

Brewing A Business Of Hope

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SIOUX FALLS, SD - Imagine having to flee your country because your life and the lives of your family were threatened. Then imagine arriving in a new land with next to nothing and not even the ability to practice your profession.

That's the story of a Colombian family now living in Sioux Falls.

"It is a dream that Adriana and I have as a way to pass on to our children the whole culture around coffee we know very well from Colombia," Nelson Prestan-Suarez said.

Nelson Prestan-Suarez and his wife Adriana Prestan are importing coffee from their homeland and selling it through their website Cafeto Colombian Coffee. It's quite a switch in careers for this former architect and lawyer.

Nelson can no longer work in his chosen field because he is losing his eye sight due to a medical condition. Adriana was working as an attorney for the Colombian government prosecuting criminals when she says she was threatened by people she calls "terrorists" and was forced to flee.

"The most difficult thing is the government wouldn't support the whole family is protecting us," Adriana Prestan said.

"Obviously in Colombia we had a network of relationships and business and when we came over here, Adriana could not continue to work in what she does. And obviously I cannot work either. You have to begin from nothing, scratch, zero in a new place," Nelson Prestan-Suarez said.

"It is never an easy thing to leave your family, your culture, your language and everything and then come here and start a new. Thank God they are professional people, higher education, and very goal oriented and determined. But for me it really breaks my heart to see somebody from my own country having to experience what they've experienced," Pastor Nate Lizarazo said.

Pastor Nate Lizarazo of First Lutheran Church is helping the couple establish a new life and new business here. He says the family is importing coffee from a co-op run by women whose husbands were killed in the conflict of Colombia. The couple is also giving back part of the proceeds from coffee sales to Lizarazo's foundation to help educate Colombian children.

"I don't want to lose the connection with Colombia. I want to help all the people affected with the violence and everything in Colombia," Adriana Prestan said.

"I received the first check not too long ago. \$48 coffee profit," Lizarazo said.

"But to me that's a huge amount of money because our foundation started literally with pennies of Sunday school children," Lizarazo said.

While Nelson and Adriana want to help Colombians, they also hope another perk of the coffee business is a better life in America for their 12-year-old daughter Nashua.

"We are a refugee Colombian family living in the United States. We created Cafeto Colombian Coffee to live worthily and help our brothers and sisters in Colombia," Nashua Prestan said on the video.

"My dad has told me this a lot of times, that he did it and my mom too that they really want to see me grow up and work with this company and build it," Nashua Prestan said.

The family says their faith has helped guide them this far and they are counting on the Colombian coffee beans for a brighter future.

"I do have a lot of hope on this and I know the best coffee in the world is Colombian. Every time someone buys the coffee I know God is always watching and that's what matters to me the most," Adriana Prestan said.

"We have a connection deep and profound with Colombia and that's part of what this coffee business is doing. It's an amazing, wonderful way of accomplishing different goals at the same time," Lizarazo said.

Several different local organizations are buying and serving Cafeto Colombian Coffee. There are four different varieties available.

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