

The Minneapolis Police Department's 2007 Crime Prevention Awards

2007 Teresa S. Ruhland Youth Award

Abia Isse Ali wins Minneapolis Police Teresa S. Ruhland Youth Award

The Minneapolis Police Department has chosen Abia Isse Ali as the winner of the 2007 Teresa S. Ruhland Youth Award. Each year, the award is given to a volunteer or volunteers who do an outstanding job of involving young people in community activities. Ali lives in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood and was nominated by Asma Lori Saroya.



*Police Chief Timothy Dolan
congratulating Ruhland Award
winner Mrs. Abia Ali*

Like Teresa Ruhland, Abia Ali is a mother of three children and is committed to creating a positive future for her community. While working full-time as a Human Service Representative in the Family Services Division of the Hennepin County Economic Assistance program, Ali has also been volunteering with the Abubakar As-Saddique Islamic Center since it first opened in 2003.

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Ali spends her time at the Center talking to the children, helping them with homework, listening to them, and finding alternatives to gangs by offering them hope for their futures. Recognizing the need for fun activities, Abia also organizes several events and field trips to keep the children engaged in positive and safe activities such as roller-skating, sleepovers, basketball games and picnics.

Abia's work with Somali youth has had a positive impact in the community. In the summer of 2007, Abia helped organize a neighborhood clean-up project with the Islamic Center youth group. As children picked up trash near the Center, many neighbors joined the effort spontaneously. Afterwards, all were invited to enjoy Somali food and get to know each other.

When nominator and camp counselor Asma Lori Saroya encountered many of the children Ali works with, she asked her campers who their hero was. Many of the children replied "Sister Abia." In nominating Ali, Saroya wrote, "Abia empowers kids from disadvantaged backgrounds. She provides them with resources to change their own situation and feel confident about themselves. Abia's work directly deters Somali kids from joining gangs or engaging in other criminal behavior."