



SOMALI GRADUATE JOURNAL

Issue #9, 2024

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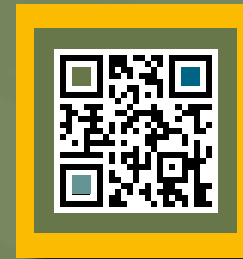
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Somali Graduate Journal

PREVIOUS EDITIONS



“
Among our graduates are doctors, engineers, chartered accountants, scientists, lawyers, IT professionals, teachers and social workers.
”

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

“ It gives me great pleasure to present the 9th edition of the Somali Graduate Journal.

Despite the 3-year gap since the last edition, the wait is worth it!

The graduates featured here are only a small number of the many that have achieved education success and I am proud of them. It is truly heartwarming to see the dedication and hard work put in by these graduates to achieve their goals. Education is a powerful tool that can transform lives and open doors to endless opportunities.

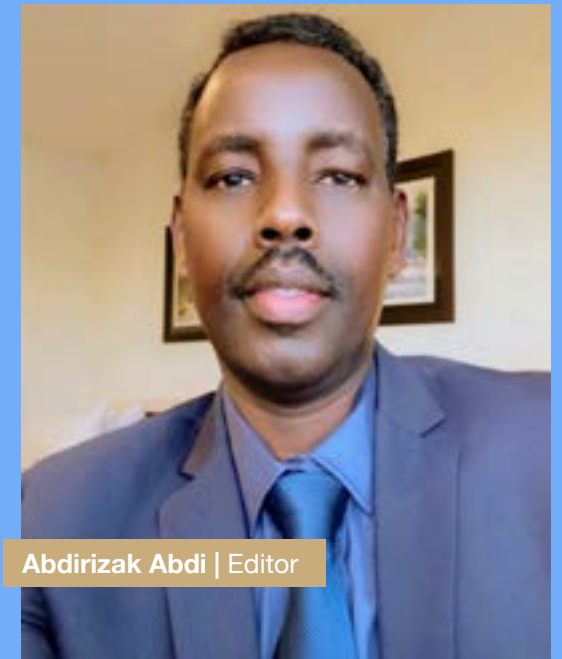
As the editor of this great community publication I am grateful for the opportunity to showcase the achievements of our community members and for the personal inspiration I have drawn from reading the graduates' amazing education journeys - each one uniquely inspiring indeed. I hope that the journal serves as a source of motivation and encouragement for others who may come across it. To my Somali community I say, let us continue to support and uplift each other on our educational journeys and the many other types of achievements we may aspire

to, knowing that together, we can achieve great things individually and collectively. I also want to acknowledge the many individuals who have helped with the contacts of the graduates from our Somali community across New Zealand. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of our community members, your efforts do not go unnoticed and are greatly appreciated.

Congratulations to all the graduates featured in this edition, your success is a testament to your determination and perseverance. May you continue to reach new heights, overcome challenges, and make a positive impact in the world. Your hard work and dedication have brought you to this moment, and we have no doubt that you will achieve even greater things in the years to come. Keep striving for excellence and never stop chasing your dreams. The future is bright for each and every one of you. Congratulations once again on your well-deserved success!

Spotlight on leaders who are making a difference.

While the focus of the journal is on highlighting the educational achievements of the community, we know that there are many people in the community who are making a significant contribution. We dedicate this section in the journal to individuals in the community who deserve to be acknowledged for their exemplary leadership and contributions to society. Therefore, to all Somalis who are doing great things wherever you are and in whatever capacity I say to you keep up the great work you are doing, you are being a good Somali ambassador and a positive role model.



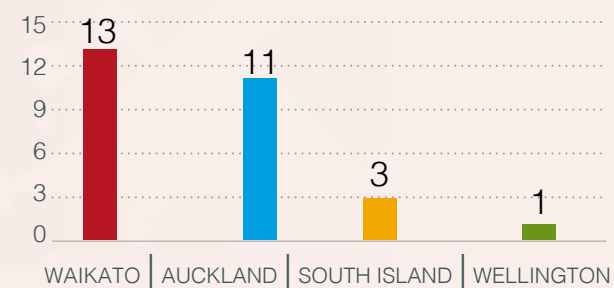
Abdirizak Abdi | Editor

ANALYSIS

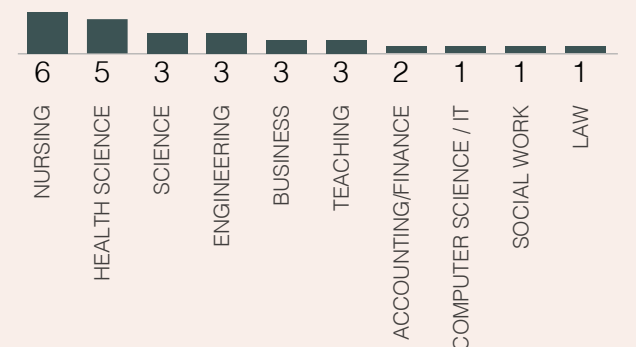
In this ninth edition of the Somali Graduate Journal we have profiled 28 graduates from around New Zealand. These are the ones we have been able to get profiles from, but we know the actual numbers who have graduated since the last edition are more than 28. The 28 graduates are 15 females and 13 males.

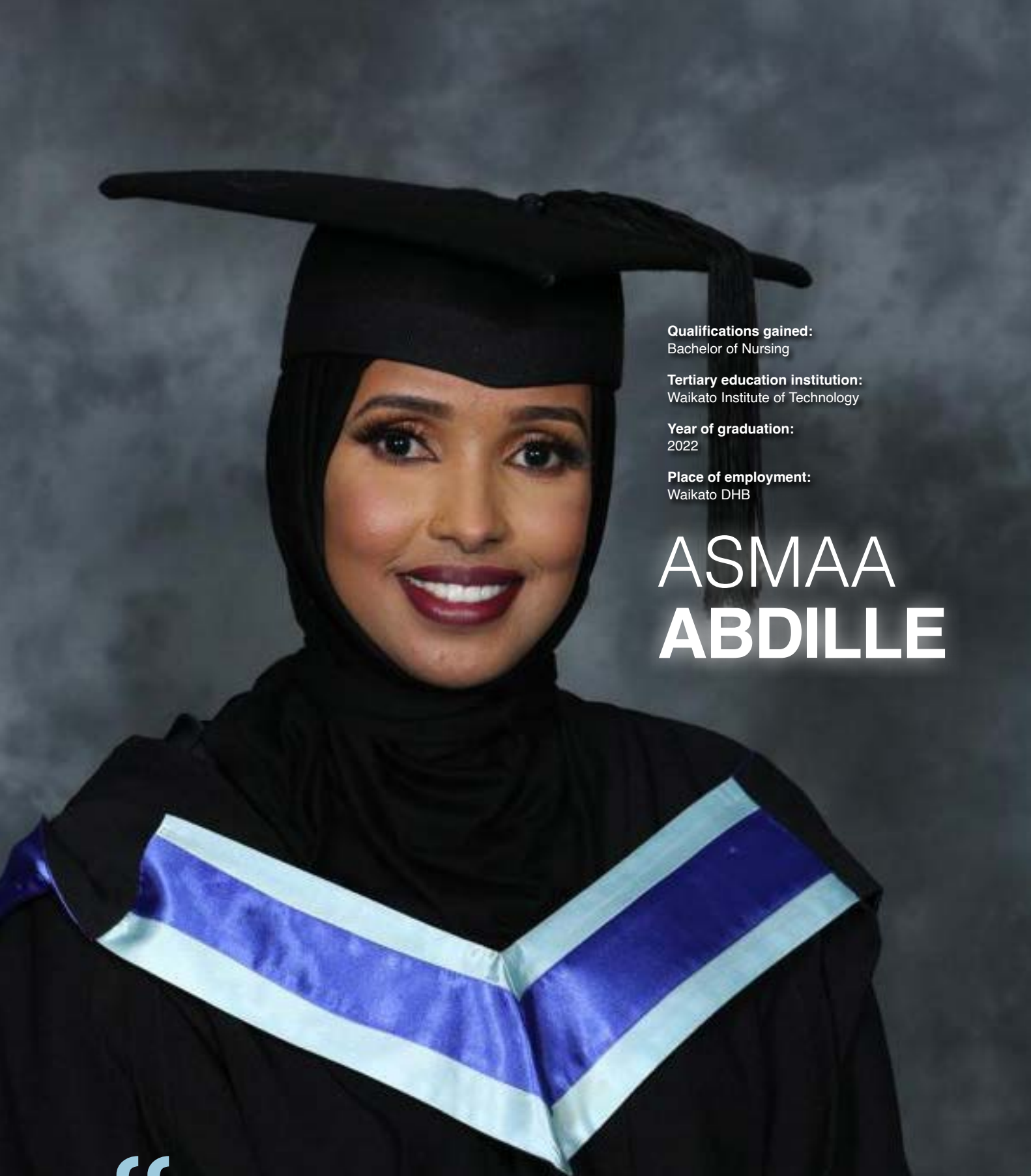
The following charts are a quick reference for the regional numbers and the field of study to show the wide range of qualifications the Somali graduates have pursued.

GRADUATE NUMBERS BY REGION 2024



GRADUATES BY FIELD OF STUDY 2024





Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Nursing
Tertiary education institution:
Waikato Institute of Technology
Year of graduation:
2022
Place of employment:
Waikato DHB

ASMAA ABDILLE



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I finished high school in Kenya. I always wanted to be a nurse because as a nurse you can make a real difference in someone's life. It gives me an opportunity to offer hope to people in their worst time of their life.



MY FUTURE PLANS

I would like to continue to develop my skills and experience by working different types of nursing set up I also want to continue further studies maybe to be Nurse practitioner insha' Allah.



MY BIGGEST CHALLENGE

My biggest challenge was feeling mother guilt by leaving my children to do my placements and spending a lot of time in Wintec doing assignments. It was not easy but in the end it was worth it.

First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Allah. Throughout this journey, I have felt His presence and guidance, providing me with strength, wisdom, and blessings. It is through His grace that I stand here today, ready to embark on the next chapter of my life.

Next, I want to acknowledge and thank my incredible family. They have been my rock, my support system, and my constant source of love and encouragement. From the late-night study sessions to the moments of doubt, they have stood by my side, believing in me even when I struggled to believe in myself. Their unwavering

faith in my abilities has been a driving force behind my success, and I am forever grateful for their presence in my life.

Lastly, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my children. They have been my greatest inspiration and motivation. Seeing their innocent eyes filled with admiration and pride has pushed me to be the best version of myself. They have taught me the true meaning of resilience, sacrifice, and perseverance. I am grateful for the lessons they have unknowingly taught me and for the joy they have brought into my life. Without them, this journey would not have been possible. As I step into the future, I carry their love and encouragement in my heart, and I am excited to make them proud. Thank you all for being a part of my journey and for shaping me into the person I am today.



MY MESSAGE

As important as education is, everyone's education journey is different. The common ideology of going to school, then straight away going to university and then working is not a must for everyone. I will advise current students to take their time, find their passion and pursue it without the pressure of others. Make the most of the opportunities that are presented whilst you are still a student, whether it is summer scholarships, internships or volunteering.

IDIL MOHAMED KHALIF



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Kia Ora Katou. My name is Idil Khalif, a Kiwi born Somali, a Hamiltonian. I currently hold a Bachelor of Laws and I am a member of New Zealand's legal bar. I made the decision to study law in year 11, at Hamilton Girls High School. My reason to pursue a law degree stemmed from seeing injustices in our society and seeing too much corrupt in this world. I said to myself "perhaps, me holding a LLB might change this". Well, it could, but I also realised while studying law, justice is not "blind" or "fair". It will depend on the merits of the case, how the law is interpreted and so many other legal issues. Furthermore, my second reason to pursue law, was because of Malcolm X. Malcolm wanted to study law,

however, his teacher said that type of job is reserved for the "whites". This comment in his biography motivated me to pursue the degree, which I successfully did, and proudly can call myself a lawyer. I found my first year of law confusing. However, after a year 1, I saw myself enjoying the course and receiving good marks.

I aspire to use my legal skills to help clients achieve justice and where I can work on a pro bono basis as well. Plus, I want to be an advocate for New Zealand's legal system and see changes in our laws, perhaps see the Treaty of Waitangi become have a legal status, so I want to end up in parliament somehow. Also, I want to be an advocate in so many ways.



MY INTERESTS AND FUTURE PLANS

My interest is corporate, commercial law, and New Zealand's previous legal system before colonisation; Tikanga Law. My interest is not just legal stuff, I am fond of history, especially warfare: United States Civil War, World War II.

I aspire to a good lawyer in the future. I know that will only come with hard work, consistency and learning from experienced lawyers.

Qualifications gained:
Bachelors of Laws (LLB) Admitted Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.

Tertiary education institution:
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2021

Place of employment:
University of Waikato



MY ADVICE TO OUR SOMALI STUDENTS

"Education is the passport to the future" said Malcolm X. That is my favourite Malcolm X Quote, it speaks for itself. Here in NZ, education is a privilege, do not play with it. It will open doors for you, secure you a job and bright future. My advice, take your high school studies serious, plan your future and see what subjects you are good at. From there, see whether you want to pursue tertiary education or trade. If you need assistance, universities have advisors who can help you with your course and what degree suits your career choice."

AMINA MIRE

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Nursing

Tertiary education institution:
Waikato Institute of technology

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Waikato Hospital



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamu alaikum, my name is Amina Mire and I am part of the 2023 graduate class.

Growing up, I was always interested in learning new things, and I was certain that I wanted to live a life that was rewarding with many opportunities for success. Despite having strong dreams, I was unsure of the

direction my career should go in. As my senior year of high school approached, it was difficult to choose one profession to continue with because I had so many career options. Science and knowing about the human body have always been my interests. I sought advice

from my school's career counsellor to gain a greater understanding of my career options. After many discussions, I made the decision to pursue a career in science. Although I was unsure about this career path, I enrolled at Waikato University to study for a Bachelor of Biochemistry. I knew after studying for a semester that this degree wasn't for me. The classes and the labs we conducted weren't fun for me. I was aware that it wasn't a profession I wanted to pursue or love. I've finished a



MY MESSAGE

My advice to new students is to understand that, even if it's what people are expecting from you, it's normal to not know what you want to pursue as a career while you are in high school or shortly after you graduated. First, take some time to consider what you truly want to do with your life. Before enrolling in university, be sure to develop passion in your field of study. Also to know that it's okay changing careers, don't feel discouraged because one career path did not work out for you, and change as many times until you find a career you love and want to pursue. Studying years might be hard but have strong motivation and know the reason why you started in the first place.

semester and have decided to change my career path.

One day I attended the Waikato Institution of technology open day, an event in which an organization (such as a school or institution) invites the public to visit in order to see the things that happen there and careers that are studied there.

Nursing was always a profession that I loved, it included helping people and I knew I wanted to work in the health industry. Without having a second thought I enrolled into nursing school being so excited. Friends and family have always assured me that nursing will be a good fit for me because I am a highly driven, positive, and social person. As I began my clinical placement, interacted with patients and their families, and acquired practical experience, I realized nursing was a profession for me. The long hours, lack of social life, and pressure to fulfil deadlines that came with nursing school were not easy, but having such a supportive family and friends I knew that the effort I put in would be worthwhile in the end.

I was fortunate to be accepted into the new graduate program at Waikato Hospital after passing my final registration exam, allowing me to begin my career as a medical registered nurse. During my career, I have encountered many challenges which were all learning experiences. Nursing is a unique profession that allows you to grow as a person and offers many satisfying experiences. It gives you the chance to make a difference in someone's life by following their health journey from start to finish. Not only do I enjoy my job as a nurse, but nursing has also given me critical and enduring abilities that I can apply to both my professional and personal lives. It is rewarding knowing that this job of helping others is also encouraged in our religion Islam.

In Islam, generosity is greatly loved by Allah SWT and those who give to help others shall receive infinite reward from their Lord.

"With hardship comes ease"

KAWSAR MOHAMED

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Teaching

Tertiary education institution:
University Of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2021

Place of employment:
Melbourne Australia, Teacher

Stay true to yourself; if you're passionate about something, pursue it. The world is brimming with opportunities just waiting for you.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

As- salamu alaykum, my name is Kawsar, I was born and raised in New Zealand, where I completed my entire education journey, from kindergarten all the way through high school.

Educational Background:

During my high school years, I had the chance to engage in Early Childhood Education, taking a course that allowed me to observe and participate in nurturing and teaching young minds at a kindergarten, an experience that sparked my desire to pursue a career in teaching. Upon graduating

from high school, I decided to take a gap year to explore my academic interests as I was unsure of my path. I relocated to Australia, where I pursued brief training in healthcare, leading to temporary work in that field. After spending six years in Australia, I made the decision to return to New Zealand to pursue my lifelong dream of teaching.

In 2019 I started my journey at Waikato university to study the Bachelor of teaching. University life presented its challenges, with countless sleepless nights and tight deadlines. However, my

determination to become a teacher and support children in becoming lifelong learners drove me to persevere. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to my family for their unwavering support they have provided me. Enabling me to successfully complete my studies. Fleeing Somalia for a better life in New Zealand, they provided numerous opportunities for me to pursue a fulfilling career. I am grateful to them for their sacrifices and for laying the foundation for a brighter future for their children.



MY MESSAGE:

Step out of your comfort zone. This is my message to Somali youth. It's perfectly fine to feel unsure about which career path to pursue. Graduating from high school can be intimidating when you're uncertain about your next steps. However, everything falls into place eventually, especially if you remain dedicated to your passion. The secret to success lies in acknowledging your fears and pushing forward regardless. Follow your heart and pursue your career that you have an interest and passion for.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

In the future, I aim to pursue a master's degree in child play therapy, aiming to broaden my understanding in education and advance my career in working with children. This field offers a fulfilling path where I can assist children in their psychosocial, mental health, and overall well-being through the therapeutic potential of play. I am excited about the future opportunities to continue supporting and positively shaping the minds of the next generation.



KHADIJA YASIN MIRE

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Nursing

Name of tertiary institution:
Waikato Institute of Technology

Year of graduation:
2021

Place of employment:
Waikato Hospital



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I arrived in New Zealand in 2014 with my family. Coming to a new environment where everything was new was my biggest challenge. Despite these challenges, I gave all my effort as soon as I arrived here. I attended English language classes at Wintec (centre for languages), to improve my language and continue my study. I always loved to study and my dream was to work as a healthcare professional. It has always been my dream to enter a field where I am able to help others. I was always fascinated with the sciences, and I slowly developed a passion for nursing.

I remember attending and working hard to learn the English language. With the help of my teachers and friends I was able to complete up to level 5. However, all the difficulties and challenges encouraged me to focus and work extra hard to become the best version of myself and to never give up. After completing my English language journey, I started to attend pathway course at wintec to help me get the credit I need to enrol into Bachelor of Nursing. I strived for the best grades in each assessment during my nursing studies because I knew that it would make my parents proud and remind them the sacrifices they made were for a worthwhile purpose.

Ever since I can recall I have always felt an obligation to become the best person that I can be, not only for myself but also to repay this generous country for providing my family with valuable opportunities. Living in New Zealand has provided my siblings and I with numerous opportunities, including access to a high-quality education and a promising future. It meant that I could pursue my dream of becoming a nurse.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I wanted to be a nurse from a young age. Nursing is a wonderful career choice, full of opportunities, diverse, rewarding and challenging. In this position, I hope to increase my knowledge while providing help and improvements to common problems. In the long run, I aspire to contribute significantly to my nursing career development and optimisation to create something that would improve the lives of thousands. In the future I want to be a special diabetes nurse and help people manage their diabetes.



MY MESSAGE

Time management is crucial during studies, so schedule your day properly and make the most of your free time. Having a hobby that aligns with your field of study can also contribute to being motivated to study.

LIBAN YASIN MIRE

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Electrical Engineering

Tertiary education institution:
Waikato Institute of technology

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Solarzero NZ



MY MESSAGE to our Somali students

I would like to encourage my fellow Somali youth to give priority to education. Learning something new will always have its challenges. Choosing something you are passionate about helps. Take the opportunity to learn from your mistakes. Put your trust in Allah and believe in yourself. Don't forget who you are and where you came from.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

After graduating high school I wanted to pursue higher education. Engineering was something that I had in mind since very young age ,I would see myself repairing electrical appliances at home until I became the first person to call upon if electrical fault happens at home. It excites me to pursue a professional career which will give many opportunities . I also enjoy myself to think out of the box and apply them in real world problems Despite having that dream in high school mathematics and physics were never my favourite subjects. I started Wintec and did one year certificate of Electrical Engineering which helped me get the credit I needed to get into my degree, despite the hurdles and the challenges that presented themselves along the way. This could never have happened without Allah`s mercy and compassion. I would like to thank my parents for their love and sacrifice over the years and how they value education. They instilled in me the love of learning and understanding that hard work and dedication pays off Alhamdulillah.



Liban at work using drone to assess the roof condition, spacing and the roof pitch.



MY FUTURE PLANS

In the future I may go back to studies to continue on to pursuing my master`s degree or perhaps a PhD in Electrical Engineering.

Qualification gained:
Bachelor of Science

Tertiary education institution:
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2021

Place of employment:
Australian Clinical Labs
- Melbourne

MAYMUNA ABDI



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamualaikum everyone, my name is Maymuna Abdi and I completed a Bachelor of Science degree back in 2021. Education has always played a significant role in my life, and my parents have always emphasized the importance of pursuing higher education. During my time at university, I learned valuable skills like discipline, patience, time management, and Sabr (perseverance), which I now apply in my everyday life. It was definitely a challenging journey with early mornings, late nights, and plenty of sacrifices.

I overcame all the challenges university threw at me by reminding myself why I'm here and putting all my trust in Allah SWT.



MY MESSAGE:

My advice to the Somali youth is the importance of surrounding yourself with a supportive circle of people and to stay connected to your faith. Whenever you feel lost or face challenges, remember the beautiful words of Allah SWT "Verily, with hardship comes ease" (Quran, 94:5). It's a powerful reminder that tough times won't last forever and better days are ahead. Assalamualaikum and good luck to the younger generation.



MY FUTURE PLANS

I aspire to advance in my career while also contributing to my community. Fulfilling my dream of assisting my Muslim community and supporting the next generation in achieving their goals is important to me.



NADIFA SULEIMAN

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Science (Technology) Molecular
and Cellular Biology Minor in Psychology

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Analytica Laboratories/ALS Limited



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Pursuing a science degree like Bachelor of Science (Technology) was a challenging but rewarding experience for me. Even though it wasn't my first option, I was determined to pursue my interests and succeed in my studies. I was particularly drawn to the combination of molecular and cellular biology with psychology because I was fascinated by the ways in which these fields intersect and can be used to better understand the human body and mind. I'm thrilled to have completed my studies in

bioinformatics and community psychology. I believe that these fields hold great promise for improving human health and well-being, and I'm eager to explore the ways in which I can apply my knowledge and skills to make a positive impact in the world. Whether I'm working in a research lab, a healthcare setting, or a community organisation, I know that my education will provide me with the tools and knowledge I need to succeed.

MY MESSAGE

to my fellow somalis

Don't compare yourself to others. It's easy to fall into the trap of comparing yourself to others, but everyone has their own unique journey. Instead of focusing on what others are doing, focus on your own path and what

makes you happy. Remember that success is subjective, and that everyone defines it differently. By staying true to yourself and your values, you can create a fulfilling life that's uniquely yours.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

My future aspirations are deeply rooted in my desire to grow my knowledge and use it to help my community. I am committed to staying engaged with the people around me, listening to their needs, and finding ways to make a positive impact. Whether it's through volunteering, mentoring, or working in a related field, I believe that I can leverage my skills and knowledge to create meaningful change and contribute to a better world." I am driven by a desire to use science to make a positive difference in the world. Whether it's through research, education, or a related career path, I am committed to using my knowledge and skills to help my community and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.



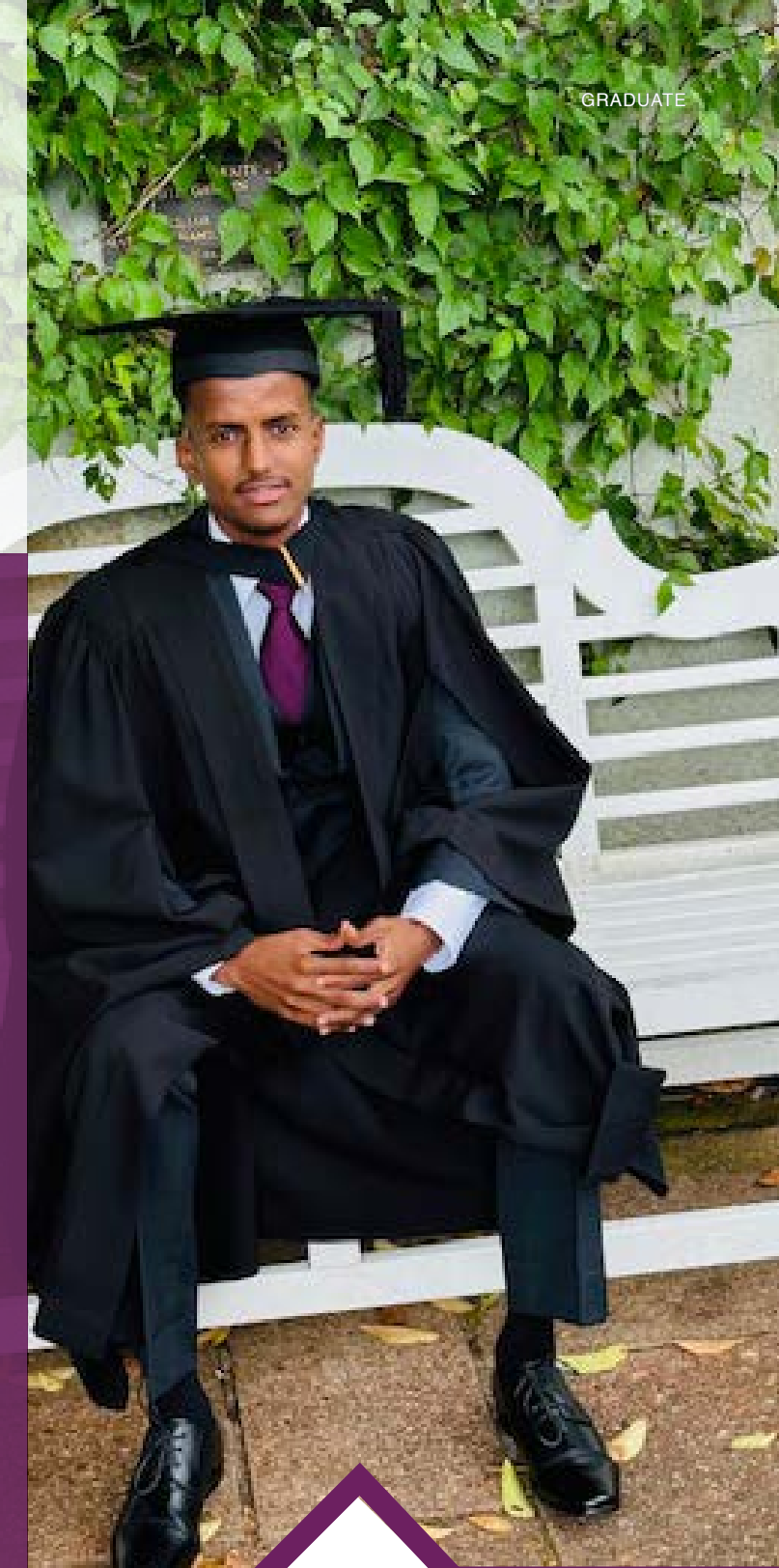
NOOR MIRE

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Computer Science & Mathematics

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
ACM - Hamilton



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Education is a powerful tool that can change the trajectory of our lives. When I started my educational journey in New Zealand I was aware of the challenges ahead of me and I knew I had to do a lot of work to catch up with my peers. Moving from a foreign country meant that I had to overcome barriers such as learning a new language, adjusting to a whole new education system and balancing living in a new environment

Graduating from high school alongside my peers was a significant milestone in my educational journey and it allowed me to make the necessary steps in preparing for my future qualifications.

Once I completed my secondary education I took some time and thought about the kind of future that would be suitable for me, one that would lead me to a fulfilling and happy life. I considered multiple

promising options that all seemed to hold a bright future for me before enrolling at the University of Waikato.

I knew that the journey towards tertiary education would not be easy, and I hoped and prayed that it would be worth the struggle eventually. I believed that getting an education would provide me with new opportunities and put me in a better position to gain a successful job in my chosen field. I decided to pursue a career in Computing and Mathematics as I felt it would be fulfilling and at the same time I would have a chance to help people in the community.

My journey has been eventful, with a variety of challenges, detours and sacrifices. Since enrolling at the University of Waikato, I have learned a lot academically and through various practical experiences in the course of my studies. Being in

University has expanded my views and the way I perceive the world. It has allowed me to build on my self-confidence and gain critical interpersonal skills.

Studying computer science is not easy, especially when you are learning a new programming language. It is important to be motivated and have a positive mindset.

My educational journey would not be complete without my supportive parents and family.

I would not be here today without them, so dear mom and dad, thank you for being my mentors, guiding me through the obstacles of life and being my best friends whenever I was in need. Thank you for your immense care, love and support. I am forever grateful to you!

To my beautiful siblings, thank you for always being there for me and always having my best interest at heart.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Programming is a kind of communication with a computer, which can happen through various languages and methods. In the long term, I aim to become a senior programmer and take on leadership roles within the company that I am working for. I believe that my technical skills, combined with my passion for technology, will enable me to succeed in this role and make a meaningful contribution to the competitive world of programming. I am excited about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and I am confident that I have the skills and determination to succeed in this role.

MY MESSAGE

My advice to anyone studying would be to spend time with people who have similar values and goals. We are influenced greatly by the people we surround ourselves with. So choose to surround yourself with people who will inspire you to become a better person and motivate you to achieve your full potential. I would also advise anyone studying to never give up and keep persevering through difficult challenges. Everyone's journey throughout education is different, never give up and try harder when you fail. Everything will work out well in the end!

RIDWAAN OMAR

Qualifications gained:

Bachelor of Business – Marketing and Supply Chain Management

Tertiary education institution:

University of Waikato

Year of graduation:

2023

Place of employment:

Inland Revenue



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

In my final year of high school, I applied for a Bachelor of Biomedical Science at UOA. However, upon being accepted, I quickly realised it wasn't for me. Feeling lost and uncertain, I found myself grappling with the daunting question of what I truly wanted to pursue. In a bid for security, I turned to accounting as my major, believing it to be a safe and stable career choice. Yet, to my surprise, after delving into it during my first year, I discovered it wasn't my passion. There I was back to square one! But this time, I went through my first-year papers and found myself loving Marketing and Supply Chain Management. I could actually envision myself thriving in the career paths that these majors offered.

So, I bet you can tell that just in the first year, I had gone through a whirlwind of experiences. Despite this, my journey through university has been nothing short of amazing. Along the way, I've discovered so much about myself—unveiling strengths and resilience I never knew I had. Through challenges and



FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I firmly believe in creating my own opportunities rather than just waiting for them to come my way. Especially with the job market being the state it is, I've actually taken matters into my own hands. So while juggling my full time role at Inland Revenue, I'm also hustling as a freelance digital marketer and providing services in web-development, SEO, Google Ads, etc to a couple small businesses here in Hamilton. All I can really say is who knows where that will take me, time and inshallah fate will tell :)

achievements, I've gained a newfound confidence that has truly shaped who I am today.

This growth wasn't just by chance; it came from a mix of leadership positions, work experiences, and of course the coursework that pushed me to my limits. Throughout my university journey, I've assumed numerous leadership roles, each offering its own set of challenges and opportunities for growth. From serving as the vice-president of the Waikato African Student Association to taking on the role of marketing manager for the Management Communications Student Association, I've had the chance to develop essential skills for my hopes to hop into future managerial roles or entrepreneurial endeavours. These experiences have provided profound insights for me into leadership, teamwork, and effective communication, shaping me to be more confident and ready to tackle whatever lies ahead inshallah.

My memorable achievements throughout university include being awarded the Waikato Muslim Association Scholarship, consistently ranking in the top 15% of my course, and experiencing personal growth that is equally significant, even if not as tangible. While I recognise that I've mentioned growth quite a bit, it really is such a huge achievement to me. So these experiences have definitely broadened my perspectives, allowing me to see my future through a new lens. Overall, my university journey has been a path of self-discovery and empowerment, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

And lastly, I want to extend a heartfelt shoutout to my hooyo for all the sacrifices and unwavering support she has provided. She has been the driving force behind all of my achievements throughout my studies, and I am endlessly grateful for her love and encouragement. None of this would have been possible without her by my side. Hooyo, thank you for everything!



MY MESSAGE

I understand that starting tertiary education can feel overwhelming, especially as a school leaver. You might even have some doubts about taking that new step in your educational journey. But let me tell you, university is more than just lectures and textbooks – it's a journey where you'll discover yourself on a whole new level. University equips you with all the tools and guidance you need to sculpt the version of yourself you want to become. I want to emphasise that it's not just professional growth you are investing in; it's also a personal growth. So, do not hesitate and enroll!

Qualification gained:
Bachelor of Business
Major in Digital
business minor in
strategic Management.

**Tertiary education
institution:**
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Cornell Diesel systems
(Melbourne)



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

My future goal is one day be running my own department and head manager of a Data analyst team at the company I am working for currently which is the biggest diesel company in the Southern Hemisphere located in Melbourne Australia.

ABDIWAHAB FARAH

Qualification gained:
Bachelor of Pharmacy with Honours

Tertiary education institution:
University of Auckland

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
Dawson Road Pharmacy

OMAR M ABDULLAHI



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamu Alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh, My Name is Omar Abdullahi. I am part of the 2023 graduating class. I have always had a passion for studying Business and having an entrepreneurial mindset since I was a child. so I somehow knew what I was going to do now it was about what I wanted to specialize in I had a passion for numbers and the strategic side of running a business so I put those two components together which was digital business as my major so I can get into being a data analyst and minoring in strategic management learning the strategic side of running a company. I have faced many problems and challenges, one being doing university through COVID-19 but it was a life lesson where I learned what it means to be resilient and always have the mindset of getting through any challenge that comes your way.

MY MESSAGE

One advice that I have always been given and that I want to pass on the saying "Networking is your Net Worth"

It is a very important aspect in this day and age to Network this could be anything future jobs network with your class peers volunteer in your faculty it will help build your career.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I came to New Zealand in 2015 and I started foundation studies at Auckland university which allowed me to gain University entrance. Pharmacy was not my first choice, initially I wanted to study health science and public health, after I completed first year health science I realised that I wanted to practice clinically therefore I applied for Pharmacy.

MY MESSAGES

- Recognise if stating Tertiary education is suitable for you.
- Stick with it and complete that degree or course.
- Try to pick a pick a major or a degree with clear purpose and understanding of what are you going to do with the degree and career implications.
- Again I want to emphasise the importance of finishing any course or degree you start.

ABDALLA HASHI FARAH



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I am humbled to be included in this graduation journal and partake alongside these other successful stories. My name is Abdall Hashi and I arrived in New Zealand along with my family in 2015 as a teenager meant I had less time to adjust to the schooling system in a new country. I began my education journey at Avondale College, I then enrolled at Auckland University after high school where I spent a year not knowing if I was on the right track not knowing what I exactly wanted to do, and if a Bachelor of Science was for me. I had a stroke of luck when I attended an Engineering industry Expo at Unitec Institute of Technology talking to industry seniors, engineering practitioners and former students about their industry experience. I made the choice of switching my education provider from Auckland University to Unitec and the faculty I was enrolled in from Bachelor of Science to Civil engineering. Firstly, I want to say thanks to Allah the Almighty SWT for giving me this ability and allowing me to be a role model and inspire those around me. Secondly, I want to thank my mom who has inspired, motivated, and disciplined me throughout all the good and difficult times when I needed words of encouragement and useful advice. I can humbly and genuinely say without her, I wouldn't be the man I am today.

My passion for problem-solving and figuring out how things work, along with a curious mindset led me to engineering. I also was influenced by my mom to go along with my studies. For instance, my mom always insisted that I should attend university and make something of myself, with that and her education background I was easily influenced by her a former school teacher and deputy high school principal in Mogadishu. With the help of Almighty Allah, I have achieved my goal of becoming a Civil Engineer. Unitec gave me a lot of potential to hone my hobbies & interests and get valuable experience in the industry.

Overall, my greatest achievement I would say is becoming a better person during my journey of self-discovery. I have learned to understand that everything happens for a reason that each event has its purpose and each setback has its lessons. I have also come to understand that failure whether it's individual, professional, or even a spiritual kind, is vital/ important for our personal growth. I was able to embrace what I have learned from my experience and use it to grow.



Qualifications gained:
Bachelors of Civil Engineering Technology

Name of tertiary institution:
Unitec Institute of Technology

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
LeadAlliance (piritahi)



MY MESSAGE

A word of advice to my fellow Somali students is to never give up and to keep going till the end. There will be barriers along the way, getting a bad grade isn't the end of the world. Don't stress over something you can't control remember to learn & to embrace challenges rather than avoiding them. Don't forget getting an education is so important as you will gain useful skills and knowledge.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

The future for me whether it is personally or professionally is to continue to develop and learn, Insha' Allah. As I grow my tenure in construction, I may eventually want to pursue postgraduate study and self-employment.

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Engineering Technology

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Auckland

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
Ghella Abergeldie JV (Central Interceptor)

ABDULAZIZ HASSAN

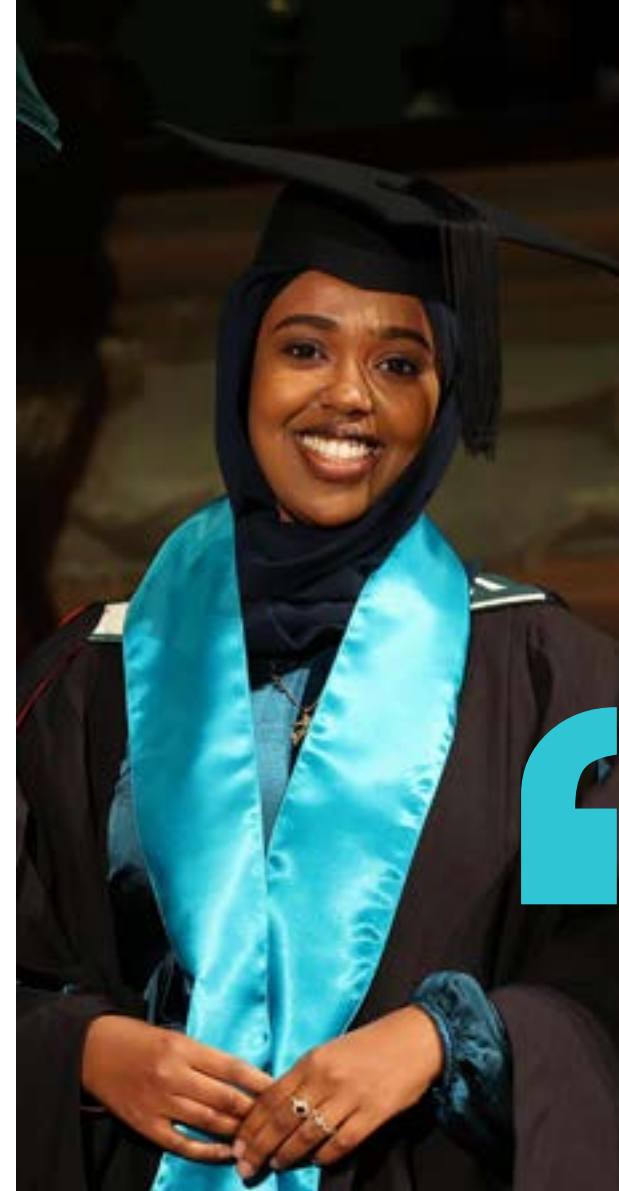
MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

My first year was when I faced my biggest challenge as a student, I was working at the same time which made it difficult to manage my time. Additionally, the second challenge was when we were studying at home during COVID-19 with no Uni facilities to use e.g., Library, software, etc. Fortunately, I am deeply thankful to my family and without their support/guidance, this journey would not have been possible.

I've wanted to become a Civil Engineer. In this position, I hope and try every day to increase my technical knowledge while providing solutions and improvements to common engineering problems.

MY MESSAGES

- Do not give up on studying, even when it gets hard. Always remind yourself of the end result.
- Go to the library so when you're surrounded by people who are studying, you'll feel inspired to study. This will lead you avoid being a lazy student.
- Ask for help when you need it and don't be shy or hesitate to ask your teachers or parents.
- Last but not least, don't forget your parent's efforts and do your best to show them how genuine you're and make them pleased so they can be proud of you.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalaamu alaikum My name is Deqa Warsame. My parents moved to New Zealand in 1994. I was born and brought up in New Zealand. During my schooling, I lacked a clear idea of what I wanted to study. After much contemplation on my career path, I made

the decision to pursue a bachelor's degree in teaching (Early Childhood Education). I always knew I wanted to work with children, coupled with a keen interest in child development which ultimately led me to this rewarding educational path.

MY MESSAGE

Stay organised keep track of assignments, exams and deadlines and connect with your classmates and always ask for help from your lectures, they are always there to help.

DEQA WARSAME

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)

Name of tertiary institution:
Unitec Institute of Technology

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
New Shoots Childrens Centre



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

At the moment my goal is to complete my full teacher registration and inshallah my long-term goal is to open my own childcare centre.



MY CHALLENGE

As I took a long gap year after high school, it was challenging getting back into study mode as I was working full-time and I lost the study habits I acquired in school, but alhamdulillah, I overcame this with discipline, setting goals, and support from my family I was able to push through.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

In the long run, I would like to become a Senior Project Engineer. I aspire to contribute significantly to this field of development and optimization to create something that would genuinely improve the lives of thousands.

FATHI SHEIKH

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor's Degree of Health Science, Occupational Therapy

Tertiary education institution:
Auckland University of Technology

Year of graduation:
2023



MY MESSAGE

To my fellow Somali students and youth considering tertiary education, always remember education is the key to unlocking your potential and shaping a better future. Embrace any opportunity you get with determination and resilience. It might be challenging, but remember, with hard work, dedication and Allah SWT by your side, you can overcome any obstacle. Constantly Seek support from mentors, teachers, and your community, Don't be afraid to dream big and push boundaries. Your education can not only transform your life but also inspire positive change within our community. Always remember to Stay focused, stay motivated, and believe in the power of Allah SWT and your education to make a difference.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamu Alaikum

My name is Fathi Sheikh and I have graduated with a bachelor's degree of health science in occupational therapy.

My Journey towards becoming an Occupational Therapist with a specialization in mental health is deeply rooted in my desire to support my Somali community in addressing the often-overlooked topic of mental health.

As a Mental Health Occupational Therapist, my role revolves around supporting individuals facing mental health challenges. I assess their needs, develop individualized treatment plans, and provide therapeutic interventions to help them regain independence in daily life. This includes focusing on life skills, emotional regulation, and social integration. I also assist in managing and preventing relapses, whether in inpatient or community settings. In inpatient care, I work closely with individuals during their hospital stay, whereas in the community, my aim is to help them reintegrate and thrive in their daily lives. My ultimate goal is to improve mental well-being and empower individuals to lead fulfilling lives despite their mental health difficulties.



FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

My interests are deeply rooted in my passion for giving back to my community and serving as an inspiration to the younger generations. Alhamdulillah, I am driven by the incredible opportunities that have been granted to me, opportunities I believe should be accessible to all. My family's consistent support has been my strength, allowing me to pursue my ambitions. My journey is shaped by the inspiration I draw from the remarkable Somali graduates who have paved the way for me, breaking barriers and creating positive change. Their stories remind me of the impact one person can have when they are determined and focused on uplifting their community.

What draws me to this field is not only the opportunity to make a huge difference in the lives

of those who need it most, but also the chance to be a source of inspiration within my community. Mental health remains a taboo topic in many cultures, including the Somali community. I believe that by pursuing this underrepresented field of work as a Muslim Somali, I can break down the barriers and stigmas that surround mental health. I want to show individuals from my community that they can pursue careers in mental health, that they can overcome the challenges and stigmas associated with it, and that they too, can be a part of the solution.

In the future I aim to be able to actively contribute to my community's improvement. I want to inspire young people by demonstrating to them that their aspirations are possible despite the obstacles they encounter through guidance and education.

KHEIRIYAH OSMAN

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Business

Name of tertiary institution:
Auckland University of Technology

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Concentrix



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Hello, my name is Kheiriyah Osman, and my journey has been a testament to resilience. Arriving in a new country as an immigrant, I faced the daunting challenge of not just adapting to a new culture but also overcoming language barriers. Determined to carve a future brighter than my past, I immersed myself in language classes, tirelessly practising day and night.

Despite the initial struggles, I gradually uncovered my purpose, discovered my love for business, and decided

to pursue a degree as a bachelor in business. I enrolled in AUT, juggling multiple jobs to support myself and fund my education. My days were a balancing act—attending classes, working late nights, and dedicating weekends to studying. Yet, the fire within me never wavered.

With each obstacle, I grew stronger. Encouraged by mentors who saw my potential and embraced opportunities for growth, I participated in an internship as a digital marketer and networking events within my field.

The road to graduation was fraught with challenges, but each hurdle was a lesson in perseverance.

My graduation day wasn't just the culmination of a degree; it was the triumph of resilience, hard work, and an unyielding spirit. My journey, from an immigrant facing uncertainty to a graduate adorned in a cap and gown, served as an inspiration not only to myself but to many others who dared to dream despite adversities.



MY MESSAGE

Dear Somali students, Congratulations on considering tertiary education! As you embark on this incredible journey, here are some words of advice. Dream big but remember to plan strategically, blending ambition with practical steps. Your Somali heritage is a strength, so embrace it proudly in your educational pursuits. Seek guidance from mentors and professionals, explore your passions, and stay resilient through challenges. Build networks, maintain balance, and celebrate every achievement, no matter how small. Stay open-minded, as higher education offers diverse perspectives. And it's okay not to have everything figured out; this journey is about exploration and self-discovery. Remember, your pursuit of knowledge isn't just for you but for the betterment of your community. Best of luck on this rewarding academic adventure!



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I recently received my business degree; therefore, I have a few great interests and ideas. To begin with, I find the concept of launching my own business incredibly appealing. Generating fresh concepts and turning them into reality seems like a lot of fun. Then there's financial matters; I'm considering a career in banking or investing, where I can figure out prudent methods to manage finances. It resembles solving a riddle in a way, and I enjoy difficulties. Additionally, I enjoy branding and marketing. Producing goods, marketing them, and building a strong brand seem like great ideas to me. It all comes down to making creative connections with individuals.

I also enjoy taking leadership and managing a group of people. Gaining prominence in a firm and moving up the

corporate ladder seem like great goals. In the future, I hope to pursue further education, such as a master's degree, in order to expand my career opportunities. Alternatively, I may launch my own company and see how it does. Obtaining additional certifications in project management or finance might also be beneficial. In addition,

I'm considering working abroad, maybe for multinational corporations. Additionally, it seems intriguing to combine business with improving the Somali community. And if it's more in line with my interests, I might even change careers altogether. I am eager to explore my potential in the vast realm of business!

MONA MUSE



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamualaikum, my name is Mona Muse and I am a registered Nurse, I have completed a bachelor's degree in health science nursing as well as a postgraduate study in the advanced practice of Nursing. Finding what out what I wanted to do was no easy task, during the end of high school, I had felt stuck and uncertain about what path I wanted to take for my career, I was unsure on what I was passionate about, the pressure to make a choice was daunting, so I had opted to apply to multiple different courses in the hopes of discovering my true passion, this journey of exploration not only allowed me to weigh out the pros and cons of my options but also allowed me to identify my genuine interests, ultimately guiding me towards a career path that felt right for me. Nursing stood out to me due to the various different avenues it can take you, this career being so broad had captured my attention greatly. In my speciality as a PACU (Post-Anaesthetic Care Unit) nurse, I have dedicated my career to providing high-quality, compassionate care to patients during the crucial moments of their recovery. I grew a passion for delivering one-to-one care, ensuring that each individual receives the attention and support they need during the post-operative period, going into surgery is extremely scary and often times individuals wake up in PACU feeling vulnerable, helpless and alone. In my unit family members are

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Health Science Nursing,
Postgraduate study in Advance
Nursing practice

Name of tertiary institution:
Auckland University of Technology
(AUT), University of Auckland

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
Auckland district health board

unable to come to the bedside due to the sensitive nature of post op recovery and so we take on the crucial role of managing not only the physical but also the emotional pain of our patients. It can be a challenging task, as patients wake up in an unfamiliar environment, often disoriented and in discomfort. Providing comfort and reassurance becomes vital in our care, as we step in as a source of support in the absence of family. This role ensures that patients not only recover physically but also feel emotionally supported during this critical phase of their healthcare journey. I've had the privilege of providing care to patients that are of similar background to me in recovery, and it's deeply fulfilling to witness the comfort they feel when I look after them. In those moments, as a healthcare professional; I become a source of familiarity for them in a potentially vulnerable time. Being a representative of our community in the healthcare field is extremely important, as it instils a sense of trust especially in the setting of healthcare, where trust and understanding are crucial. It reminds me that diversity and inclusivity in healthcare can make a world of difference for patients, fostering a healing environment where they feel valued and cared for. Alhamdulillah, I appreciate my family especially my parents for instilling me with confidence and believing that I can achieve anything.



MY MESSAGE

To my fellow youth/Somalis that are thinking about delving into a career whether in health care or elsewhere, when you embark on this journey, always maintain a strong relationship with Allah, and keep your 5 daily prayers, remember to stay dedicated to your goals, work smart, and never underestimate the value of education. Embrace the responsibility of being a symbol of inspiration and change within your community and beyond, your determination, compassion, and cultural understanding will be invaluable in your role, and never forget the difference you can make in the lives of others. Maintain a balance between your academic pursuits, work, and personal life, prioritising self-care, as it's important for maintaining your well-being and serving others effectively. The journey to tertiary education in healthcare will at times be challenging, but with faith, consistency, and the ability to overcome obstacles, you can achieve your aspirations and contribute to the well-being of your community.

MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I aim to not only provide exceptional care but also continue to be a representation for others, inspiring them to pursue excellence in their medical careers. I aspire to continue to help patients in their recovery journey, offering not only medical expertise but also unwavering support and empathy to promote their healing and overall well-being. I aspire to take an active role in improving the well-being of my community by actively participating in outreach programs and initiatives. My goal is to one day provide effective health care in Somalia as well as become a travel nurse and gain a wider scope of experience in health care inshaAllah.

NUWAL HUSSEIN SALAD

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Health Science

Name of tertiary institution:
Auckland University of Technology

Year of graduation:
2021



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I pursued a Bachelor of Health Science to gain a comprehensive understanding of diverse aspects within the realm of health and well-being. The program's versatility was a key highlight, allowing me to explore various subjects rather than confining me to a singular field. My career ambition is centred around making a positive impact in the healthcare sector, and I aspire to contribute to the well-being of both individuals and

communities. Throughout my academic journey, I excelled in research related to mental health and ethnic backgrounds, deepening my interest in Somali mental health. A shared challenge, familiar to many, was the demanding academic workload, including the dreaded assignments and exams that often translated into late nights. However, I successfully navigated this challenge by honing effective time management skills.

MY MESSAGES

To all our Somali students and youth contemplating tertiary education, envision education as a captivating journey or embarking on an adventure. View your destination not merely as a degree but as a gateway to knowledge, growth, and endless possibilities. Embrace the excitement of delving into subjects that fuel your passion. Never shy away from asking questions—always seek answers. Embrace failure as a stepping stone toward personal and academic development. In the pursuit of knowledge, prioritize your well-being. Establish a balance between your studies and self-care. Prioritize

sufficient sleep, plan your tasks ahead of time, engage in physical activities like walks or exercise. Remember to stay connected to Allah, drawing strength from faith. Above all, internalize the idea that knowledge is power. Let your educational journey not only shape your academic prowess but also empower you to contribute positively to your community and beyond. The path you're embarking on is not just about acquiring a degree; it's about the transformative journey toward becoming a knowledgeable and empowered individual.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I am passionate about health science, particularly in the context of mental health. I am fascinated by the complexities of mental well-being and recognize the crucial cross over of mental health in both Islamic and Western perspectives. My future aspirations involve actively contributing to destigmatizing mental health in my community. Addressing the prevalent taboos surrounding

mental health, I aim to facilitate open conversations, help individuals grasp fundamental concepts of mental health, and dismantle barriers that stop discussions or acknowledgment of mental health issues. I plan to engage in community events, workshops, and educational courses dedicated to fostering a better understanding of mental health.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

My family and I moved to New Zealand from Malaysia in mid-2019. When I arrived, I encountered a language barrier because my ability to speak English was limited. I dedicated myself to mastering the language for six months, eventually receiving the IELTS qualification. I successfully earned a degree in Health Management, obtaining broad insights into the subtle dynamics of healthcare management. Throughout my academic career, I actively sought opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world circumstances. Participating in internships and initiatives enabled me to make a significant contribution to the field.

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Health Science (Health Management)

Name of tertiary institution:
Auckland University of Technology

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Oceania Healthcare (internship)

SHAMSUDIN ISMAIL



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I was interested in the healthcare sector since childhood, particularly midwifery. I enrolled in Wintec city campus in the year 2019. I did two levels of English language studies, foundation pathway and eventually entry into Bachelor of Nursing. As an adult learner and also as mother of two, it was challenging for me to study. It was not easy for me especially working on assignments as I always needed extra help. I was lucky the campus had student learning services which aided me to get through my studies. As a mum I spent most of my time doing school learning this meant missing out time with the family. Looking back now as a graduate I believe it was worth it as nothing comes without sacrifice. Am grateful for the support and patience that I got from my family.

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Nursing

Name of tertiary institution:
Wintec

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Te Whatu Ora, Waikato DHB

FATUMA MAWOL



MY MESSAGE

Time is your most valuable asset in tertiary education. Make good use of it. Set clear goals, manage your time wisely, and take advantage of every opportunity for learning and improvement. Connect with mentors, create a network, and make the most of this important time in your life. Your decisions now affect your future.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

In the future, my goals in health management include helping to establish and implement effective healthcare policies and initiatives. I'm especially interested in using technology to improve healthcare delivery systems and patient outcomes. I am dedicated to lifelong learning and remaining current on evolving trends and developments in healthcare administration.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I currently work at Women assessment unit: E2 women's postnatal: It is a great area to be as I would love to pursue midwifery God willing. I would like to stay in maternity setting and to gain skills and knowledge.



MY MESSAGE

Education is the key, and I would advise the Somali youth to study and follow their dreams as we are in a country that is full of chances and opportunities. Tertiary education is not easy it needs commitment and mind-set. It is vital for the youth to understand the career pathway that they want to choose. This will enable them to make wise choices.

SHUKRI YUSUF



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Assalamu Alaikum, my name is Shukri and I have graduated with a Bachelor of Health Science Nursing degree. I chose to study nursing and work in the mental health industry because of my unwavering passion for always helping others. It's a calling that resonates deeply with me, and I'm committed to making a positive impact on people's lives through healthcare.

I chose to work in the field of mental health because I'm deeply committed to destigmatising mental distress, particularly within my culture. I have a profound desire

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Health Science Nursing

Tertiary education institution:
Auckland University of Technology

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
ADHB



MY MESSAGE

To our Somali students and youth embarking on the journey of tertiary education, remember that knowledge is a powerful tool that can shape your future and positively impact your community. Your pursuit of higher education is not only a personal achievement but also a step toward building a brighter future for Somalia. Embrace the opportunities and be relentless in your pursuit of knowledge. Connect with Allah, keep striving and stay inspired.

to spread awareness about mental health, with the goal of normalising conversations around it. My passion extends to advocating for marginalised communities, particularly refugees who have fled their home countries in search of safety, offering them support, and guiding them toward recovery. By fostering a safer, more understanding community for individuals living with mental health conditions, I aim to empower them to believe in their own capacity for recovery and lead purposeful lives. My aspiration is to break down the barriers that prevent open dialogues about mental health and ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, receives the support and

understanding they deserve.

Additionally, my decision was driven by a strong desire to make my parents proud and express my gratitude for their unwavering support. While I recognise that I can never truly repay them for everything they've done, I believe that a career in nursing allows me to give back and contribute to the well-being of others, which is a meaningful way to honor their sacrifices and love. My educational and career aspirations in nursing are grounded in these motivations, aiming to not only provide compassionate care but also to make my parents proud of the choices I've made



FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

One of my most profound interests and future aspirations revolves around the desire to give back to my community. I have always been drawn to the idea of returning home to assist my fellow brothers and sisters. Whether it's through initiatives that enhance access to healthcare, education, or economic opportunities, I envision a future where I can play an active role in uplifting the community that I belong to. This aspiration is rooted in a deep sense of responsibility and a strong connection to my roots. It's a dream that inspires me to work hard, gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make a meaningful impact, and eventually contribute to the betterment of my homeland.

ABDIFATAH HASSAN

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Accounting and Taxation and minoring in Information System

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Canterbury

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Audit NZ



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

When I arrived in New Zealand, I was enrolled at Hagley High College and completed my high school education there. Subsequently, I pursued further studies at the University of Canterbury, where I earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a major in Accounting and Taxation and a minor in Information Systems. During my penultimate year of studies, I began attending career workshops & events, networking with individuals in relevant industries, and participating in activities with university clubs, such as serving as the

treasurer for the university football club. This allowed me to learn about the industry and the various roles and opportunities available, leading me to apply for different companies. During this period, I was fortunate enough to secure an internship with a public auditing firm which provided me with valuable hands-on experience. This internship ultimately paved the way for me to secure a full-time graduate role as an assistant auditor with the same organization this year.



FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

As a recent graduate in this field, I aim to capitalize on all the available opportunities within the business sector to enhance my knowledge and skills. My objective is to make a meaningful impact in the accounting field and contribute to the community. Ultimately, I aspire to attain full qualification as a Chartered Accountant, continually advancing my personal and professional development.



MY MESSAGE

My message to my fellow young Somalis is to seize the opportunities presented to us by this country with both hands. By doing so, we can put ourselves in a position where we are able to support our families and communities, whether they are back home or here. While each journey may not always be easy for everyone, and challenges are inevitable, remember that with time, effort, and the help of Allah, everything is possible, and you are not alone. Don't be afraid of failure; instead, embrace it as a steppingstone to success.

MOHAMED JAMA

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Teaching

Tertiary education institution:
University of Waikato

Year of graduation:
2023

Place of employment:
Rhode Street School



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Kia ora and Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Nau mai, haere mai welcome to my education journey and adventure.

First and foremost I thank Allah SWT for blessing me with my past and present and all of the challenges and opportunities that he gave me.

I'm Mohamed Jama, 24 years old, and I completed my Bachelor of Teaching degree in Primary Education in 2023. Since immigrating to New Zealand as

MY MESSAGE

To my fellow Somali students, prioritize maintaining your faith (Deen) throughout your academic journey. Remember that despite any challenges or hardships you encounter, Allah (SWT) will provide guidance. Additionally, I advise entering university with a clear understanding of your desired field of study to avoid wasting precious time and effort. Furthermore, recognize that your career choice is yours alone, and do not allow anyone to discourage you from pursuing your aspirations.

a refugee in 2005 to seek assistance for my skin condition, my family and I have been fortunate to build a better life and access more opportunities.

Life can be interpreted and described in a variety of ways, but my life is not that of the typical person who leads a carefree lifestyle and is able to act without hesitation since their body is not impacted by any condition. Transitioning to the University of Waikato, I faced the challenge of balancing my tertiary education with managing my rare skin condition, Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB). While I received immense support during my 13 years of schooling, adjusting to university life proved difficult, leading to challenges in prioritizing my skin care amidst changing routines and academic demands. Despite

the struggles, I remain determined to find a balance that allows me to excel academically while ensuring my skin receives the care it needs.

My decision to pursue a teaching degree is fueled by my mother's sacrifices and unwavering support as I navigated life with a rare skin condition. Witnessing her dedication inspired me to repay her kindness and fulfill her hopes by becoming the person she always wanted me to be. Her guidance shaped my desire to empower others and make a positive impact through education, driving me to dedicate myself to helping students achieve their goals.

Alhamdulillah I was fortunate to find a job within the primary education sector. I am currently working as a year 7 & 8 teacher within my city.



MY FUTURE PLANS

My future goal is to utilize my teaching degree to travel globally, expanding my teaching experience while immersing myself in diverse cultures. Additionally, I aim to enhance my qualifications within the teaching sector to access various teaching opportunities.



MOHAMED WARSAME

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor's degree in health science

Name of tertiary institution:
Massey University Palmerston North

Year of graduation:
2021

MY MESSAGE

I am Abdirahim, a former Somali refugee who arrived in New Zealand in 2014 from Malaysia. After arriving here I started studying English at level 3. After completing my English course, I enrolled in the Social Practice programme at Unitec in 2016. I was supposed to finish the programme in 2019 but due to health issues I took a three- year break and resumed my studies in 2023.

Throughout my journey I faced lots of challenges, including language barrier and family commitments. However, with determination and perseverance, I successfully completed my studies and achieved my dream. I take great pride in being a Social Worker, as it allows me to contribute to both my community and the wider society.



MY MESSAGE

First you know yourself if there are any barriers which would hinder your enthusiasm and personality. If so, evaluate before starting university. Being free from peer pressure and influences are important. Never rely on others for things that are your own responsibility. Remember stress is a fact of challenge life for any important task of our life.

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Social Work

Name of tertiary institution:
UNITEC

Year of graduation:
2024

ABDIRAHIM HILOWLE

MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Looking ahead, my future aspirations revolve around helping my community. I aspire to work with ADHB or Oranga Tamariki in the future, as I am currently employed as an Interpreter in hospitals with Te Whatu Ora, Ministry of Health. Insha Allah, I aim to utilize my skills as a Social Worker within the DHB, continuing to support and serve those in need.

MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

In conclusion, I want to convey a message of encouragement to others. Despite initially struggling with my English proficiency, I refused to be discouraged and worked diligently to improve. Through immense effort and unwavering support, I not only improved my language skills but also obtained my degree. My journey has taught me the importance of perseverance and self-belief, and I am proud of the person I have become today.

MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

Asalam aleykum

I come from Somalia where I finished my education up to High School. Upon arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand in July 2005 I was interested in attending University. Despite facing numerous challenges upon my arrival, I came with dreams of accessing the opportunities available here. My goal was to become a health worker in the health field. Initially, I enrolled in an English course at the Wellington Institute of Technology and undertook the Certificate of University preparation course. Subsequently, in 2008, I commenced a Bachelor of Nursing Degree at the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) but decided to discontinue my studies at the end of my second year due to disillusionment and lack of motivation. However, my previous hard work towards my Nursing degree had not stopped me continuing my studies

alongside the encouragement of my wife. I sought a similar course that I could transfer all my credits from my Nursing degree. Social science was the nearest transferable qualification to align with my nursing credits. Massey's career advisers advised me to finish studying towards the social science degree, but it was not what I desired to study. I took a break to consider what I was interested in studying towards and to ensure my second attempt was not in vain. I chose to study the Bachelor of Health Science, majoring in human health and environment (BHS) at Massey University in 2015 and completed it in 2019 although the nursing credit was not transferable to it. Being a father of young children and studying was not easy. However, I thank Allah who blessed with me with a great wife and aunt as they encouraged me and ensured I never gave up my studies.



ABDIRAHMAN ABDI

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Commerce Major in
Accounting

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Canterbury

Year of graduation:
2022

MY MESSAGE

Stay consistent with studying, make friends who can help you and be passionate about what you plan to study, and things will be easy. It's ok if you're unsure what you want to pick but whatever you do pick try to find something in it to be passionate about. All subjects have wide ranges of jobs that can be done so don't think narrowly.



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

My name is Abdirahman, and I was born and raised in New Zealand. Coming from a family of 6 which I'm the 5th youngest child my older 4 siblings had already received higher education making the whole experience of going for higher education an expectation to me. Originally in the primary/intermediate and secondary school system had placed me in a position which higher education wouldn't be easily accessible straight out of high school. Luckily, I was able to get moved around thanks to persistent communication of my desire to go to university at around year 9 and 10 of high school.

After finishing high school, I found that I really enjoyed accounting as a subject and went straight into university to study accounting further. I chose to study in accounting as it provides a great financial service to others and that it came easy to me.

While I'm lucky to not have any academic challenges while in university, however I did have challenges during and after studies in terms of the choice I have in terms of where I want to take my career post my bachelors.



MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I enjoy playing competitive video games with my speciality being in fighting games. And have won national level tournaments and have placed highly in international tournaments in Australia and Japan and plan to continue pursuing this hobby for as long as I can. and have future aspirations of becoming an academic researcher in the accounting field while also wanting to work in industry to have a firm grip of understanding of the practice of accounting. My wish is to be an academic researcher to help better the bridge of standard financial accounting and other new growing aspects of accounting like social and environmental accounting.

HASSAN ALI HASSAN

Qualifications gained:
Bachelor of Science,
Majoring in Chemistry and
Environmental Science

Name of tertiary institution:
University of Canterbury

Year of graduation:
2022

Place of employment:
Studying Master of Urban
Resilience and Renewal
at University of Canterbury
(MURR)



MY EDUCATION JOURNEY

I moved to New Zealand in December 2014 and began my educational journey at Hagley Community College in 2015. English was my second language, so I enrolled in ESOL. I completed high school in 2018 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in science with majors in Chemistry and Geography from the University of Canterbury in 2022. My educational journey has taught me the importance of determination and hard work in achieving my goals. Challenges I faced included language barriers and adapting to a new education system, but I overcame them through dedication and support. I am passionate about chemistry and geography and aspire to work in an area that combines the two, focusing on environmental research and sustainability.

MY MESSAGE

For Somali students and youth contemplating tertiary education, I offer this concise advice. Embrace diversity and new cultures, as it enriches your experience. Overcoming language barriers is possible with support, so don't be discouraged. Persistence is the cornerstone of success, and your journey becomes more rewarding when you follow your passion. Seek guidance from mentors and advisors to navigate your path effectively. Remember to maintain a balance between

academics and your well-being. Explore opportunities like internships and build a network of peers and professionals. Stay resilient in the face of challenges, as they contribute to your growth. Finally, plan your career goals and the milestones to achieve them, for your education is a valuable investment in your future. Lastly but not least put your trust in God, work hard and embrace your Somali heritage as a wellspring of strength.

MY FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

I am presently enrolled in a Master of Science program in Urban Resilience and Renewal at the university of canterbury. Within this academic pursuit, my primary focus centres on the intricate dynamics between green spaces and their potential in mitigating climate challenges encountered in urban environments. My research specifically delves into the intricate relationship between human activities and the corresponding responses of nature. Through this comprehensive examination, I endeavor to contribute to the formulation of effective policies aimed at addressing these complex urban environmental concerns, ultimately fostering a more sustainable and resilient future.

There are many Somali leaders making significant contributions in their local community here in New Zealand and Australia. Some have even gone back to Somalia to participate in the reconstruction and peace-building efforts in their country of origin.

In this section we celebrate a few of these extraordinary Somali New Zealanders, whose leadership and contributions **make us immensely proud.**

Spotlight on Leaders

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

RECIPIENT 2022

Companion of the Queen's Service Order



FADUMO AHMED, for services to ethnic communities, women and social entrepreneurship

Mrs Fadumo Ahmed has been a community development worker and social entrepreneur for more than 20 years, contributing significantly to the empowerment of ethnic women.

Using her experience as a refugee from Somalia adapting to New Zealand life, Mrs Ahmed created a support network and social business for other refugee and migrant women, founding the New Zealand Ethnic Women Trust (NZEWT) in 2001. She continues as Chair of the NZEWT, a grassroots non-profit organisation run by women, which offers a range of services and activities from classes in English language, computing, health education, family violence awareness, and two playgroups promoting language and cultural heritage. She also established a sewing school in 2007 to assist refugee women and in 2014 established Cottonseed, an environmentally conscious, ethical fashion label whose clothing is designed and produced by migrant and refugee women. Cottonseed has grown to fulfil bulk commercial orders and has created economic pathways for low socio-economic and socially disadvantaged women to earn a living for their families. Mrs Ahmed has been a member of a Muslim women's forum since 2009, engaging in discussions on employment, discrimination and housing, and the Mt Roskill Collective since 2015, a social network supporting communities through initiatives promoting mental health and wellbeing, youth development, parenting and general wellbeing.

Source: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/honours/lists/qb2022-qso>

MEMBER OF THE NEW ZEALAND ORDER OF MERIT

MOHAMED ABDI JAMA,
for services to the Muslim
Community of Canterbury

Mr Mohamed Jama has contributed to the Muslim community of Canterbury for 20 years in his capacity as the President of the Muslim Association of Canterbury (MAC) and President of the Canterbury Somali Community, both since 2002.

Mr Jama, as President of MAC, makes efforts to ensure unity amongst the community who hail from 33 different countries. With the growing Muslim population, he has ensured investment in spaces of worship and communal gathering, investing in Masjid An Nur. He helped source a Homework Centre for refugee children due to students not attending school and needing extra support in the subjects of maths and English. This helped dramatically reduce the rate of students not attending school. After the Canterbury earthquakes, he mobilised his community to provide assistance wherever was needed, including providing meals to emergency responders for many weeks, gathering volunteers to start clearing streets, and a team was set up to visit the homes of elderly to clear their homes. He provided space for 300 people who were unable to return to their homes to stay at Masjid An Nur. Mr Jama was elected for an eighth term as President of MAC following the Christchurch Terror attack in 2019, due to his unifying, calm leadership.



20 years

as the President of the Muslim Association of Canterbury (MAC) and President of the Canterbury Somali Community



33 Countries

communities united

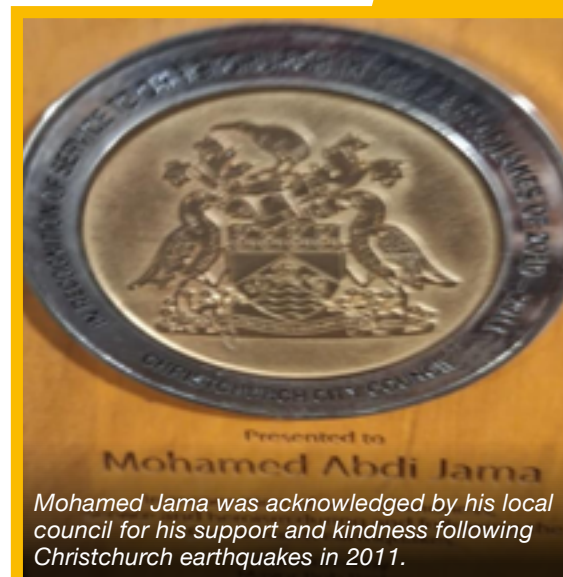


300 people

supported with a space to live



Mohamed Jama being celebrated by his Somali community following his award.



Mohamed Jama was acknowledged by his local council for his support and kindness following Christchurch earthquakes in 2011.

Source: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website
<https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/honours/lists/ny2023-mnzm>

A NEW ZEALAND CITIZEN HELPING HIS BIRTH COUNTRY MOVE FORWARD

By Abdirizak Abdi

HON. ABDIRAHMAN SHEIK, a member of the Federal Parliament of Somalia, is making a significant impact in various ways. He is a dedicated individual with a clear mission.

Prior to his involvement in the Somali Parliament, Abdirahman was renowned for his humanitarian endeavours, particularly in fundraising for impoverished Somalis who required life-saving medical procedures abroad.

Transitioning from a background in humanitarian work and volunteering, Abdirahman is now focused on leading his country towards good governance, justice, and liberation from the violent extremist group, Alshabaab. His commitment and contributions have earned him recognition, including being voted among the top 100 Somali leaders by Somali Leadership Magazine and receiving numerous awards for his service to the community and nation.

Recently, Abdirahman caught the attention of the Somali Parliament Speaker for having the best attendance record in Parliament sessions. This exemplifies Abdirahman's serious approach to his role as a Member of Parliament. He understands the importance of being accountable to the people who elected him to serve the country.



Furthermore, he actively engages with the Somali army fighting against Alshabaab, providing motivation and support on the frontlines.

Due to his accessibility and openness, Abdirahman is frequently interviewed on various topics, including security. While combating Alshabaab remains a priority for Abdirahman, he also recognises the importance of developing accessible and affordable educational institutions to secure a better future for the next generation. He believes that by addressing the neglect of the education sector and effectively managing resources, the senseless conflicts among Somalis can be eliminated. According to him, an educated individual values not only their own life but also the lives of their fellow human beings.

Last year, Abdirahman visited Somali communities in several cities in Australia and New Zealand to provide updates on the situation in Somalia. He believes it is crucial to maintain a connection with his fellow Somalis in these two countries, where he resided for many years before returning to Somalia. He emphasizes the importance of the Somali diaspora's participation in the efforts to rebuild Somalia.

Abdirahman demonstrates exceptional leadership qualities, and with his dedication and the support of individuals like him, we are optimistic that Somalia will overcome its challenges in the near future.

We extend our best wishes to Abdirahman in his endeavours.



LUUL IBRAHIM

A PROMINENT SOMALI LEADER
IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

By Abdirizak Abdi



BACKGROUND

Luul Ibrahim arrived in New Zealand with her family at the age of 8 before migrating to Western Australia where she has been calling it home for more than 20 years now. She is a qualified Early Childhood Educator and holds various professional and voluntary roles such as Mental Health Director, Cultural Ambassador, Somali community leader, Author, and the Australian Multicultural Council member.



CIVIC AWARDS RECEIVED

Luul Ibrahim arrived in New Zealand with her family at the age of 8 before migrating to Western Australia where she has been calling it home for more than 20 years now. She is a qualified Early Childhood Educator and holds various professional and voluntary roles such as Mental Health Director, Cultural Ambassador, Somali community leader, Author, and the Australian Multicultural Council member.

Civic Awards received:

- Western Australia African Women Leadership Award.
- Awarded the 2022 Human Appeal Australia Muslim of the year.
- Nominated for community citizen of the year in 2023.
- Nominated for city of Canning Citizen of the year in 2022.
- Received the 2022 Somali Australian friendship Association (SAFA) community award.
- Honoured with the 2023 Australian Somali (AUSOM) Award.



Q: How would you describe yourself?

A: I take great pride in embracing and upholding my identity as a Somali, my culture and religion throughout my journey. I am a natural leader with ambition and drive. I thrive on meeting new people and connecting with those who are open-minded. Family is at the core of my being, as a wife and mother of 7 children, Alhamdulillah. I am passionate about learning and sharing knowledge with others, constantly striving to enhance my creativity and innovation. Authenticity is key to me, as I always stay true to myself.

Q: What gives you your sense of purpose in life?

A: As a Muslim, my sense of purpose and drive in life stem from my faith. Allah is the guiding force in my life, and I am grateful for being raised in a home that instilled in me Islamic values. These values, such as prayers, fasting, reading the Quran, and paying zakat, form the foundation of my life's purpose. They provide me with a true sense of direction and fulfilment.

Q: As a community leader what achievements are you most proud of?

A: I am the first Somali Western Australia appointed to the Australia Multicultural Council at a federal level, representing Western Australia Multicultural. First Somali to be appointed as Western Australia Mental Health Director and the first Somali Cultural ambassador of western Australia. I am also proud of setting up the Somali support Perth organisation, a non-profit organisation created to serve the needs of the Somali community in Perth.

Q: What are the main challenges you have experienced in your leadership roles within your Somali community?

A: The challenges are multifaceted. One of the key challenges is the struggle to be recognized and respected as a female leader in a culture that often undervalues women in leadership roles. Additionally, there is lack

of willingness among our Somali community leaders to work together towards some common goals. The focus often tends to shift towards tribal affiliations and personal issues rather than the collective progress of the community. It can be challenging to maintain a positive outlook in such a negative and toxic environment. However, by taking small steps forward, staying afloat, and motivating others, it is possible to overcome these obstacles and unlock new opportunities for collaboration with other like-minded and resourceful people even if they happen to be outside my own community. As a mother I manage the responsibilities of 7 children while also working full-time, volunteering, and traveling for work or conferences. I am honoured and blessed to be a good role model for mothers, fathers, elders and for our youth and for my children.

Q: What are some of the key challenges for the community and what solutions would you recommend?

A: As a community we have so many barriers and challenges when it comes to supporting or uplifting our own members. Throughout my leadership journey, I have had various leaders mentoring me, but I have not come across Somali mentors. Perhaps this is because they are also experiencing the same challenges as I am facing.

As for possible solutions, perhaps we the Somali leaders need to come together and discuss our challenges, come up with training and mentoring paths for our emerging leaders. A small number of people with the right mindset and attitude can bring about positive changes for the community. We can share our experiences and learn from each other.

Q: You are an active user of social media, what do you use it for?

A: social media has become a powerful tool to connect people from all corners of the world, allowing us to express our thoughts, showcase our creativity, and inspire others. As an active user of platforms like Facebook and Linkin, I utilise this opportunity to share with my audience my personal experiences/opinions



about things I care and what that I am passionate. I believe that everyone has a unique story to tell. By sharing my experiences, I hope to encourage others to pursue leadership roles and make positive impacts.

When it comes to my personal values and vision, I strongly believe in embracing authenticity, honesty, courage, and resilience. These values shape the content I share on social media, and I strive to align my messages with these core beliefs. One of my favourite quotes that resonates with my values is from Dr. Seuss Geisel: "Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who matter don't mind and those who mind don't matter." This quote reminds me to stay true to myself and not be swayed by the opinions of others.

Q: Political ambition: You ran for a city council seat in Perth last year. What motivated you to run for this role?

A: Throughout my journey towards becoming a young leader, I had the opportunity to be surrounded by various influential figures such as ministers, MPs, mayors, councillors, police officers, and ethnic community leaders. This exposure to different leaders may have been due to me stepping out of my comfort zone, and they recognized the potential within me.

Last year when I ran for local council, I was encouraged by Government officials and community leaders and individuals. It is good to have people who believe in you and can see your potentials.

Perhaps it was my eagerness to acquire knowledge and learn from a diverse range of mentors, or maybe it was my ability to provide a fresh perspective that appealed to them. When the former Minister Alex Hawke, who held positions in Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services, and Multicultural Affairs, appointed me as a representative of the Australian Multicultural Council at the federal level, he sought someone young, enthusiastic, and dedicated to fostering Australian unity. This recommendation came from other esteemed leaders who believed I would be a valuable addition.

Being entrusted with such a responsibility is a privilege, and it is often surprising to discover the individuals within

your circle who genuinely want to see you succeed.

At the local council level, a few individuals have been closely following my progress and have suggested that I consider running for a position. Despite being a novice in this field, I consider myself fortunate to have received guidance and support at every step of the process.

Q: What are your future goals and aspirations?

A: I would like to see a wide range of Somali professionals in various fields who are committed to finding common grounds for sustained collaboration for the sake of our community here in Australia while also contributing our collective expertise and knowledge back home in Somalia.

Who knows, perhaps in two years' time, I may embark on standing for the city council once again. Ultimately, our destiny lies in the hands of Allah.

Q: What advice would you give other leaders or your Somali community in general?

A: My advice is: be yourself, embrace your fears and put your trust in Allah. We Somalis need to take pride in our culture, showcase it through waving our flag and singing songs. It is important to ensure that our actions align with our culture and identity. I am mindful of this in every decision I make, whether it is through showcasing our food at cultural events or advocating for more inclusive services and society. If we do not speak up for ourselves and promote our own culture, others will not recognise and appreciate us. We need to be good role models for our younger generations so that they too become strong in their cultural identity growing up in multiethnic/multifaith society.

“ I am proud to call myself Somali. ”



The Umma Trust was established in 2003 as a charitable trust. We provide social services with a specific focus on the wellbeing of Muslim women and children who are refugees, socially, or economically disadvantaged, as well as supporting youth development.

We Offer Free:

- Social Support and Advocacy
- Weekly mothers' group
- Budgeting advice
- Emergency food parcels
- School holiday programs
- Youth Programs
- Driver License Training

Physical Address

Ferndale House
830 New North Road
Mt Albert, Auckland
1025 (Office at rear of building)

Postal Address

PO Box 77078 Mt Albert
Post shop, Auckland 1350
Ph (09) 815 0153
Fax (09) 815 0156

ZAKAT DONATIONS TO: 12 3069 0267612 04

KHADRO MOHAMED

WRITER AND POET

By Abdirizak Abdi

Pink Lakes

//

*all they know is the familiar sight
of unturned stomachs
sand-caked faces,
oversized, bloated bellies
jet-black eyes
sticky lashes
tinted curls with dust caught in between
broken tomato fields
houses made of earth
a heat that rises slowly
with an intensity that distorts the footprints
and turns leaves into coffee powder and
dehydrated calderas where lakes used to be*

*even now, the feeling of emptiness sticks to me
like hydrangeas on the inside of my veranda in the spring
like the deep brown undertones of my skin
if only baba could tell them that the earth that once
covered our home gave birth to flower fields
and entire forests that could swallow science whole
gravity-defying vines with pepper growing on the ends
that the sky dances only for us, leading us through
oceans, the long-winded tail of taniwha and capsized
ships*

*if only they knew the kingdom that once ruled
this rich and vibrant land
has remnants scattered along the earth
feeding the mouths of hoards of goats
that carry stars in their bellies and
lute string in their U-shaped shoes
if only they could land on the shores
of pink lakes, baobab silhouettes
and lion calls.*



WHO IS KHADRO?

Khadro Mohamed is a writer and poet from Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington. Her work has appeared in multiple online magazines include Milly Magazine, The Spinoff, Starling Magazine, Salient and Pantograph Punch, and her debut poetry collection *We're All Made of Lightning*, has won the award for 'Best First Book of Poetry' at the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards in 2023. You can find her book in bookstores across the country.

Q: What did you study at university and what made you want to become a writer?

A: I originally studied Biomedical Science at Victoria University of Wellington but have always enjoyed the arts. I worked mainly with the science and biology departments but have always enjoyed writing and having a creative outlet. My writing was always a side hobby for me growing up, often pushed aside to make room for more 'important' things like science and maths. However, once I left university, I had taken a trip to Egypt to see my family. Over there I realised I was in a majority Muslim country for the first time in my life and that felt exciting and different. Because we did not know Arabic, we spoke predominately in our mother language, Somali, and I learnt so much more about my own cultural background. It was an experience that really changed the way I saw the world and one that has shaped my writing going forward. It solidified how important writing and storytelling was for me, and I found it difficult to contain it to just a side hobby. My love for writing grew and grew and I began working on my now award-winning poetry collection, *We're All Made of Lightning*.

Q: How did you become a published writer?

A: When I returned from Egypt, I knew I wanted writing to be a bigger part of my life than it was previously. I had gotten a job at the Wellington City Libraries and found myself in a team of other published and aspiring authors and poets. I think this is what set me down the path of creativity even more. I found myself sharing other pieces of work online particularly through The Spinoff's 'Friday Poem' series, Pantograph Punch and Starling Magazine (a poetry magazine for under 25-year-olds). Through this my confidence in writing grew, especially

as other Women of Colour complemented my writing and found comfort in my characters. I think this was a profound moment for me because I realised that I had a voice that resonated with other people. That's one of the gifts of storytelling, that simply by telling your story you inspire others to do the same. I was lucky enough to have a coworker who had just opened up an independent publishing house and asked me for a manuscript and it's from there that my book was published.

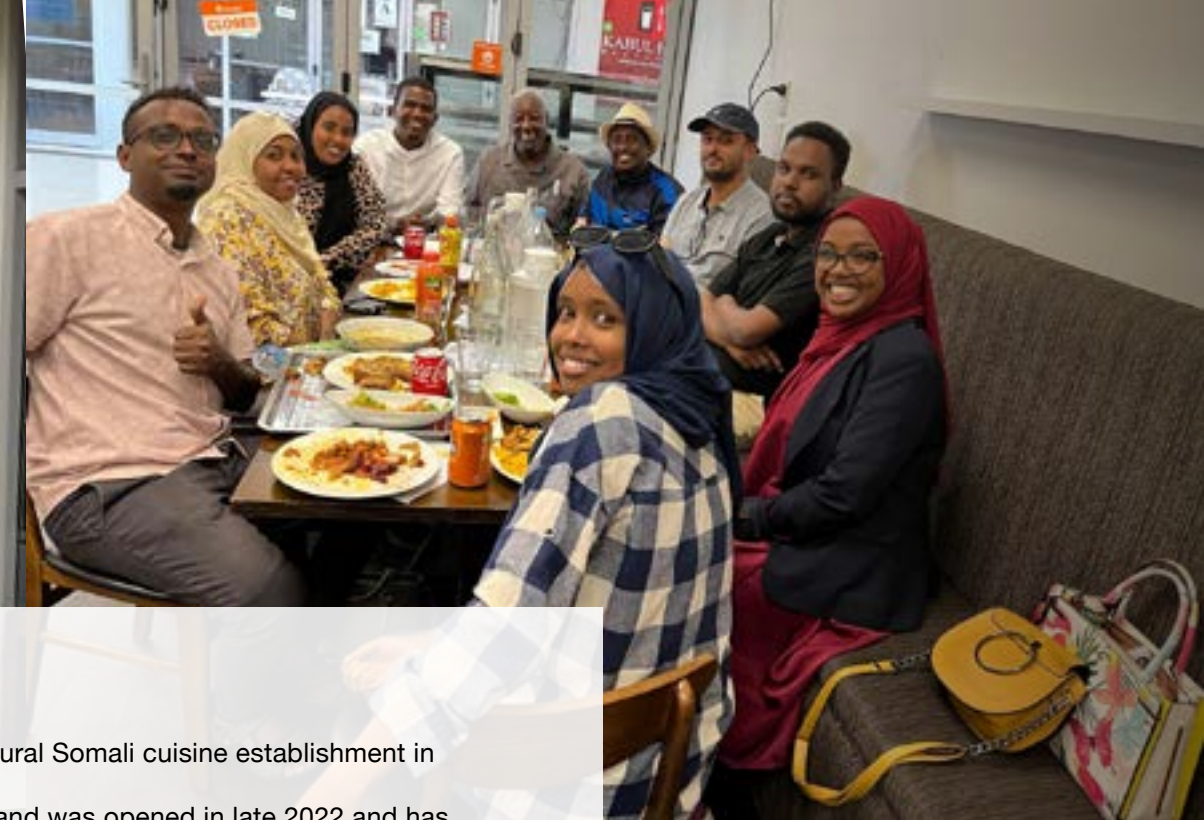
Q: What inspires you?

A: My biggest inspirations draw from two things: my cultural background and my faith. As a Somali Muslim, I find representation in New Zealand hard to find. Our community is small and very misunderstood, so most people base their opinions on us through negative stereotypes. This often frustrates me and pushes me to make alternative stories that people can access. My goal in writing is not to change minds, but rather to show other Somali's and young Muslims that there is a real career to be made in the creative field and that our stories matter—especially when they are being told by us.

Q: What else are you currently working on?

A: I am currently working on a novel – a full body of fiction which I have not done for many years. The story follows a young Somali boy who has a complicated relationship with his mother and father. The story travels through time, exploring the Somali civil war in 1990. The goal for the story is to explore the life of a young Somali New Zealander and what it means to navigate this contemporary world while also linking back to the past. This is a story I've wanted to tell for many years, but it's only recently that I've been able to find time to sit and finish it.

NEW SOMALI RESTAURANT IN AUCKLAND

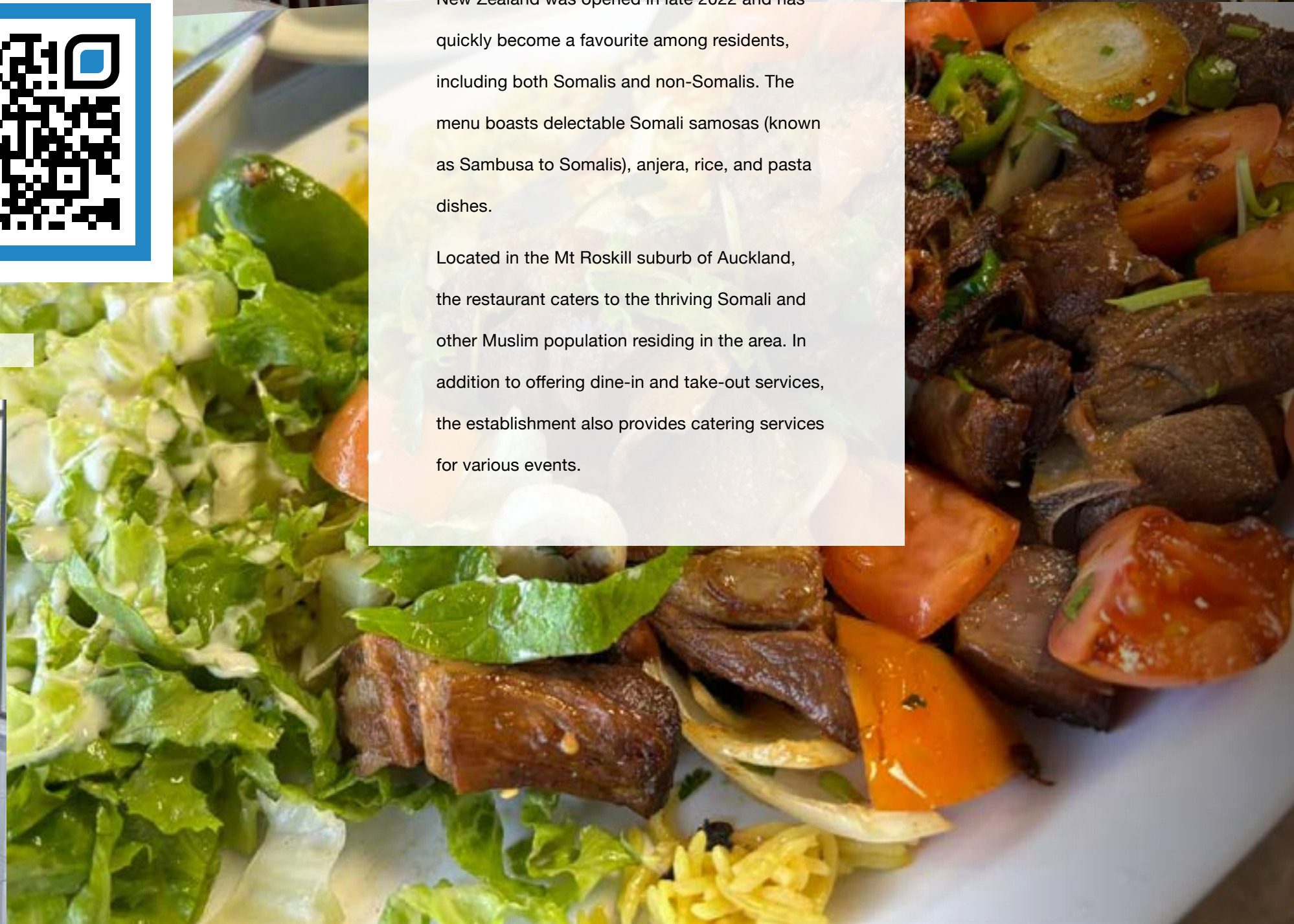


See their menu on banaadir.co.nz



The inaugural Somali cuisine establishment in New Zealand was opened in late 2022 and has quickly become a favourite among residents, including both Somalis and non-Somalis. The menu boasts delectable Somali sambusas (known as Sambusa to Somalis), anjera, rice, and pasta dishes.

Located in the Mt Roskill suburb of Auckland, the restaurant caters to the thriving Somali and other Muslim population residing in the area. In addition to offering dine-in and take-out services, the establishment also provides catering services for various events.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Huge thanks to everyone who has helped with the collection of the graduate profiles from the community around New Zealand. I want to particularly thank these two community leaders in Auckland Sheikh Uwais and Mr Bootaan for their significant roles in getting the graduate profiles from our Auckland Somali community. I also want to thank the graduates themselves for sharing their amazing stories in this publication which is widely anticipated and celebrated across our Somali community in New Zealand and beyond.

Special thanks to the funders whose support was instrumental to the design and printing funds.

A special acknowledgement to the Ministry of Social Development's **E Tū Whānau Team**, for their support to not only this publication but also their ongoing engagement with the community. Our sincere thanks also go to **Umma Trust**, **Auckland Somali Community Association** and **Waikato Refugee Forum** who have also made financial contributions towards the cost.

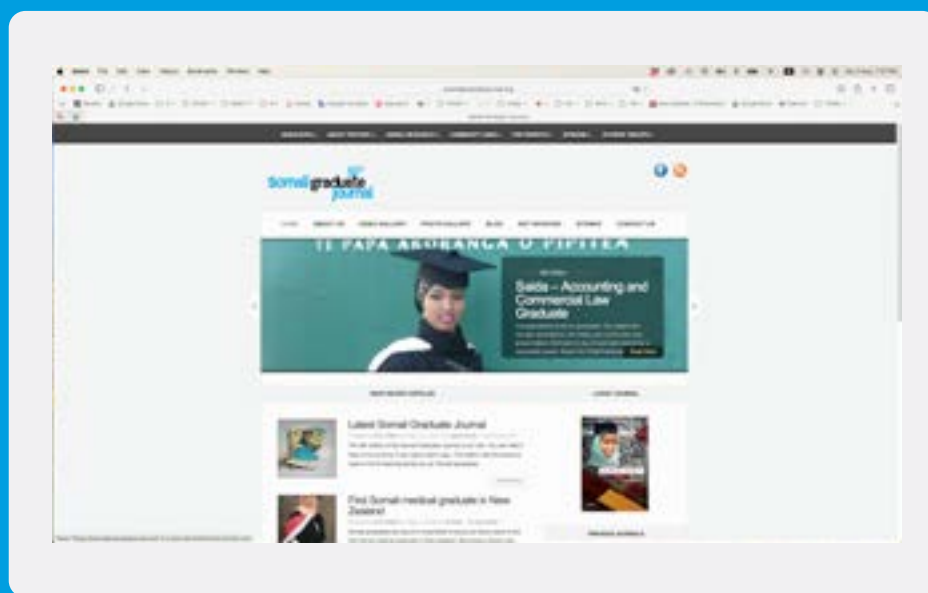
Abdirizak Abdi | Editor | nzsomaligraduates@gmail.com



LAUNCH EVENT AND CELEBRATIONS



Check out the **Somali Graduate Journal** website
www.somaligraduaterjournal.org





SOMALI GRADUATE
JOURNAL

Our Somali Graduates inspiring
Our Community

www.somaligraduatejournal.org

Edition designed with ♥ by Jess@GraficaCreativa.co.nz



SOMALI GRADUATE JOURNAL

Issue #9, 2024