

My ASU experience at Lake Havasu By Gulbike Kaseinova

Since childhood, my dream was to study abroad. However, growing up in the male-dominated Kyrgyz culture, where building a family is valued over choosing a career path, I struggled in my pursuit of higher education. At age 16, I applied to ASU and they accepted me. I can not describe my feelings, but I was really cheerful. It is such an amazing opportunity to study here. When I first came to Lake Havasu, everything was so different. After a while, I met my new, real friends. We traveled around the states. We bought, crashed and sold a car. We had a lot of moments together that we'll remember for our whole lives. From morning to evening we are together and they are the only people who can support and motivate me. Other students call us the "Russian Community," but we are like a big, friendly family. Despite the fact that we are not from the same country, I am not afraid to say that they are my second family, who make me feel like I'm in my hometown. We are from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia; we have the same culture, common language, and mentality. Even being far from our families, we are together and we are always ready to help each other. Coming from a small country to the US, it is a great experience to remember. It would not be realistic without my ASU@Lake Havasu family's support. It's my dream come true.

