

Entrepreneur Spotlight

SAFE TREE TRANSPORTATION

7275 Commerce Circle W.

Fridley, MN 55432

www.safetreetransportation.com

612-226-4789

763-270-5927



MUSTAFAY WAKE, OWNER
OF SAFE TREE TRANSPORTATION

With years of exceptional customer service skills on his resume, and a passion for helping people with special needs, Mustafa Wake decided to open his own business, Safe Tree Transportation. Mustafa emigrated to the USA in 1999, attended high school at Southwest High School in Minneapolis and obtained an Associate's Degree from Normandale Community College. His customer service skills came shining through as an employee at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel and from there, as a driver with the School Bus Transportation Company.

"The best thing about being an entrepreneur is having the ability to put your dreams in action. The freedom it gives you enlightens your personal beliefs and confidence in yourself."

Mustafa Wake, Owner of Safe Tree Transportation

He was promoted to Transportation Manager where he further developed great management skills and then with the support of wonderful people, he opened Safe Tree Transportation. A focus for Safe Tree is to serve students with versatile needs. All of these students go in and out of district schools for a variety of reasons. This niche market is where Safe Tree does a great job by going door-to-door and providing individualized services. Currently, the company has 30 vehicles and 32 employees. They anticipate that they will double these numbers by the end of 2016.

Mustafa attended NDC's Oromo speaking training class with trainer Teshite Wako. With the help of the entrepreneur

training class and NDC's lending department, Safe Tree has sped past its competition in the market. One of their biggest challenges initially was the lack of start-up capital and access to credit history, but with NDC's assistance they obtained a loan from NDC and purchased more vehicles in 2015, enabling the company to grow quickly.

Most of the employees at Safe Tree are of Oromo background. Mustafa is proud to be able to employ people from his community. Well-established positive relationships with the school districts during the past 10 years means that Safe Tree has no shortage of business opportunities. They continue to grow every day and have generated a business that is considered safe, reliable and stable in their industry.

Read more on what Mustafa Wake, owner of Safe Tree Transportation has to say about his experience so far as an entrepreneur:

NDC: What motivated you to start your own business?

MUSTAFAY: I decided to start my own business due to the experience I have developed during my tenure as a Transportation Manager and my customer services skills.

NDC: What's difficult about being an entrepreneur?

MUSTAFAY: The time and energy it consumes. You have to put in more energy and be away from family for longer periods of time.

NDC: What is your business' biggest accomplishment to date?

MUSTAFAY: After only one year in business, we were able to provide an outstanding service to our customers. Moreover, we have been able to provide employment opportunities to more than 30 employees.



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663 University Avenue West, Saint Paul, Minnesota
PHONE: 651 291 2480 WEB: www.ndc-mn.org