



McKinley Paltzik

Welcome to America

While researching for a speech about Afghan refugees, McKinley discovered the story of Fahima, one of thousands of refugees re-settling in Arizona, inspiring her to start her Gold Award project. With the Valencia Newcomer School for first-year refugee children in Arizona, McKinley crafted a free English tutoring program to support students as they transition from refugee schools to public schools. McKinley interviewed teachers, studied ESL teaching strategies, and practiced with students to help them succeed academically. The stories and friendships that came from this experience remind McKinley of what it means to lead with care and compassion. McKinley studies government and economics at Harvard University.