
Chapter 8

My Career with Radio Shack

Almost eight months before my graduation from the Citadel, I stopped at a Radio Shack store in Laurinburg, NC to purchase a turntable. The store owner and his wife were from New York and were very friendly toward me. They spoke very highly of Radio Shack as a good place to work. Though I was not searching for a job, they offered me a store catalog and pointed out the “employment opportunity” section where I could inquire, if ever I were interested in a job with the company.

Later when I made my decision to stay here in the U.S. in August of 1977, I applied at Radio Shack as a full time manager trainee. Being new in the work force in this country, I was apprehensive and afraid at first and was not sure if people would respond positive to me especially with my heavy accent. But soon I learned that people were accepting me for who I was and at that time never encountered any problems. In less than a year, I became manager of my own store in Greenville, SC, became a very successful salesperson, awarded a gold ring and won several trips as incentives.

After two years with Radio Shack, I felt I should move on to other opportunities, so I applied for a position at Duke

Power. The person who interviewed me was very nice and the interview went well. Then he asked me if I had my citizenship or “green card” which is the permanent residency card since that was required and was considered necessary for employment with them. I had applied for my permanent residency some time back and had gone through all the necessary paper work, health check and interviews and was waiting to hear from them. I was afraid they had rejected it since it had been so long, but I told him I would pursue it that very day.

So, with much excitement and full of hope, yet scared of rejection, I left the Duke Power personnel office, and headed home, to call the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The telephone rang several times but no one was there to answer my call. I had to leave a message on their answering machine and told them who I was and the reason for my call. Within a week from the time I called, and to my surprise, my ‘green card’ came in the mail and was in my hand without me talking to anyone any further. Apparently, they were waiting for someone to call and claim it. I praised God for His intervention and was excited about the possibility of a new job. As soon as I could, I went back to Duke Power to inquire about the job, but they informed me that the position was no longer available.

The more I thought about that event, the more I realized that God had a hand in it. It wasn't meant for me to have that job, but it sure prompted me to make that phone call to the INS! This resulted in the peace and assurance I needed that He would take care of me (little miracles of God)!

Have you ever wondered how God answers our prayers without you hearing a single audible voice from His mouth? God, miraculously opens some doors while at the same time shuts some as a guide for his children. He is unpredictable yet faithful. He is undetectable by our five human senses, yet authentic and genuine and can be recognized by our spirit through faith. I gave Him the praise and glory for that miracle. I then immediately applied for my citizenship and received my Naturalization papers with no problems or difficulties. It was as if God had already paved the road for me. And yes, I am still working for the Radio Shack Company after thirty two years. WOW!



God blessed us in our marriage and with our three children, Crystal, Alyson, and Elizabeth.

We were blessed to be able to raise our children without the need for a regular babysitter or daycare since my wife was able to stay home. They are truly gifts from God that were added to what He already blessed us with, and have brought much joy to our lives.

After living in Greenville, SC for a few years we moved to Florence, SC in order to be closer to Ursa's parents and stayed there for approximately 11 years.

In the year 1985, something unexpected happened which caused me to be involved as a witness in a court of law. A

customer came to my store and purchased a telephone recording control to record his personal calls. But instead, he used it to wiretap his wife's telephone conversations without her knowing about it. He did indeed catch her and this resulted in him getting custody of their children. This particular story hit the national media that year and later on my store became part of the 20/20 T.V. program. John Stossel, the consumer reporter, and his crew were in my store. My store was in the middle of some minor construction and not ready for any kind of publicity, so I suggested for them to go to the store across town not knowing what was going on. But they insisted on doing their story in my store. They did not disclose what they were doing except that they wanted to do a story around electronic stores in general. Luckily my supervisor, Terry Kipick, was there at the time, so I directed them to him. I saw their camera crew shooting at anything they possibly could. Then I noticed the cameraman was aiming his camera toward the telephone recording device. When we saw the 20/20 program that weekend, it all became clear that it was about wiretapping and my store was one of the stores among many others in the story. Later that year I had to sit as a witness for the case of the man who bought the recording device from me. It was an interesting experience for me and I got to see first hand how the justice system works in this country.

Although I had mixed emotions about what people's motives were when they sued each other.

In July of 1989, I put in a request to transfer to Asheville, NC with my job. My request was granted. Our home was sold right away, the buyer paying in cash! The buyer even purchased my entire entertainment system and

satellite equipment, which turned out to be great for us since we were going to live in a camper for the next year and half.

Ursa and I wanted our children to be able to start at their new school at the beginning of the school year, so I moved them to Asheville while I stayed behind at my brother's house for a few more months until my transfer store became ready.

That fall, during the time I was staying with my brother, Hurricane Hugo hit our region and destroyed much of eastern South Carolina, including the city of Florence where we lived. We lost our electricity for days. There were food and ice shortages and generators were all sold out in several States. If we had not sold our home at the time we did, our move would have been delayed or cancelled for a long time. Fortunately, and by the grace of God, my wife and children were already in Asheville living in a 32 foot camper, which had three bunk beds for the children. They stayed at a KOA campground for several months while we attempted to find a piece of land to purchase and to build our house on.

Before school started, Ursa looked for a suitable school where she wanted the children to attend. Once she decided on a school, she began to look for a piece of land in the same community for our future home and where we could keep our horse as well. Finding a piece of land at a reasonable price was not easy since we wanted it to be close to schools and town. Most property for sale was on the side of a mountain covered with lots of trees, which would be very expensive to clear and grade to build a house on. But once again God was good to us. Ursa found three acres of flat land with a barn and a creek that bordered it, so the horses would be able to drink water and have shelter. We

considered ourselves fortunate to find this flat piece of property for sale at a reasonable price in the mountains of Western North Carolina. She secured it with a deposit, and later we moved our camper right on the property. But because we lived in such a small place, we had to rent a storage building for most of our belongings.

One day, not long after we had been there, the pastor of a local church stopped by to meet us and to see if we needed anything. I suppose he felt sorry for us since it appeared we were living like gypsies! We had been visiting churches in the area, but had not decided yet where we belonged, so of course he invited us to his church, Gashes Creek Baptist Church. We loved the church and the people there, and soon we knew it was where God wanted us to serve. Rev. Hilton Moore, his wife Dot and daughter, Stephanie, became very dear friends and were our neighbors as well. They lived only a few houses up from us, and among many other acts of kindness, allowed us to move our things we had in storage into their basement. This was such a blessing since it saved us so much money.

We lived in that camper for almost a year and half and were very happy, but as the winter approached, we faced some challenges. At night, the winter winds would blow, causing the camper to shake and making it difficult to sleep. Sometimes when it was really cold, the pipes would freeze and we would have no water. And many nights, we would run out of propane gas in the middle of the night which of course was our source of heat! The diesel car I had didn't do well in the winter months. Needless to say, we had our hands full! But our hope was elsewhere. Even though things were tough at times, we never let our circumstances get us

down. Now when we think back on those days, we remember them fondly. Living in such close quarters wasn't always easy, but it taught us a lot about each other and what was important. My dad even came to visit while we were living there, but thank goodness he was able to go back and forth between our family and Hamid and his family in Charlotte! But I will tell you it was a beautiful sight when we were finally able to see our new home being built. It gave us hope and we couldn't wait until the day we could move in!

This experience often reminds me of the short time we live here on this earth. Our house on this earth is temporary like a tent, but our real home is in heaven, where it is not built by human hands, but by God's. Our hope is to one day to be there, see the glory of His Majesty, and be in His presence forever.

We enjoyed going to our new church and became involved in the many activities that were offered. The children were happy and enjoyed their classes and activities as well. We were happy to be in a place where we felt unconditional love and where our children were being taught Godly principals.

As our children became older and became part of the youth group, we began going on annual beach retreats with them to a Christian retreat center in Garden City, S.C. We did this for several years and enjoyed it very much. One year while we were gone, our house was broken in to. Many things were taken, especially electronics, and the house left in chaos! The police came and took a report and did fingerprinting, but could not give us much hope that they would be able to find out who had done such a terrible thing.

At first, we were afraid, not knowing who had done this or if they would be back. We all slept together on the living room floor for several nights because we were so afraid. Right after it happened, I had informed all my neighbors about the incident in hopes that they may have seen something or somebody that looked suspicious, but they had seen nothing.

I won't say that it was easy, but we felt God telling us that we needed to pray for and forgive those who had broken into our home. What good would it do for us to be angry and resentful towards people who so apparently and desperately needed to know the love of Christ! Well, a few days later, one of our neighbors called and asked the specifics of the TV that we were missing. Her son lived in the basement of their home and she had noticed a TV and some other electronics that she did not recognize. Sure enough, it was ours and it turned out that her son and some other neighbor boys had been a part of the break-in. I went to see them and their parents and, showed them my love and forgiveness, but since we had already filed a police report, we had to let justice run its course. We just hoped that the light punishment they received would be enough to deter them from future criminal activities.

Since things were more expensive in western North Carolina compared to where we used to live in South Carolina, we felt the need for extra income, so we prayed for a job for my wife. She had not worked outside of our home the past 12 years since our first child was born. Suddenly God's grace poured out on us again and He provided a job for her at Fairview Family Physicians, which

was directly across from the elementary school where our children attended!

This is how it happened: One day after a doctor's visit I asked one of the ladies there if they were looking for someone to fill a secretarial position, which was the training my wife had. I thought I had seen an advertisement for that position in the paper. They informed me that they were really in need of a phlebotomist and x-ray technician and were planning to ask my wife to fill the position. I told them that my wife's schooling was secretarial and that was all she knew, but two of them responded in unison that they were willing to teach her everything she needed to know on the job. WOW! Isn't God so good!

I was so excited about the news, and how God was providing a job so close to the school and our home. I came home and encouraged my wife to go back and speak with someone about that position. She applied for the position and got the job. She spent the following weeks being trained for the job, which she was able to easily grasp. She enjoyed what she did very much. She had actually wanted to be a nurse when she was much younger, but the technical school she attended did not have a nursing program. So she took the secretarial classes instead.

God provided this job for my wife, and to this day, she is still working for the same practice, although it has expanded and has moved to a new location, called Parkway Medical Group.