

Narrator: Kafisa Mohamed Interviewer: Haneen Mohamed Date: May 12th, 2019
Location: East African Cultural & Community Center, San Diego, CA (UWEAST)
Collection: Race and Oral History Course, Spring 2019 Length of interview:
00:29:12

This interview takes place at the East African Cultural and Community Center in City Heights, San Diego. The center is the home base for the United Women of East Africa Support Team (UWEAST), a community organization that provides programs and services that address the overlooked needs of East African in the Greater San Diego area. The interviewee, Kaifsa Mohamed, oversees community outreach programs as well as the center's kitchen, where Kafisa and other women cook for community events, catering services, and for youth at the center. Kafisa shares her story starting from her migration to the United States in 1998 from Somalia, and the process of navigating language barriers, restricted employment access, and religious discrimination. Kafisa describes her migration to the United States as a journey in pursuit of safety following the Somali Civil War, which destabilized the region and displaced almost a million Somalis throughout the 1990's and 2000's. She explains the role UWEAST and the community center have played in helping her settle, access resources and find a stable sense of community. Kafisa also describes her experience as a mother raising American born children, detailing the joys of watching them grow, finish their schooling, and being able to pass down cultural knowledge through storytelling and religious education. She hopes to return to Somalia one day, and take her children with her.