

2018 EDITION | \$4.95

# Destination NH

A Newcomers' Guide from the Experts at **New Hampshire**  
magazine



## Welcome

Newcomers Share What They Love • Dining Out • The Best Events for Every Season • Family Attractions • Arts & Culture • Granite State Breweries • Plus: A Comprehensive Resource Guide to Healthy Living



» *Sunset on the Harbor, Portsmouth*

SPONSORED BY

**CMC**

CATHOLIC MEDICAL CENTER





# Feeling Welcome


Families of refugees often have no choice where they are placed in the US. That was the case for Mohammed Mustak’s family, but now that they are citizens, they are staying put in Nashua.

Finding acceptance was important for Mustak since his roots in Myanmar (formerly Burma) were deliberately obliterated in a violent upheaval that caused more than a half a million ethnic Rohingya people to become refugees. The Rohingya are not recognized as a legitimate ethnic group in their own region of Myanmar, and have essentially become a stateless people, says Mustak, even though his family lived there for generations.

His flight from the country was perilous but had at least one positive outcome when he met “the beautiful lady, my wife Aisha, in Malaysia” says Mustak. He worked there as a community leader, but there were still dangers and challenges. Children of refugees are not allowed to attend school in Malaysia, so their son, Rabiul, yearned for an education as he watched other children attended classes.

“From the first day I arrived in America, I was happy. My son Rabiul will have the opportunity to go to school. My daughter Alisha, born here four years ago, is the first official citizen of any country in my family,” says Mustak.

It was a refugee resettlement program that chose Nashua for Mustak and his family, but the city has since become their home. The people in Nashua, he says, welcomed them and made them a part of the community. Today, Mustak is deeply connected to his new home, where he works as medical interpreter, a case manager at a local nonprofit, is a founder and executive director of the Rohingya Society of

Greater Nashua (RSGN), and, along with a partner, recently opened the Rohang Halal Market. He was also appointed to the Nashua Board of Aldermen’s Cultural Connections Committee and he volunteers at One Greater Nashua (OGN). At OGN, the aim is to increase social inclusion, equity and integration for newcomers or anyone who feels disconnected. Here people from many different backgrounds come together to create the kind of welcoming community that readily accepted Mustak and his family. 



## SNAPSHOT OF THE AREA

The most populous region of New Hampshire, the Merrimack Valley is the cultural, commercial and political center of the Granite State. Named for the river that gave life to a booming textile industry, today **the area’s mills** are finding new life as luxury condos, breweries, shops, other businesses and, in Manchester, as a hub of **science and technology**. In the northern part of the region is Concord, the state capital. **The Statehouse** was built in 1818 and is the oldest such building in continuous use in the country. It’s not all tech, government and industry. Catch an independent film at **Red River Theatres** in Concord, sample fine dining in many cities and towns, and in Manchester, view famous works of art at the **Currier Museum of Art**, enjoy America’s pastime with the **NH Fisher Cats** at **Northeast Delta Dental Stadium** or see today’s biggest stars at the **SNHU Arena**.



Top: The State Capital in Concord

Above: Mohammed Mustak Arif poses with his family after their naturalization ceremony in May.

courtesy photos