

Nadin Yousef, Macrame by Nadeen

Nadin Yousef came to Buffalo from Iraq in October 2014 with her family. Her case worker from the International Institute of Buffalo, an organization that helps resettled refugees, noticed that Nadin had a talent for making macrame items like plant holders, wall hangings, and necklaces. She encouraged Nadin to consider starting a business selling her creations and gave her a WEDI business card. Nadin was pleasantly surprised to discover that WEDI's office was located just behind her apartment: "It was a sign from the sky," she said.

At WEDI, Nadin's Relationship Manager helped her build a business plan and advised her to expand her inventory. She opened [Macrame by Nadeen](#) at WEDI's West Side Bazaar only four months after arriving in the United States. "I was very shy when I started at the Bazaar," Nadin remembered, "so I didn't talk a lot." The West Side Bazaar staff encouraged her to talk with her customers and explain how she creates her items in order to build relationships with them. They also showed her how to display her products for maximum appeal. While she admits it was tough starting her business with nothing but an idea, she knows how lucky she was to be partnering with WEDI. "It's like a family," says Nadin. "They always have time for the small businesses. They never say "No, it's not our job to take care of this.""

In the near future, she plans to graduate from the West Side Bazaar and open a gift shop with classroom space. "I want to have classes to teach people how to do macrame, and once they get good at it, I can sell it for them." With WEDI by her side, Nadin knows she has endless opportunities for growing her business.

VISION

All residents of Western New York can succeed and thrive in a culturally inclusive community.

MISSION

WEDI strengthens communities through a continuum of educational and financial resources, removing systemic barriers to economic equity for all Western New Yorkers.