



IMPACT

August 2025

Dear Friend,

It's our joy to continue to share stories that reflect the heartbeat of Nehemiah Gateway. Stories of hope, of giving back, and of full-circle transformation.

In this Impact, you'll meet three inspiring alumni who are using their gifts and time to serve others in meaningful ways. Whether through dental outreach or educational scholarships, their journeys remind us of the power of compassion in action.

Your support makes stories like these possible. Thank you for standing with us - whether you've been walking alongside us for years or are just now learning about our mission. We're so glad you're here.

With gratitude,

Your Impact team



First-grader Rajsa learns how to care for her teeth.

Floss and Smiles: A Homecoming of Healing

Giving Back Where It All Began

When Dr. Flavia Myrtaj returned to her hometown of Pogradec, Albania, it wasn't just to reconnect with family or revisit familiar places, it was a mission of care.

Now a practicing dentist in Tampa, Florida, Flavia is also a proud graduate of Nehemia School (Shkolla Nehemia) and Tufts University. Her recent trip to Albania brought her full circle: from student to servant, from recipient to giver. Flavia launched her volunteer initiative, **Floss and Smiles**, with a clear purpose, to provide essential dental education and care to children who might not otherwise receive it. And where better to begin than with the very schools that shaped her own journey?

"I graduated from Nehemiah Gateway," she shared. "That's where my passion for serving others took root. I still remember volunteering at Christmastime, delivering gifts to children in remote villages. That experience stayed with me. It taught me what compassion in action looks like."

During her visit, Flavia provided dental checkups and hygiene lessons to students at both Nehemia School and Amaro Tan. Her team educated children aged 6–10 on how to care for their teeth, how nutrition affects oral health, and what prevention looks like in daily life. Each child received a checkup, fluoride varnish, and a goodie bag with a toothbrush, toothpaste, and floss.

"This is a key age, when kids are transitioning from baby teeth to permanent ones," Flavia explained. "It's the perfect time to help them build strong, lifelong habits."

Flavia emphasized that beyond technical care, relationship matters. Delivering care in her mother tongue, among children who reminded her of her own childhood, brought a special joy.

"I've done volunteer work in other countries, but this was different. This was personal. Seeing their smiles and excitement - that's what fuels me to keep going."

Her dream is to grow Floss and Smiles into a sustainable outreach program that not only educates but also provides free dental care to children across underserved communities in Albania. To make this a reality, she hopes to build a network of dental professionals, volunteers, and supporters.

"Oral health is often overlooked, but the consequences of neglect can be serious. When we offer knowledge, care, and prevention, we don't just protect teeth, we empower lives."



Flavia teaching dental hygiene playfully with help from dedicated volunteers.

Giving Back Through Education: A Family Legacy

When Lazaron Gushe ("Lazi") and Lori Cobani launched a scholarship program in 2019, they weren't just investing in students—they were honoring their family and giving back to the community that raised them.

In memory of their grandfather, Dr. Jorgji Jajçari, and inspired by their own experience as Nehemiah School graduates, the cousins created a way to support talented students in Pogradec who might not otherwise afford further education. Both now living and working in the U.S., Lazi and Lori remain closely connected to their hometown and Nehemiah Gateway.



Lazaron (left) and Lori (right) with this year's proud scholarship recipient Daors Sofi and Herolinda Shkullaku (NG Albania Executive Director)

Lazi continues his commitment as a member of the NG USA Board of Directors.

Their scholarships are about more than academics. They're about hope, opportunity, and giving others the same chance they were given.



Want to help more children smile confidently?
Want to empower the next generation
of Albanian leaders?



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Whether you're a longtime supporter or just learning about our work, you're invited to be part of these life-changing stories.

Thank you for walking with us - past, present, and future.

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