

## Ethiopian Education Fund Newsletter | December 2014



Dear Friends of the Ethiopian Education Fund,

As this year comes to a close, we'd like to thank you for your continued support of the Ethiopian Education Fund. Your contributions are helping to break the cycle of poverty that traps individuals, families, and even communities. Simenesh, a bright young woman from a poor family is able to stay in school; the same is true for Tigist, Tsion, and Desta. All are part of EEF's program to educate girls and boys, to give them one more year of school. And when they pass their grade, the EEF will be there again to give them yet another year of school. As they say in Ethiopia, "Cus beh cus," little by little. In this way, the EEF support students in primary and secondary school, in technical college, and in the university. "Just one more year," that is our motto at EEF as you can see from this short video that was made by board member Rochelle Stowe: [youtube.com/watch?v=dBycyEi8ank](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBycyEi8ank).

Since 2005, the EEF has been supporting girls and boys. While cultural sensitivities mean we cannot just support girls, we do give preference to girls because they are the most underserved group. They have no voice. They are taken from school to work at home. They are married at a young age. However, the EEF is part of a movement that is changing this tragic story by empowering girls through education ([youtube.com/watch?v=1e8xgF0JtVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e8xgF0JtVg)). In the last 6 months, a global and highly visible effort is underway to raise the issue of girl's education.



Simenesh at home

Prominent women such as Melinda Gates and Oprah Winfrey have made the education of girls a rallying cry.

And then there is Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani girl who was shot and nearly killed simply trying to get an education. After her recovery, she became an advocate for girl's education throughout the world and received the Nobel Peace Prize this year for her work, the youngest person ever to receive a Nobel Prize.

"In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It's their normal life. But in other parts of the world, we are starving for education... it's like a precious gift. It's like a diamond."

Malala Yousafzai, Pakistani activist

Our students have done well this year. All thirteen students have passed their grade, which means they will continue to receive support from the EEF for further studies. In the coming school year, one student will complete his MS degree in Development, and five others will complete either Grade 10 or Grade 12 and take their "leaving exam," which determines their educational fate. If they do well on the exam, the Grade 10 students will go to technical college or to university prep (Grades 11 and 12); the Grade 12 students will either go onto university or revert to technical college. Through our two fundraising dinners this summer and significant contributions from others, we have raised enough funds to support the students who graduate from these milestone grades and continue their education.



However, the need is still great. You can imagine the waiting list of kids who are smart and from poor families. This year, we have only been able to add three new students. Your continued support will allow the EEF to add new students, particularly girls, so they can continue their education. It costs \$360 per year to support a girl in secondary school; \$1,400 per year for technical college; and \$2,400 per year for a university student.



EEF's manager Zelalem in Chiri problem solving on his mobile phone

We continue to work in Chiri with the Scholars Committee, which is composed entirely of Ethiopians and evaluates students for possible inclusion into the EEF program. Our Ethiopian manager Zelalem makes sure they are following the proper procedures and prioritizing the needs of girls. He is also an extraordinary problem solver and motivator of students and draws on his 12 years of teaching experience.

One of our goals at the EEF is to maintain a close connection to the students and communities we serve. This past year saw

board member Jeffrey Ried return from 20 months in Ethiopia where he was working on agricultural development and spending time building strong relationships with the EEF students and the community of Chiri; board member Stephanie Garlich visited Chiri in April and met with the students and the Scholars Committee to reinforce our commitment to education; and just last month, Elaine Tyrie from Spokane, a long-time organizer and supporter of the EEF, spent 3 weeks in Chiri helping our students improve their English, meeting with the Scholars Committee, and showing that the EEF remains connected to the community. One important note: all travel is covered by each person and does not come from any donations; donations support students.

As we close this year, we hope that you'll consider a donation to the EEF. Our students are doing well, which means they will continue to need support from the EEF. The Scholars Committee is constantly asking us how many new students can be added. Remember that \$30 per month allows a girl to stay in school; \$120 per month in technical college; and \$200 per month in a university. Consider a regular monthly donation. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the EEF through our website ([ethiopianeducationfund.org/donate](http://ethiopianeducationfund.org/donate)) or through the mail (Ethiopian Education Fund, PO Box 30834, Seattle, WA 98103). The EEF can also benefit from any shopping you do at Amazon.com. Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), follow instructions to select the Ethiopian Education Fund, and continue shopping. A portion of your purchase goes to the EEF, and the prices are exactly the same.

As we say in Ethiopia, "Betam ahmesugenalew": many thanks on behalf of the EEF and especially the students we support.

*Jeffrey, EEF Co-founder*