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Social Work Is in Line with Najeeb Kamil's Commitment to Service and Social Justice

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Learning of the profession was fortuitous for this former biotechnologist

"I believe in living a life of service that not only guides my professional work, but guides my whole way of life," says Najeeb Kamil.

For him, that commitment to service began early. "As I was growing up, I did street clean-ups in Oakland, fed the homeless in San Francisco, built homes with Habitat for Humanity, conducted basic health testing in a free clinic, and did prison outreach," he recounts. "I believe that this interest in social service/social justice work stems from my religion, Islam, which emphasizes service and promotes justice for everyone."

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Najeeb was planning for a professional life of service when he entered UC Berkeley to study pre-med. Although those plans changed, he earned a B.A. in Molecular and Cell Biology, never abandoning the idea of a service profession.

While working in biotechnology three years after graduation, Najeeb happened to meet someone who had an MSW. Until then, he says, "I never came across the idea of social work." The encounter proved fortuitous. "That's how I learned about social work and the opportunity to earn a living helping people," he says.

CSU, East Bay Provides a Solid Foundation

Najeeb enrolled as a IV-E stipend recipient in the MSW program at [California State University, East Bay](http://www.csueastbay.edu/class/departments/socialwork/) (<http://www.csueastbay.edu/class/departments/socialwork/>), where, he recalls, "My experience was very informative and helped me gain the knowledge and skills to work in child welfare. CSU, East Bay provided many opportunities through child welfare-focused electives and field classes to learn from each other and bounce off ideas and situations that we encountered in our field placements."

He considered those placements valuable as well. His first year, he interned in a high school counseling students. He spent his second year in the County of Santa Cruz Family and Children's Services—which proved to be a defining turn for him. "My field instructor and supervisor in Santa Cruz County were instrumental in my development as a child welfare social worker," Najeeb says. "It was during this internship that I realized I was in the right place."

Gaining a Broad Exposure

Since graduation, Najeeb has held a number of positions in various settings, where he has honed his skills and developed new ones, and both broadened and deepened his knowledge.

His first post-graduate position was in Shasta County as a senior social worker in Children' Services, where Najeeb received an excellent introduction to the unique challenges of serving clients in a rural setting. "I really delved deep into rural child welfare and being creative when there are not many resources for children and parents," he says.

"Shasta County Children's Services was an amazing agency to work for," he recalls. "It had a very unique setup, where multiple agencies such as child welfare, mental health, drug and alcohol, county office of education, juvenile probation, adult probation, and public health were housed under one roof. I could easily connect with other agencies to facilitate services for families on my caseload."





