

# Our Town America Celebrates June's Immigrant Heritage Month with Bassam Safi



America has several monikers, including “The Land of the Free,” “Home of the Brave,” “The Melting Pot,” and “The Land of Milk and Honey” among others. **Bassam Safi’s** road to success is comparable to most Americans’; he worked hard, faced some setbacks, persevered and is now thriving in the Our Town America system as a Regional Developer and owner of franchises in **Wilmington and Raleigh, North Carolina**. It’s the journey to where he is right now, that has Safi fond of one particular nickname for America, “The Land of Opportunity.”

“I’m extremely grateful and appreciative to this country,” Safi says. “My appreciation for the opportunity of what we enjoy here is endless.”



Bassam Safi, Our Town America Franchise Owner & Regional Developer

Family comes first for Safi. He is a husband and a father of two teenagers. He loves to travel, loves to learn and enjoys playing and watching sports of all sorts. At the age of 50, Safi considers himself amongst the nation's retirees. "I'm already doing something that I enjoy so I'm already retired," he says.

Working with Our Town America is something that he enjoys because becoming an owner and regional developer is something Safi worked so hard to attain.

Safi's personal and professional journey has roots overseas. Safi was born to Lebanese parents who moved to Kuwait at the time of his birth. "Growing up in Kuwait was a wonderful experience," Safi says. "It was a small community in the sense that people knew each other and cared about one another. The culture was hospitable. People would go out of their way to help you and others out if you needed direction or advice. It's similar to what we call 'Southern hospitality.'"

Safi got a taste of 'Southern hospitality' when he moved from Kuwait to America after graduating from high school. The time was 1991. Iraq invaded Kuwait. For America, it meant leading a coalition of nations to wage war against Iraq. For Safi, the impact was also extremely personal.

"I was enrolled in college in Wilmington when the war broke out," Safi says. "At the time, my parents were funding my college tuition. However, Kuwait's assets were frozen, meaning the money I was receiving from my parents was unexpectedly cut

off. I had to get two, sometimes three, jobs to make ends meet.”

That also meant Safi’s pursuit of a college degree was on hiatus. Instead, he was now a student at the School of Hard Knocks. Safi seized the opportunity presented to him and ran with it.

Safi snagged a job delivering pizza part-time. That job became a career.

“I went from deliverer to manager, to general manager to district manager, to an executive in the corporate office,” says Safi. “I spent a total of 17 years with the company. There’s nothing I didn’t do. I worked my way from the bottom to the top.”

Climbing the corporate ladder within a pizza franchise would be enough for most. Safi is cut from a different cloth. “My goal was to own franchises along the coast. Unfortunately, none were available. I would’ve had to move to the Midwest.”

For the first time in nearly two decades, Safi was looking for a new professional opportunity. Our Town America stood out above all others. “I had previous experience working with Our Town America as a client of theirs, so I was familiar with their services,” says Safi. “It was an excellent service that delivered on what they promise. They welcomed new people to the area and capitalized on the concept of hospitality.”

Safi was ready to experience Our Town America from the other side, as an owner. He has been with Our Town America going on 11 years, and says he hasn’t looked back.



Owner Bassam Safi, Wife Tina, and Daughters Maya and Zaina

Safi says, “It has been rewarding in every sense. Knowing that I’m able to make a difference in the community by easing the transition for the new movers and replacing the lost sense of belonging with a personalized and hospitable gesture and a gift from a local business.”

The road hasn’t always been smooth, but Safi takes it all in stride. “Some businesses have canceled on me, and some have tried not to pay,” says Safi. “I’ve learned how to deal with collections by cutting losses early. I’ve also learned to not take it personally.”

What he does take personally are the relationships he’s formed since joining Our Town America. That includes the bonds he’s developed with the communities he now calls home. “There’s so much growth here in Raleigh, as well as Wilmington,” he says. “They’re both such hot markets. Both consistently make the top of the lists of cities where Americans are relocating. They’re full of small businesses and owners who appreciate and understand Our Town America’s unique concept.”

Safi is also appreciative of the unique relationship Our Town America’s corporate office offers, including how Michael Plummer Jr. manages to treat everyone as a member of the family.

“As an Our Town America franchisee, you have all the necessary tools, the system, training, technology and support to succeed,” Safi says. “The corporate culture, from the CEO to our staff, makes you feel like family. They go out of their way to help you – which is reassuring. I don’t know many CEO’s who will pick up their phone on a Saturday or return a text on a Sunday.”

Safi has worked hard his entire life to reach his current status. He’s capitalized on the opportunities and is appreciative of what they have produced. “I am incredibly grateful to this country and all that it has given me. I would never take this life for granted. I lived in a different world. Things that we enjoy here in America may be a given to many people, but they’re not everywhere. I appreciate the opportunity I’ve had here.”

Do you want to realize your business ownership dreams, like Bassam Safi? Does the Our Town America franchise opportunity sound like it could be for you? If so, learn more at <https://www.ourtownamerica.com/franchise-us/>.