



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

GERMA Y SUCCESS STORY

Youth Education and Employment Program

METROCENTER YMCA

Born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Germa grew up with his mother and step-father and attending and progressing through the public school system. Six months before he would have graduated from high school in Addis Ababa, Germa moved to Seattle to join his father, who had immigrated years before. A documentation error during the immigration process led to Germa being placed as a sophomore in Seattle Public Schools. He worked consistently towards graduation for two years but further administrative complications prevented him from earning his diploma. Learning that he might age out of the school system before graduating, Germa enrolled in Metrocenter's education and employment case management program. He attended GED classes and passed his first four tests before Christmas that same year.



His final exam was on writing, which proved to be a significant challenge. Germa attempted it 4 times between December 2009 and March 2011. With grit and determination, Germa passed the writing test and earned his GED on March 8th, 2011. "I work at McDonald's right now, and I'm not satisfied with the lifestyle I have," Germa explained. "I know I needed the GED to move on to college and improve my life. Education is the key to have a better life."

Germa is ready to take on more responsibility as he pursues his goals at the college level. "I want to study dental hygiene, and be the first person from my family to graduate from college. Most of all I want to show my dad how good I have done, and how good I can be." Germa is resilient and motivated, and he credits the Y staff with helping him persevere and achieve his goals, "The Y showed me a good way of life. I had my first job here with my Green Jobs internship, and the teachers in the GED program helped me a lot and for a long time. Now I get to start a new life in college, and I'm going to do whatever it takes to be successful."

METROCENTER YMCA

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Everyone is welcome. Financial assistance is available. The YMCA of Greater Seattle strengthens communities in King and south Snohomish counties through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.