

# Mikail Hussein



## UNITED TAXI WORKERS OF SAN DIEGO

2024 FINALIST

Mikail Hussein's work for social justice in San Diego began in 2009 when he and hundreds of local taxi drivers went on strike seeking respect and economic justice as immigrant workers. A Somali immigrant and longtime City Heights resident, Hussein helped to establish United Taxi Workers of San Diego (UTWSD) in pursuit of fair policies and economic justice for the region's drivers, of which more than 50 percent are African immigrants. In these efforts, he sought to set an example for African immigrant communities for how to "advocate, educate, organize, and empower" for social and economic justice – all while also prioritizing multi-ethnic unity to overcome historical barriers among drivers. With a leadership style firmly grounded in persistence and respect, Hussein garnered policy and economic wins while building bridges with labor and law enforcement.

By spearheading development of UTWSD's RideUnited app with UCSD Design Lab's Just Transitions group, he championed technological innovation as a tool for economic justice. The app has enabled local taxi drivers to remain competitive and fairly compensated even as tech companies and ride share apps gained dominance. Hussein also initiated UTWSD's civic engagement efforts to ensure workers' voices are heard at the ballot box, including a longtime partnership with Engage San Diego in their non-partisan voter registration work. Whether interacting with labor, law enforcement, policymakers, the nonprofit sector or academia, he has demonstrated the ability to engage as an equal partner with high level local leadership, rather than be subordinated to those with different skill sets.

*Nancy Jamison*  
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SOCIAL JUSTICE

The logo for the Fund for Social Justice features the text "FUND FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE" in a serif font, with "FUND FOR" on the top line and "SOCIAL JUSTICE" on the bottom line. The text is centered within a circular sunburst graphic composed of many thin, radiating lines.