



## Message from the Editor:

Greeting to all Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia. On behalf of the YESSERA Team, I extend best wishes. As I was preparing our 3<sup>rd</sup> newsletter, I reflected on the role Ethiopians in the diaspora, have played in helping our country and our people cope with economic hardship. Regardless of our views and personal beliefs, we have always come through for our country. However, we have a lot more left to do. The desperate call of our country's youth for guidance resonates louder now more than ever before.

The YESSERA team is grateful for all those who have enabled us to continue our mission of providing opportunities to our youth. Thanks to your support, the trainees from Debre Berhan have completed their training at end of September from OICE (Opportunities Industrialization, Ethiopia). They are currently on a two-month field practice in Debre-Berhan. YESSERA is working hard to raise funds for the graduates to start business(es) to help themselves and their community. Looking ahead, the selection of 10 candidates from Bekoji (Arssi) is underway. The new team will start training at OICE once the final candidates are selected. We hope that Ethiopians will open their heart and extend their hands to support YESSERA in its effort to create opportunities for disadvantaged Ethiopian youth.

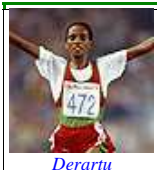
Members of YESSERA are raising funds across US by organizing dinner events. And other activities. There will be a YESSERA booth at this year's Vermont International Festival to sell cultural items donated by friends and members to raise funds for YESSERA. The festival takes place on December 5, 6, and 7 at the Champlain Valley Fairground Sports Pavilion. If you are planning to come to the festival, please visit us at our booth. Any donation of cultural items for this events is greatly appreciated. Please contact the Gutema Family at 802-734-0819 to donate. All proceeds goes to support YESSERA projects. [ngutema@comcast.net](mailto:ngutema@comcast.net)



የይሠረ ድርጅት ከመሠረረትና ዓላማው የሚያተኩረው የኢትዮጵያ ወጣቶችን በማሠልጠንና ራስቸውን ችለው ለውግናቸው ድጋፍ ለሃገራቸው መሪዎች ከንዲሁም በማድረግ ላይ ነው። ድርጅቱ ይህን ዓላማውን የሚያስከትለው በመላው ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ በቤተሰብ ክቅም ማጣት ከንዲሁም በሌሎች ከቁጥጥራቸው ውጭ በሆኑ የኢኮኖሚ ችግሮች የተነሳ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርታቸውን ሊያጠናቅቁ ይልቻሉ ትጉህና ጠንካራ የሆኑ ወጣቶችን መልምሎ በተለያዩ መደቦች በማሠልጠን ነው። ድርጅቱ ወጣቶችን የሚመርጠው በከነባቢው በታወቀና በሕዝቡ ከታሙ መሪዎችና ከንዲሁም ከንደ ቀበሌና ከንደማዘጋጃ ቤት ባሉ የሕዝብ ድርጅቶች ጋር በመተባበር ነው።

ይሠረ ከነዚህን ተግባሮች የሚያከናውነው ከድርጅቱ መሪዎች፣ ከኢትዮጵያውያንና ከሌሎችም ደጋፊዎች በሚያገኘው የገንዘብና የህወቀት ርዳታ ነው። ይህም በመሆኑ ድርጅቱ የተመረጡት ወጣቶች በሚሠሉ ጉዞዎች ውቅት ከሸፈላግውን ወጭ ሙሉ በሙሉ ይሸፍናል። ተመርቀውም ለሥራ ክለም ሲዘጋጁ የሚያስፈልገውን መሣርያ መግዘያ ወይም ንግድ መጀመርያ መዋጮ ያደርጋል። ለምሳሌ ይሠረ ከዚህ ቀደም ከከዋሳ ከሥራ ሁለት ወጣቶችን ከዲብ ከባባ ከስመጥቶ በተለያዩ መደቦች ካሠለጠነ በኋላ ከነዚህ ምናታን በከዋሳ የብሎኬት ማምረቻ ድርጅት ከንዲከፍቱ ረድቷል። ይህም የማምረቻ ድርጅት በከሁኑ ውቅትም ከሠላሳ በላይ የሚሆኑ ሠራተኞችን ያስተዳድራል። በተራውም ሌሎች ወጣቶችን በማስጠን ላይ ይገኛል። በከገር ክቅፍ ደረጃም በምርት ጥራት ተሸልሟል። በከሁኑ ውቅት ከሥራ ከንድ ወጣቶች ከደብረ ብርሐን ተመርጠው ከዲብ ከባባ በኩይ.ኤ.ሲ.ኪ (OICE) ድርጅት ውስጥ ሥልጠናቸውን ከጠናቀው የሁለት ወር መከራ ላይ ተሠማርተዋል።

በሚቀጥለው የሞያ ማሠልጠኛ ፕሮግራሚችን የሚሳተፉት ተማሪዎች የሚመረጡት ከበቅጂ ከተማና ከከነባቢው ነው። ይህም መረጣ በከሁኑ ውቅት በከተ ስለሞን ረታ (የይሠረ ቦርድ ክባል) ከስተባባሪነት በከተ ታደሰ ደስታና በከተ ሙንን ታደሰ ርዳታ አየተካሄደ ነው። የበቅጂ ማዘጋጃ ቤት ውጥቶች ተመርቀው የራሳቸውን ድርጅት ለመመሥረት የሚያስችላቸውን ክስፈላጊውን የሕንጻ መሥርያ በታና ለሎችም ከስፈላጊ የሆኑ ርዳታዎችን ለማድረግ ተስማምቷል። ከበቅጂ የሚመረጡት ወጣቶች የሙያ ሥልጠናቸውን የሚጀምሩት ጎዳር 1 ቀን 2001 (ክ.ኤ.ክ.) ከከነባቢ ድርጅት ነው።  
- የይሠረ ቦርድ



Derartu



Tirunesh

### Our Next Trainees will come from Bekoji, Arssi

Bekoji is world famous, thanks to its world class Athletes like Derartu Tulu, Tirunesh Dibaba, Ejegayehu Dibaba,, Kenenisa Bekele, and many others, who have made us all proud. Today, despite all the fame, Bekoji remains as tranquil, as diverse, and as close knit a community as ever. The community has endured extreme economic and natural hardship. Unemployment is very high, mostly affecting the youth. For every sung hero, like our glorious athletes, there are hundreds of unsung young people who are struggling to survive. That is why YESSERA made Bekoji its current focus. We are in the process of screening over 40 applicants to select ten (10) candidates. We will provide details in our next newsletter. With your financial help, we will be able to train and enable more young people. We ask you to join us and help the Bekoji youth become self-sufficient.



Kenenisa



Ejegayehu



### The new YESSERA graduates made a working visit to Hawassa:

Dear All,  
We returned safely from Hawassa. The mission was very successful. Trainees from Debre Berhan have observed firsthand the achievements of YESSERA Hawassa and have learned a lot. They saw the active participation of YESSERA members and non-members (employees). There was a question and answer time. The Hawassa team shared their success stories and challenges. The way forward was explored by YESSERA Hawassa Construction members and Debre Berhan trainees. I have learned that such events are important for trainees to learn from each other's experiences....Solomon Retta, DCS. 09 October, 2008



### Taking Turns:

Mintamir Desalegn Werku, General Manager of YESSERA-Hawassa, joins us in our Taking Turns section on page 2.

## YOUR DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A BIG WAY!!!

Please consider supporting YESSERA to continue enabling the youth in all corners of Ethiopia. We are raising funds for the new graduates and the new trainees. Any donation will get us closer to our goal. Please make personal check, or cashiers checks, or money orders payable to Yessera, Inc. and mail to P. O. Box 4242, Austin, Texas 78765.



“YESSERA has given us the fishing hook and has taught us how to fish. Now it is up to us to fish.”

## Taking Turns (Mintamir Desalegn Werku)

My name is Mintamir Desalegn Werku. I reside in Piazza, in the center of Hawassa (formerly Awassa) - my birth place. This is a brief story of my life and the unexpected turn of events that brought YESSERA and its supporters into my life.

I come from a large family. I am the fourth of seven children – 5 girls and 2 boys. When I was old enough to go to school, my parents enrolled me in public school. I was a very good student and was able to move through the grades rather quickly. Knowing the size of our family and the meager income of my parents, I realized early on that the only way to get out of poverty and help my parents is to get a university education. My dream of going to university was shattered when I had to interrupt my education to respond to the pressing needs of my family. To help out I started a hair dressing (Shuruba) business. Juggling work and family needs had a significant impact on my education. As a result, I scored low on national examination, and was unable to enroll in university. The irony was that those students who were well-off and whom I have once tutored were able to enroll in private schools and were able to attend university. I was morally devastated. I felt that I am stuck in a vicious circle of poverty for the rest of my life. We lived on my father’s pension of 63 Birr (approx \$12 US). My mother made every effort to supplement our income by making injera for neighbors whenever possible. My siblings also tried helping by working for food or for few cents.

Three years later, in 1994 (E.C.), our Kebele made an announcement about an organization called YESSERA from United States that was working with Spotlight Services Organization of Ethiopia to provide vocational training opportunities for hardworking young Ethiopians who were unable to finish high school due to poverty. The announcement indicated that all costs associated with the training and funding to start business will be covered by YESSERA. I jumped on the opportunity and applied. I passed the stringent screening and was qualified, along with 11 others, for one-year of vocational training. The training was offered at Opportunity Industrialization Center– Ethiopia (OICE). Even though my mother and siblings were very happy for me, I was saddened and intimidated by the thought of leaving my family under the current circumstances and going to a strange place. Thanks to the coaching and mentoring provided by Ato Solomon Retta and Weizero Aselef, both of Spotlight Services Organization, we were able to adapt to our new place and focus on our training.

After graduation we returned to Hawassa and started a cinder block manufacturing factory in 1997 (EC) with the funding and business consulting provided by YESSERA and Spotlight Services Organization. Additional help came from the Kebele officials under the leadership of Ato Legesse Lankamo. With dedication and hard work, the Hawassa YESSERA Association has become very successful and has been recognized for its quality products. Today, we provide free training for young people and employ over 30 people on full time basis.

I have been serving as the General Manager\* of the Association. We are grateful for the support we have received from everyone who has supported YESSERA to make a difference in our lives. My family no longer has to worry about food to put on the table or roof over our heads. YESSERA Hawassa is planning for future growth. I am saving a portion of my earnings to pursue my life long dream – to become a Medical Doctor and help my people.

In conclusion, my story is a success story that is made possible by the generosity and support of all who were determined to make a difference in the life of struggling young people like me. YESSERA has given us the fishing hook and has taught us how to fish. Now it is up to us to fish.

(\* Editor's Note: Since this story was written, Mintamir has completed her term as the GM of YESSERA Hawassa. She now focuses on coaching and mentoring of new leaders. She also serves as Public Relations Officer for the Association.)

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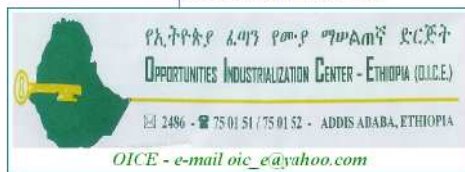
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