

Brand New Website! Check it Out! WWW.ethiopianeducationfund.org. This summer we worked with New Eve Creative on Whidbey Island to create a more dynamic and user-friendly site. Thank you, Marianne!

Ethiopian Education Fund Newsletter | Winter 2019



Dear Friends of the Ethiopian Education Fund,

In 2019 we were able to make two visits to the remote village of Chiri in Ethiopia where girls and boys are selected by the community to enter the EEF program. Stephanie and Jeff took their 16-year-old granddaughter, Raven, in June. Four months later Jeff was able to make a second visit, adding a trip to Chiri to a business trip to Ethiopia. Each of these trips, paid for by personal funds, allows us to stay close to those we seek to help, ensure that our program is running effectively, and become even more motivated to reach more students with education support.



Raven with Jeff, Stephanie, and friend Baky



Every journey has its difficulties. Patience (and a good spare) usually win the day

Raven was experiencing Africa for the first time and came away amazed and humbled.

"I truly was astonished how I, as a stranger, could be considered family so soon and welcomed into people's

homes. I loved how the children were not afraid to interact with me and that the adults respected us and yet saw us as equals. I love how all were so positive when we see them as having so little."

In June, 3 EEF students graduated from Higher Education and got jobs. Yohannes teaches math at a high school; Gebaynesh teaches Kaffanunu, one of the major local languages; and Tesfaye is a now a certified Health Extension Worker and is the eyes and ears of the distant healthcare facility for his community. Read their highlights on the "Student Stories" page on the website.

By October, 12 primary and 16 secondary students were settled in for the school year and were happy to gather with Jeff, Zelalem, and the Scholars Committee representatives who select the students. The support these students receive from your contributions means that smart girls can continue to go to school and not be kept at home. By passing their grade, each



Gebaynesh in Chiri

becomes a vital contributor to her family and guarantees one more year of support from the EEF.

Part of our visits are to let the primary and secondary students know that if they keep passing their grade, EEF will be with them all the way through college. We talk about Shibelay, who is beginning her first year at University; we speak of Aynalem, who started training in Information Technology. We let grade school students know that EEF provides opportunity, but they must do their part by studying and participating in class.



Aynalem, 1st year student in IT studies in Bonga

Women and Children's Affairs Office

During both trips this year, EEF met with staff at the local government office of Women and Children's Affairs. They work with young children from Grades 1-4 who are desperately poor. They provide food, clothing, and school supplies to as many children as they can afford, even using their own money. After in-depth discussion and review of their program, we decided EEF should provide program support for these very young students. We provided an initial donation to a government bank account for \$1,000 and, after reviewing their books in October, made the commitment to provide \$2,000 in 2020. The staff expressed appreciation for the funds that will further their current projects and reach even more very young children in need. It is a pleasure to work with the dedicated women and men of this office.

Our alliance with Days for Girls

We continue to work closely with the Whidbey Island chapter of Days for Girls, an organization that provides reusable menstruation kits for girl students. This year alone Days for Girls and EEF provided nearly 200 kits. Further, one of our nurse graduates from the EEF program has been asked to speak to young women in high school about reproductive health, women's empowerment, and making good choices.

As this year draws to a close...

EEF is making a difference. Our students pass their grades, receive diplomas, and get jobs. Please consider a year-end donation by going to www.ethiopianeducationfund.org and clicking on the "Donate" button or sending a check to the address below. A subscription of \$30 per month (\$360 per year) supports a student in grade school and her family; \$40 per month (\$480 per year) supports a college or university student. Each single donation or monthly commitment reaches students who are inspired by your support. With your support, each of us can make a difference.

All the best from the EEF Board,

Annie, Jeff, Stephanie and Rochelle