

ETHIOPIAN EDUCATION FUND NEWSLETTER

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE ETHIOPIAN EDUCATION FUND,

As Ethiopia struggles under the weight of political, economic, and security challenges, life goes on especially for students supported by the EEF. While Ethiopia may be run by the “old guard” for now, the EEF recognizes that the next generation of leaders are today’s students.

TEXTBOOKS TO SCHOOLS IS A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Last summer the principal of the high school in the village where we work asked us to purchase textbooks. We knew we must help them because we have partnered with them since 2005 and it was a chance for EEF to help many students and the teachers, too. It is unfortunate that the government is unable to provide textbooks, but that is their reality. We are thankful to you, the donor, that we were able to make a sizable grant to the education office and to the primary school for the purchase of textbooks.



CHALLENGE OF KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL

Every year we support 40 students from primary grades to University. Unfortunately, every year we lose some students, mostly girls, which is why we focus on keeping girls in school. Challenges for girls are greater than boys: unplanned pregnancies, family obligations, illness, poverty, and underage marriage. We are fortunate that Tigist, the EEF community engagement manager, lives in the village and talks to girls. She advises them about potential career paths, and listens to their challenges, and reports back to the Board about how the EEF can do more to support them. We are proud of Tigist because she is talking to the girls in the EEF program 2-3 times/week about their challenges and possible solutions.

One example of thinking outside the box is with an EEF student in college who was studying IT and realized that even a college education might not be enough for her to find a job. So she began a night program in cosmetology in order to have two skills and twice the chance to get a job...all without an increase in EEF support.



WE ARE A FLEXIBLE GRASSROOTS PROGRAM

After almost 20 years of running the EEF, one of our strengths is knowing the students, teachers and officials in the village of Chiri. Although our visits to Kaffa have become less due to COVID and security issues, Ethiopia has advanced so that we are now able to communicate frequently through WhatsApp, Telegram and email. As we hear more from students, we understand more about student challenges and needs. Students may drop out, but a few years later they will contact us for help, and we are glad to have them back because they are ready to concentrate on education.

◆ The EEF recently accepted a student from Chiri who scored high enough to enter University, in Veterinary Medicine, even though he was not part of the EEF program. His family could not afford his education, so the village contacted us. We reviewed his case and decided to provide him with the support to complete his education and bring a needed skill to his community.

◆ An EEF student received excellent grades and entered pharmacy school, but soon after his mother died and he needed to raise his younger siblings, which meant dropping out of school. The EEF reviewed his situation and decided to increase his allowance so he could take care of his siblings and continue to go to school.

YOU MADE OUR SUMMER EVENTS A SUCCESS

The Board of the EEF hosted several summer fundraising parties in houses and cafés. We roasted coffee on campfires and in popcorn poppers (!), gave updates on students, and told stories about life in the jungles of the Kaffa region of Ethiopia.



SO MANY WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE

With 40 students, 2 staff members and grants to the Chiri school district and Women's and Children's Affairs Bureaus, and inflation rates of 30% in Ethiopia last year, the EEF has an ever-increasing annual budget. Therefore, we are always asking. I hope you will consider making an end-of-year donation so that EEF can meet its goals for 2025.

- A yearly donation of \$360 supports a student in grades 7-12.
- \$30 supports a student for a month.
- \$460 a year supports a student in college, university, or vocational school.
- Additional support for computers and smartphones for our University and College students.

DONATE BY CHECK, BANK OR OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.ETHIOPIANEDUCATIONFUND.ORG/DONATE



Coffee, coffee, coffee!

The village of Chiri where we work is in the region of Kaffa where coffee originated (Kaffa = coffee). We have visited the "original" old growth forest where coffee all started! Therefore, one way we raise money is through coffee sales. Our good friend Chuck at **Olympic Crest Coffee Roasters** goes out of his way to procure sweet, rich, Ethiopian coffee and allows us to sell it as a fundraiser.

We can deliver this coffee to you on Whidbey Island, in Olympia, at our fundraising events, and now at an actual store on Whidbey Island by our good friend Juliet at her **Whidbey African Store** in Oak Harbor. Thank you Chuck & Juliet!

Scan this code
to learn about
Juliet's store



All our best,

Jeff, Stephanie, Annie, Rochelle and Azeb