



## Omar Bah

I arrived in Providence, Rhode Island, seven years ago as a refugee. Four years later, in 2011, my wife, Teddi, and I bought a new home. Despite our excitement about being homeowners and achieving a piece of the American dream, we were faced with potential challenges. Our home is a beautiful single-family house with abundant space, but it was built in the late 1920s. The age of the house meant that it likely had lead paint in it. In addition, there were broken windows, peeling paint, and visible holes on the walls.

Teddi and I were worried. Our older son, Barry, was a little over a year old and we were expecting our second son, Samba. Our financial situation was not the best, as we were just a refugee family settling down in a new country. And we had spent the little we had saved toward deposits for our mortgage. We



reached out to the city of Providence for help through their HUD lead remediation program. We were awarded a \$5,000 lead remediation grant. We used the funds to install new windows and doors, and we painted the entire house. I am relieved to report that my children are lead-free. Many other vulnerable families could benefit from programs such as the one that has saved my family, and many more incidents from health hazards could be prevented.