

Ahmed "Knowmadic" Ali

Somali-Canadian poet, spoken word artist, and educator · Edmonton, Alberta · he/him · "Knowmadic" = knowledge + nomadic, pronounced like "nomadic"

Poet Laureate

Edmonton's 7th, July 2017 –
June 2019, City of Edmonton

National Champion

2011 Canadian Festival of
Spoken Word, Team
Edmonton

Educator

3,000+ students, 200+
workshops (career estimates)

International

Performances in Canada, USA,
UK, and Sudan

Verified awards & honours

- **2023** Outstanding Black Men in Canada — SHIFTER Magazine
- **2021** Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund Award — EAC / ECF
- **2018** Human Rights Champion Award — John Humphrey Centre
- **2017** Edmonton Top 40 Under 40 — Avenue Magazine
- **2017–19** Edmonton Poet Laureate (7th) — City of Edmonton
- **2015** Northlands Emerging Artist Award
- **2014** Alberta Top 30 Under 30 — ACGC
- **2014** Young Arts Entrepreneur Award — Michaëlle Jean Foundation / Futurpreneur
- **2013** Cultural Diversity in the Arts — Edmonton Arts Council
- **2011** Canadian Spoken Word Champion — CFSW

Publications

- *Black Abacus* — debut collection (Write Bloody North)
- *The Great Black North* (Frontenac House, 2012)
- *AfriCANthology* (Renaissance Press, 2022)

Civic & institutional service

- Board Member — Alberta Law Enforcement Review Board (quasi-judicial tribunal)
- National Advisory Committee — National Council of Canadian Muslims
- Equity Committee Chair — Edmonton Arts Council (2014–2017)
- Co-Founder & Artistic Director — Breath In Poetry (est. 2009)
- Artist in Residence — Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, Seattle (2013)

Recent school residencies

- **Aldergrove School, Edmonton (Feb 2026)** — 96 sessions, 16 classes K–6, 10 teaching days
- **Belvedere Elementary, Edmonton (Apr 2025)** — 297 students, 70 sessions, 47.3 program hours, family Poetry Café
- **Dr. Donald Massey School, Edmonton (Apr 2022)** — three-week residency with assemblies and showcases

Selected press

- CBC Edmonton (appointment, profile, end-of-term coverage)
- Edmonton Journal · Quill & Quire · Global News
- Avenue / Edify Edmonton · SHIFTER Magazine

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Every item on this sheet is externally verified against public sources; archive-only recognitions are deliberately omitted pending documentation. Student and workshop totals are self-reported career estimates. Prepared July 2026.