

**LOWENSTEIN TRUST
PRESS RELEASE**

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Steve Lowenstein Trust Award 2009
City Council Presentation**

The Steve Lowenstein Trust Board has selected Kayse Jama, founder of the Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO) to receive the Lowenstein Trust Award. First presented in 1992, this annual award is given to the nominee who has demonstrated, in the judgment of the Trustees, a significant personal contribution to assisting the underserved in the City of Portland.

The award will be presented **Wednesday, December 16th, 9:30am, at Portland City Council.**

Kayse Jama, recently naturalized, was raised in Somalia and came to the United States as a refugee from Somalia's civil wars. For the past 6 years Kayse Jama has devoted his life in Portland to building bridges and empowering others. Mr. Jama was determined to help those new to America to find their common interests and needs despite dizzying array of ethnic, national and religious origins. He, in partnership with all those who are part of the CIO, has helped strangers in a strange land become friends and family in a new home. He has helped Portland better embrace a diverse and inclusive future.

At the core of the CIO's work is education and empowerment, teaching the newly arrived of their opportunities, rights, and responsibilities in shaping their own futures and helping to shape the future of their new home. The CIO conducts an array of trainings aimed at helping recent immigrants understand the workings of government, the significant differences between the American justice system and systems newcomers left behind. For some, the right to voice opinions and vote without fear of reprisal is a new and often hard to believe freedom.

The Lowenstein Trust is proud to recognize Kayse Jama for his years of personal sacrifice and commitment in taking the CIO from an idea to reality and making Portland a better community.

The Lowenstein Trust is part of the legacy of Steve Lowenstein, an inspiring model of public service. His sense of purpose, his integrity, and his perseverance inspired many who have worked on issues of human rights and social justice. After law school in the early 1960's, Steve worked on program development for the War on Poverty, and assisted with the development of practices and standards in Ethiopia's legal system. Throughout his life he was a vocal civil rights activist. Steve was the founding director of Oregon Legal Services, he authored a groundbreaking history – The Jews of Oregon 1850-1950 - and at the time of his death in 1990 Steve had served for six years as Chief of Staff to former City Commissioner Mike Lindberg. Steve established the annual financial award to provide recognition and assistance to individuals who have made significant ongoing personal sacrifice to help those in need.