Refugee Artisans Achieve Their American Dreams

*ECDC African Community Center’s We Made This Program Graduates Create Fashion Designs Indicative of Their Success in the United States*

DENVER, July 13, 2017 -- ECDC African Community Center’s *We Made This* program, a sewing training and social enterprise initiative for Denver-area refugees, announces *Designing Women: A Cross-Cultural Design Collaboration*. Lt. Governor Donna Lynne and Mayor Michael B. Hancock will join the celebration to share welcoming remarks.

The *We Made This* program, which seeks to unlock the courage and creativity of refugees through a multicultural sewing community, has paired recent graduates with local professional designers to collaborate on innovative apparel designs like community member Sweeta. As a refugee from Afghanistan, Sweeta has been here for almost 3 years. Initially, Sweeta found out about *We Made This* from someone on the bus and has completed both the beginner and intermediate programs since then. She is known around *We Made This* for her diligent work ethic, patience, compassion, kindness, and gentle spirit. Sweeta’s design was inspired by the lack of fitting dresses she saw at stores; she is working alongside local Denver designer, Jessica Shaver, to complete her design. Their dress is an A-line design with a fitted top, cap sleeves, and an umbrella skirt. Sweeta’s favorite part of the design is the skirt because it is flattering and fun to make. Although Sweeta had done some sewing in her home country, she wanted to learn more and be able to work in a company in the United States. She is excited about gaining skills in making clothes and is thankful to be working with Jessica. Sweeta describes Jessica as helpful, very friendly and patient, helping her with pattern-making and enjoying teaching her new techniques and abilities. Sweeta and others’ designs are emblematic of all of the *We Made This* graduates’ successes.

The *We Made This* graduates and designers will display their designs at The Designing Women showcase which will take place on Friday, July 21 from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Space Gallery, 400 Santa Fe Drive, Denver. General Admission tickets start at $65 and can be purchased [here](#).

*ECDC African Community Center (ACC)* is a branch office of the Ethiopian Community Development Council that has helped refugees and immigrants build safe, sustainable lives in the Denver area for more than 15 years. Reception and placement activities that ACC conducts are paid for, in part, through financial assistance provided by the Department of State. *We Made This* is a program of ECDC/ACC, which is funded in part by the Colorado Refugee Services Program. CRSP is a division of the Colorado Department of Human Services and funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement. ACC is a 501(c)(3) entity. For more information about ACC, visit [www.acc-den.org](http://www.acc-den.org) and follow on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com).

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