

## **Ahmed Abdi's Biography**

My name is Ahmed Abdi, I was born in Somalia.

Because of violence and civil war in Somalia, my family was forced to move to the Kenya Dadaab Refugee camp that became our home for over 20 years. When I was in Kenya, my only dream was to get the opportunity to come to United States where I knew if I worked hard, I would be able to achieve my goals.

As a refugee in the US, I first worked in Kansas City Missouri at a Tyson Food plant handling chicken parts. I was paid \$9 an hour and worked in a very hard and dangerous conditions. It didn't matter if we were injured at the job and if we were ill, we couldn't call sick in because we feared losing our jobs.

After working in the factory for a few months, I realized that I needed to do something and started talking to my coworkers about ways to address the issues that we were facing. Everyone was scared talking about the issues we had since most of the workers were immigrants and refugees. But I worked hard to encourage everyone to be brave and stand together to address the safety issues and get some help – which we did.

I moved to Seattle in 2010, where I met my wife and went back to college. Today we have two young children and my wife works as a child care provider and member of SEIU 925.

I started working at Working Washington where I knocked on doors around King County talking to people and learning about their hard lives and appalling working conditions. This was an eye opener for me, how was this kind of thing happening in the United States? I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to work on behalf of other workers and share their stories and struggle. By doing so, I was always reminded my own struggle as well and it is why I feel obligated to stand up for workers' rights and fight as hard as I can to raise their voices.

I currently work at Fair Work Center as an Outreach Manager providing know your rights trainings to low wage workers in many sectors.

I am also currently one of the Seattle Housing Board Commissioners where I help to advocate for low income families' housing conditions.

Finally, I will take my personal experience to further improve the lives of the workers in and around the port. I believe that I am a candidate for change.

Yours sincerely,

Ahmed Abdi for Port Commissioner