

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Rafi Issa

Date 22 October 2025

Medium born digital audio file

Description Audio file of interview with Rafi Issa. He was interviewed by Zeynep

Su Oguzer on October 22, 2025 in Hartford, Connecticut. Rafi Issa was

interviewed as part of the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History's

Community History Project discussing moments of change in his life. During this

interview, Rafi discusses his journey from Syria to Türkiye and then to the United

States. Rafi was born in Syria and left at age eight because of the war. His family

lived in Gaziantep, Istanbul, and Bursa before immigrating to the United States

for safety and better opportunities. He now lives in Connecticut with his parents

and two siblings, working and studying as an auto mechanic. Rafi describes

“change” as a difficult experience that brings loss and separation from loved

ones but he recognizes that moving to the U.S. was an important step for his

future. He recalls traumatic memories of war, including bombings and losing

two cousins. In Türkiye, he says he sometimes faced teasing for being Syrian but

overall felt supported. In the U.S., he finds people kind and welcoming.

However, learning English remains challenging. His family studies together at

home, often mixing Arabic, Turkish, and English. Rafi dreams of building a home

in Trabzon one day because of its nature and sense of community. He values

loyalty, honesty, and perseverance, saying he’s learned not to trust too easily

but to always keep trying. His story reflects resilience, adaptation, and hope.

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Dimensions Duration: 34 Minutes, 8 Seconds