

# *Somali-American Woman Forgives Attacker for Hate Crime*

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Minneapolis, December 23 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of Minnesota, a judge has sentenced a woman to six months in prison after she ordered a Somali-American woman to "speak English" before smashing a beer mug into her face for speaking Swahili.

Jodie Burchard-Risch pleaded guilty to last year's assault at an Applebee's restaurant, which left Asma Jama with a bloodied face and 17 stitches in her lip.

Jama addressed her attacker in court at a sentencing hearing, saying: "My religion teaches me to forgive so I can go on with my life. If I hold a grudge and I hold the hate you hold towards me against you, it's not going to serve me well. So, in front of everyone here, I do forgive you, and I hope that you choose love over hate."

Minnesota is home to a large Somali-American community, which has faced a rash of hate crimes. In a campaign stop last month shortly before Election Day, Donald Trump railed against Somali immigrants, saying some had joined ISIS and describing Somali immigration as a "disaster taking place in Minnesota."



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