Family Spotlight: Pgh Home Away from Home

Greetings from our family - Yulduz, Rustam, Sardor and Zarina! Yulduz is our stay at home mother. She has graduated with honors from Westminster University and holds a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration. Before staying home to watch the kids, Yulduz worked in the Oil and Gas industry in our home country, Uzbekistan. She loves to travel, learn different languages, and spend time with her family. Rustam is the father of the family. He has also graduated from Westminster University with a degree in Economics and is currently pursuing his Master’s in Business Administration at the Tepper School of Business. Before going to b-school, Rustam enjoyed a career in the telecom and real estate industries. His hobbies include playing soccer, watching TV shows, and reading about business topics on the web. This summer, he will graduate from Carnegie Mellon and move the family to Midland, Michigan as a finance manager for the Dow Chemical Company.

Sardor is our oldest son. He is a very curious child and has endless passion for learning. Sardor's favorite activities are playing with train sets and transformers, exploring new places, and making friends. He is currently a friend in the Green Room at the Children’s School, and it is the best experience he has ever had. Zarina is Sardor’s little sister. Although she is only 20 months old, she is a very caring sister and an independent little girl. Zarina loves playing with pets, reading books with Mommy, drawing pictures, and spending time outdoors. We are expecting our third child early March, and it’s a boy. Sardor and Zarina can’t wait to meet their little baby brother and our family is extremely happy and grateful.

We come from sunny Uzbekistan, which is a medium sized country in Central Asia with 27 million people. Before 1991, it was part of the Soviet Union. The main languages are Uzbek and Russian. Uzbekistan boasts a beautiful landscape consisting of plains, mountains, deserts and small forests. The country is well known for its rich history and culture, hospitality and cuisine. Yulduz and I (Rustam) were both born and raised in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan (photo to the right). No matter where we are, we always miss our home country, its culture, and its kind and generous people.

Below are photographs of ancient Registan Square in Samarkand, Uzbekistan (left) and a dancer and musicians in national costumes (right).
Family Spotlight, continued …

During my (Rustam’s) first year at the Tepper School, I rented a room from Mrs. Solomon. During my stay, we became great friends. She told me about the Children’s School and how it would be perfect for my son when my family moved to Pittsburgh. Thanks to the help of Mrs. Solomon and Mrs. Rosenblum, we successfully enrolled Sardor in the school. He loves all his teachers and friends. Sardor always comes home excited about many activities he does at school every day. His favorite activities include gym games, going to the playground, and learning about new countries. Ever since he has been attending the school, we have noticed a significant development in his intellectual and communication abilities. We are very grateful to the teachers and all of the school staff for this wonderful opportunity and experience.

We absolutely love Pittsburgh. Some of our favorite places are the Children’s Museum and Phipps Garden, which we visit regularly. Pittsburgh’s abundance of parks provides great outdoor experience for our whole family. When the weather allows, we like to take long walks in the parks or play with our children at the playgrounds. We are still adapting to Pittsburgh’s harsh and long winter, but nothing can replace sledding on the snow hills and building snowmen with our children. We wish we could stay longer in Pittsburgh before moving to Michigan this summer. We will miss Pittsburgh and the Children’s School.

Pittsburgh Perspectives

As we transition from winter to spring, there are many opportunities to explore Pittsburgh’s beautiful outdoor venues. Exploring flora and fauna in every season helps foster young children’s connections with nature and commitment to caring for the environment. According to Pittsburgher Rachel Carson, “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.” In Last Child in the Woods, Richard Louv touts the “emotional benefits of nature”, both for nurturing solitude and promoting social interaction, and the “healthy development of the senses” that is essential for both learning and creativity. So, don the appropriate outerwear and explore on snowy days, rainy days, and sunny days alike!

March’s Pittsburgh Tips:

• The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (http://www.pittsburghparks.org) is a nonprofit organization collaborating with the City of Pittsburgh via “an official public-private partnership agreement to restore the city’s four regional parks: Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley.” With volunteer support, the Parks Conservancy also promotes the enhancement of green spaces in many neighborhoods throughout Pittsburgh. Check the web site for a variety of family opportunities, including the April Earth Day weekend.

• Before heading outdoors, also check the web site of Tree Pittsburgh to learn about “Protecting and Growing our Urban Forest” (http://treepittsburgh.org). This non-profit environmental organization “dedicated to enhancing the City’s vitality by restoring and protecting City trees.” The web site offers diverse resources to help you best care for the trees on your property, as well as to advocate for planting trees in the public spaces in your neighborhood.