



SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR ETHIOPIAN JEWS

Fulfilling the promise for the student, for the community, for a stronger Israel

June 2006

SFEJ WORKS TO FULFILL THE PROMISE

During the six years of our work in raising funds for scholarships, SFEJ has contributed over a quarter million dollars in helping young adult Ethiopian Israelis be able to get an academic education. Through your generosity, SFEJ was able last fiscal year to appropriate \$128,500 to assist deserving students realize their dream.

Because we are an all-volunteer organization, we have managed to keep our operating costs at 4% while helping to fund 419 scholarships last year alone.

As Israel intensifies its efforts to bring over the remaining Ethiopians, we realize an even greater urgency to provide leadership and role models for these people, who are living in camps waiting to go "on the wings of an eagle" to the Promised Land. We thank you for your support as we continue to work together to fulfill the promise.

GRADUATES GIVING BACK

Listed below are some graduates who have assumed positions of leadership and are active in the promotion and integration of the Ethiopian community in Israeli society.

Dr. Sefafa Aycheek

Ph.D. in preventative medicine (did research on "Diseases Imported to and Acquired in Israel by Ethiopian Immigrants"); father of four, manager of the Center for Immigration Absorption in Netanya; prominent activist in education and advertising in the war against Aids.

Wonde Akale

M.A., father of three, project manager in NIF's Empowerment and Training Center for Social Change Organizations in Israel (SHATIL) for assistance and guidance to Ethiopian organizations.

Simha Getahun

MA, mother of two, social worker, head of a multi-cultural project, "Youth at Risk", serving both religious and secular Russian, Ethiopian, Druze and Arab youth.

SOME RECENT SPONSORS

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GRADUATES WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Natmar Hilel

M.A., mother of three, Director in charge of 170 social workers at the Branch for Psycho-social and Medical Services in Youth Aliya boarding schools of the Ministry of Education.



Workei Kasai

M.A., mother of two, President of the Association for the Advancement of the Ethiopian Family and Child in Israel (ALMAYA).



Rachamim Melaku

M.A., father of three, Director of the project "Know From Where You Come," in Youth Aliyah boarding schools and head counselor of multi-cultural counselors at five boarding schools.



Tsega Melaku

M.A., mother of two, broadcaster for Amharic Radio; vice director of the Amharic department at the Israel Broadcast Association.



Shula Mola

M.A., mother of two, Director of the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews, active in advocate work for the community.



Shimon Salomon

Father of two, Director of a multi-cultural project for immigrants at the Society for the Preservation of Nature of Israel; lecturer for Amnesty International on Human Rights; former adviser to the Minister of Education on Ethiopian affairs.



Dr. Anbessa Tafera

Ph.D. in linguistics, father of three, lecturer at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and guest lecturer at the University of Berlin; linguistics adviser to various organizations; translator of books and articles; chief examiner in Amharic language; high school teacher.



Shmuel Yilma

M.A., father of two, Senior Director of Immigrant Integration Section at JDC-Israel; member of KHA Board of Trustees.



Over 50 additional graduates are currently employed in their professional fields, thus enhancing social change and integration of their community into Israeli society.*

S F E J

**fulfilling the promise for the student, for the community,
for a stronger Israel...**



SFEJ's Unique Mission

The Scholarship Fund for Ethiopian Jews is committed to raising money to assist highly motivated, young adults achieve graduate school education. This unique project targets the brightest, most academically motivated Ethiopian Israelis and helps them become role models for the younger generation and leaders of their community. Moreover, we are helping these highly talented young people break through the barriers causing socio-economic injustice.

Although the Ethiopians coming to Israel bring with them their Jewish heritage, they come from a culture radically different from that of the technologically sophisticated Israel. The Ethiopian immigrants were brought up in an agrarian community, where electricity and running water were virtually an unknown. Thrust into a highly-skilled, competitive society, most Ethiopians who are lucky enough to get jobs find

themselves working at menial jobs for extremely low wages. In fact, 90% of working Ethiopian Israelis make such low wages as to be categorized among the "working poor."

SFEJ's unique mission is to be an agent of change by providing opportunities for graduate school education. We are encouraging bright, talented young Ethiopian Israelis to come forward, to realize their potential, and to make a difference in the world.

Please join hands with us to advance social and economic equality. Donate today to help give these deserving young people, their families and their community, indeed all of Israel, a brighter tomorrow. You may either use the enclosed coupon with a check or credit card or donate through our website, www.sfej.org. Give the gift of hope.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

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SFEJ graduate and Advisory Board Member Michal Avera Samuel, M.A., recently shared the podium with Hillary Clinton, Laura Bush, and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg at the Lion of Judah Convention in Washington, D.C. Michal has been working for FIDEL, the Association for Education and Social Integration of Ethiopian Jews.



The Miracle of Education

At age 13, Yardena Fanta had never set foot into a classroom. Now 32, with the help of SFEJ Yardena is completing her Ph.D. She is the creator of "Thinking Science," a project aimed at developing interest in scientific and technological fields among Ethiopian immigrant youth.

Thank You For Helping Me Realize My Dream

Today is one of those days I am disappointed,
Disappointed that human language is so limited
For the words "Thank you" or "You helped me a lot"
Can never express the appreciation of the heart...
This is why I have chosen to keep quiet
for a few seconds
And thus the heart will utter its "Thank you" quietly
And if there are more people like me
For whom "Thank you" does not fully express their feelings
Let them join me in silence...
Thus we shall let our strong inner feelings speak for us
In their own way...wordlessly. - Tessi Alchew

STATUS REPORT: THE NEED BECOMES EVEN MORE URGENT

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

- *In 2005 more than 55% of Ethiopian Israeli men as well as the majority of women were unemployed.
- *58% of Ethiopian immigrants are under the age of 18.
- *Almost 60% of the families have 5 or more children.
- *More than 70% of Ethiopian Israelis live in poverty.
- *More than 90 percent of those working have blue-collar jobs paying such low wages to warrant the label of the working poor.
- *60% of all families live on government welfare.
- *Each Ethiopian immigrant, according to government estimates, costs the government about \$100,000 over the course of his or her lifetime.
- *As much as 30% of the Ethiopian family units are single-parent families.

EDUCATION

- *Since 1996, the number of Ethiopian Israelis registered at institutions of higher education has tripled.
- *As of 2005, approximately 3,000 of the 105,000 Ethiopian Israelis have obtained academic degrees, while 2,311 are currently enrolled in institutions of higher education.
- *Women, accounting for 49% of Ethiopian Israeli students, are studying at all of Israel's universities.
- *The high school drop-out rate is almost double that of other Israelis, with

one in four Ethiopian Israeli teenage are dropping out of school.

- *800-1200 Ethiopian Israeli youngsters are considered to be at-risk.

CULTURAL BARRIERS

- *Only 56% of Ethiopian adults can hold a basic Hebrew conversation.
- *60% of Ethiopian immigrants arrive illiterate in any language.
- *Only 45 % of Ethiopian Israeli 3 year-olds are enrolled in preschool as compared to 95% of other Israeli children, resulting in their entering school already behind their native peers.

THE URGENCY

Currently, there are 17,000 Jews living in wretched conditions in Addis Ababa and Gondar waiting to immigrate to Israel. 8,000 Ethiopian immigrants have been staying for up to two years in absorption centers in Israel. The cost to maintain one person in a center for one year is \$4,370.

“Bringing our Ethiopian Jews home is only the beginning. Education is the key to the future of the Ethiopian community in Israel. That is why this initiative is crucial. Ethiopian Jews must be empowered to make their own way. Only an educated population, one generation after another, can do this.”

—Operation Promise

**“UPON THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY,
THE FATE OF THIS COUNTRY DEPENDS.”**

- BENJAMIN DISRAELI

PLEASE USE THE ENCLOSED COUPON TO MAKE A DONATION TO SFEJ TODAY.