



Determination

Ojulu spent more than 10 years living in Dadaab, Kenya, home to several of the world's largest refugee camps. He was one of the lucky few that had a job; Ojulu worked with the Danish Refugee Council as a prevention officer. Tensions often ran high at the camps and he helped enhance safety for residents.

Ojulu understood the experience of being marginalized. He came from western Ethiopia's Gambella region, and his people, the Anuak, have a long history of persecution by the government and forced displacement off their fertile land.

In the camps, Ojulu fostered connections and community among residents by teaching a game played by his people. The multi-player game, much like Dominoes, requires counting and calculation, and it became a way for residents to learn cooperation

skills and become friends. The game was such a success it was featured in a documentary about life in Dadaab's refugee camps.

“He is hardworking, committed, and goes above and beyond...”

Now, in the U.S., Ojulu is determined to be reunited with his wife, still in Kenya. To do so requires money and good work. Cheryl, his Daily Work volunteer case manager, noticed that Ojulu is everything an employer wants in an employee. “He is hardworking, committed, and goes above and beyond to work well with others,” she notes.

Cheryl knew that the interview would be the hardest part for Ojulu. “We talked about the importance of professionalism. What that means in the U.S., and how to demonstrate it,” she says. “I asked if he could wear a tie. He showed up in a full suit! I thought, yes, that’s it.”



OUR VISION OF THRIVING LIVES

From Julie Hoff, Executive Director

Half of Daily Work's job seekers are employed at intake, but most live in poverty. Clearly, having just any job does not protect people from hardship. Underemployment is a great barrier to the healthy families, stronger communities, and growing economies we all want.

That's where we come in. Our vision is more than helping people find jobs. We support finding work that provides the income and life balance to support a family, be healthy, and thrive. A key component of success is having a network of supportive people and resources. For many, Daily Work is an essential part of that network.

What this means for our organization and its future is a critical question. To answer it, a strategic planning process is underway and will culminate this fall. To inform the process, we are developing new partnerships and collecting data to determine how to best fill service gaps and maximize our unique strengths.

Daily Work is a lean, volunteer-based operation with a core of 2.25 employees and a \$250k operating budget. While this may sound adequate, we still are not able to provide health insurance or retirement benefits for employees. To truly live our values, we know we must offer these essentials.

Over the past three years we have enhanced student intern and volunteer programs to include process improvements, comprehensive orientation and training, and satisfaction surveys. Daily Work views the development of interns and volunteers to be equally as important as the outcomes for job seekers. We have a vision of thriving lives that applies to all stakeholders.

Services for job seekers are evolving to meet emerging needs such as driving lessons, tech access and literacy, and responding to rapidly changing contexts in the workforce. Evaluating the effectiveness of our systems and approach is a top priority, demonstrated by seven initiatives in the past year to analyze our processes and impact.

This is a critical time in the workforce. It's a job seeker's market; employers are willing to try new ways to attract and retain employees, creating possibilities for real change to systemic barriers that have limited opportunity for FAR too long.

Your continued support makes a difference. Thank you for being here.

daily-work.org/news-events/blog.html/article/2022/04/12/how-data-is-paving-our-way-to-a-better-future

DEI Survey Results Are In



In early 2020, Daily Work formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee dedicated to identifying opportunities for making our organization more inclusive, from how our board of directors operates to how we interact with job seekers.

To inform the process, we invited key stakeholders (job seekers, interns, volunteers, staff, board, committee members, vendors, partners, and donors) to participate in a survey assessment of three important areas:

- ① How well do our people reflect Daily Work's diverse job seekers?
- ② How well do our processes create a culture of inclusion?
- ③ How can our decision-making structures create greater equity?

The results in a nutshell: Job seekers' voices are our biggest asset when it comes to informational and representational decision-making, and Daily Work must increase its awareness of, engagement with, and leadership from job seeker communities.

We are formulating a longer-term strategy and work plan, but recommendations were approved by the Daily Work Board in December 2021 and are posted on our website, along with detailed information about the survey results.

More at: daily-work.org/about-us/dei-survey-results-and-action-steps.html

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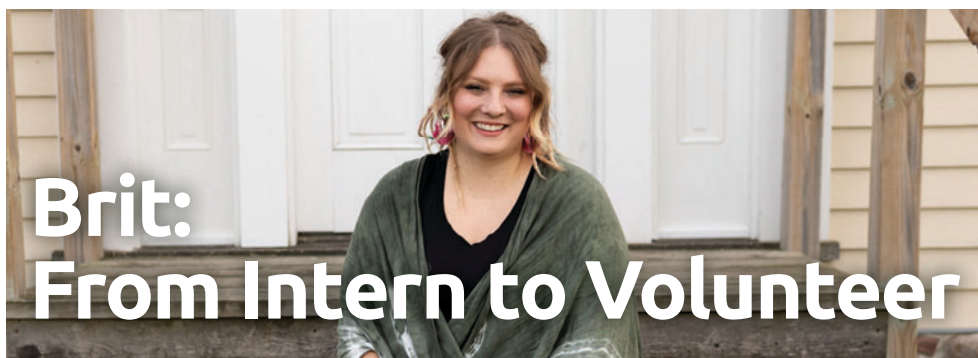
Ojulu

From pg. 1

Cheryl went with Ojulu to an Environmental Services (custodian) job interview at Children's Hospital. "When it was over, the interviewer called me into the office," recalls Cheryl. The human resource person was so impressed with Ojulu's presentation and presence that not only had he gotten the job, but they wanted to know if Daily Work could forward other candidates, too.

The job is full time with benefits, and pays \$5,000 more in annual income than his last position. "I need to bring my wife here from Kenya," declares Ojulu. "I'm taking my citizenship test. I am making more money, and soon we will be together again."

Learn more about the hardships faced by refugees in the Dadaab camps in this documentary: warehousedthemovie.com



When Brittney (Brit) Rademacher heard about Daily Work through the Master of Social Work (MSW) program at St. Catherine University, she knew we were her top choice for completing the initial, year-long internship required for her MSW.

“Employment is foundational. It’s square one of survival that gives you access to housing, food, and medical care,” says Brit. As a past intern, she provided one-to-one case management, job search, and other job readiness support to job seekers. “I worked with clients either weekly or every other week for several months. You got to know them pretty well.”

Training is a big part of DW’s internship program. As an exercise, Brit was given a \$20 check and assigned to get it cashed without a bank account. She had to take public transportation and could buy lunch with the remaining cash. “The check cashing agencies took a huge percent. There wasn’t much left over for bus and food.” It’s a hands-on task that provides a small taste of life for many job seekers.

Brit believes Daily Work’s training program is a big reason why people stay connected to the organization. “The work is productive. I learned more about micro and macro social work practice at Daily Work.” Her experience supported her development as a therapist, helping her develop skills to truly meet people where they are and gain experience in researching critical community resources for her clients.

“As soon as I established my career, I knew I’d go back and volunteer...”

Six years later, Brit is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in private practice as a Sex and Gender Therapist. “As soon as I established my career, I knew I’d go back and volunteer at Daily Work.”

For Brit, volunteering is a personal value that she makes room for, even as a busy mom of three. And our move to virtual visits during the pandemic is what allowed her to start volunteering. “Technology is double-edged. On one hand it increases flexibility, but people need to have the technology and connectivity to begin with.”



From Intern to Supervisor

When it came to deciding where to do her undergraduate social work internship, Marissa reached out to her professor at St. Catherine University for guidance. “I wanted to engage with a diverse population and work as a case management generalist. She recommended Daily Work,” Marissa says.

“I liked the close-knit aspects of Daily Work’s program. You make an immediate impact and jump in right away.” For some students,

this can be intimidating, but Marissa found DW’s hands-on environment enabled faster learning and provided more real-world experience. Interns can also gain other related skills in nonprofit administration, program development, and advocacy through blog writing.

“Daily Work is a hidden gem, and their impact is huge.”

“Daily Work is a hidden gem, and their impact is huge. I felt the care and dedication to my personal development,” enthuses Marissa.

After completing a Master of Social Work (MSW) at the University of Minnesota, her career shifted to education. Currently she teaches in St. Thomas University’s MSW program and works full-time as Field [Internship] Coordinator at Walden University.

“When Julie [Hoff] asked if I’d be interested in coming back to supervise interns, I felt it was a great opportunity to bridge my direct practice and education experience.” As supervisor, Marissa ensures that student learning and activities align with social work practices. Mentoring and supporting professional development are also key. “Once students graduate, they become colleagues,” says Marissa. “So, I work to stay connected and offer support even after the internship is complete.”

“It means so much when students come back. Not only do they already know us and onboard quickly, but it’s a testimonial about their initial experience,” says Julie Hoff, Daily Work executive director.

Editor’s note: We are grateful for Marissa’s leadership over the past year. As a new mom she will not return for the 2022–23 school year, but we know she will keep in touch.

Afghan Evacuees in MN

Daily Work is one of many government and community-based agencies who are part of a new group dedicated to connecting immigrants with employment. Minnesota's Immigrant Employment Workgroup (IEW) began in response to efforts initiated to support nearly 1,300 Afghan evacuees who have arrived in our state since October 2021.

Operation Allies Welcome is a national effort to resettle an estimated 75,000 vulnerable Afghans, including those who worked alongside allied troops for the past two decades. Locally, this effort is coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDHS). Roughly 45% of new arrivals are working-age adults.

Now that evacuees are settling into homes, schools, and daily life, they can focus on employment. Patricia Fenrick, an MDHS employee who specializes in refugee workforce development, says that the state is committed to supporting partners

in helping find jobs with “family-sustaining” wages. “Low-wage, seasonal, and shift work may be readily available but they don’t cover basic needs, and require extra support to bridge experiences into better paying jobs,” Patricia declares.

To become job ready, new arrivals have practical matters to manage such as securing documentation,

getting a driver’s license, and learning to navigate to potential worksites. High stress and low confidence are common among refugees due to war experiences, separations from loved ones, and the general loss of what is familiar. Add in the extra effort to learn a new language, a new culture, and essentially start over...it’s expected that they will require support and time to reach their potential.

Only a select group of Minnesota’s employment service agencies specialize in the needs of immigrants, and an even smaller group has the capabilities to support the specific needs of new arrivals.

This is an exciting partnership. Not only is Daily Work learning from other agencies, but we are eager to increase our impact and reach within our community.

More about Operation Allies Welcome: dhs.gov/allieswelcome

More about Afghan refugees in MN: mn.gov/afghan-evacuees

US Dept of Homeland Security / Zachary Hupp





Daily Work stands in solidarity

with ALL displaced people around the world who are seeking lives free from persecution. We are ready to help new arrivals to the St. Paul region, including those who may soon come from Ukraine.



Listening House

Daily Work recently formed a partnership with

Listening House to provide job search and readiness services two days per week. The organization provides a sanctuary from the streets for up to 140 people daily at their location inside First Lutheran Church on Maria Ave.*

Emergency overnight shelters require guests to leave during the day and take their belongings with them. Day shelters fill an important need by providing a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to connect with other community-based services such

as health care, food, housing, and employment.

“There is an eagerness among guests to be productive,” says Listening House Executive Director Molly Jalma. “But poverty holds people back. How do you begin to get ready for a job if you don’t have documentation, or have employment gaps or a colorful background?”

The practicality of our services and tangible mission is a good fit for people that require immediate, real-time solutions. “Most job trainings are not practical for folks in transition. Daily Work is good at what they do because they want people out of poverty and expanding their scope [when needed],” Molly notes.

“We are committed to meeting people where they are,” says Julie Hoff, Daily Work executive director. “And what better way to do that than to provide our services at a place that is already familiar and comfortable to so many.”

**You may have read about the soon-to-close Freedom House, Listening House’s other location on West 7th St. While this news saddens us, and takes away another needed resource from folks with very few already, we remain dedicated to this relationship.*

More about Listening House: listeninghouse.org

More about homelessness in MN: wilder.org/mnhomeless

Daily Work

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More info & link to register at:

daily-work.org/news-events/steps-to-success-event.html



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