

# Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago

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April 2009

## MAHEBER Newsletter

### A Message From The President

Dear partners, community members and friends,

The Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago (ECAC) is excited to launch and introduce to you the Maheber Newsletter, a monthly electronic newsletter. We hope that this will be a source of information for you on agency programs, activities, developments, successes, and challenges, as well as other related issues that are important to the community.

ECAC has many things to share and celebrate in the coming year. Board and Staff members have continued their work to establish a permanent home for ECAC and you will find updates on the campaign's progress in this issue of Maheber. Furthermore, this year also promises much excitement as ECAC celebrates its 25th year and Chicago hosts the Ethiopian Sport's Federation in North America's summer soccer tournament.

We hope you find this letter informative and enjoyable!

Fasika Alem  
President, Board of Directors

### Twenty-Five Years of Distinguished Service



We are proud to announce that the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago (ECAC) will be hosting a gala this fall in honor of 25 years of distinguished service to the immigrant and refugee communities in general, and to the Ethiopian community in particular.

Congratulations and happy birthday to ECAC, as well as all its members, supporters and friends! It is your commitment, support

and cooperation that have made it possible for ECAC to thrive for a quarter of a century, and we thank you for your continued encouragement. As we prepare to celebrate 25 years of service to the community, we invite you participate in this exciting occasion. Additional details surrounding the event will follow in the next issue of this newsletter.

### Celebrating the Past, Building the Future

Celebrating the past, building the future is the theme for ECAC's Community and Childcare Center Project. Our goal is to raise \$3 million dollars by 2010 in order to purchase a facility on Chicago's North Side to serve as a Childcare and Cultural Center for the Ethiopian community, as well as all other immigrants and refugees who seek our services. Aggressive fundraising efforts are being conducted by board and staff members, as well as committed supporters of the Association, and to date, we have raised over \$200,000 in private contributions and pledges. ECAC's 25th anniversary marks the perfect time to simultaneously celebrate the agency's past accomplishments and build toward its future.

### Spotlight on:

#### ECAC's Electromechanical Assembly Training Program



On January 13, 2009, the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago graduated twenty-three students from its Electromechanical Assembly Training Program (EMAT). The ten-week program is the first of its kind in the Chicago-land area, and provided the students with both theoretical and practical training in electrical, electronic and mechanical assembly.

### Cultural and Language Classes for Ethiopian Youth!



Join ECAC Youth Program Coordinator M'aza Dowling-Brown Saturday mornings from 10:00-12:00 for cultural dance, art, music and Amharic language classes!

## Ethiopian Sport Federation in North America Brings Annual Soccer Tournament to Chicago



For the first time since its inception 26 years ago, the Ethiopian Soccer Federation in North America (ESFNA) is coming to Chicago! The Chicago-based Blue Nile Soccer Team, an ESFNA member since 1988, has been selected to host the 26th annual tournament at Lane Tech Stadium, located at 2501 W. Addison St. from June 28 - July 4, 2009.

ESFNA's annual event is not only for sports supporters and enthusiasts; more than 15,000 people are expected to converge on Chicago this year for alumni gatherings, political and NGO conferences, and cultural events. For more information, please visit ESFNA's website by clicking here.

We hope you enjoyed this first edition of the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago's MAHEBER Newsletter. For more information on ECAC, including programs, activities and upcoming events, please visit [www.ecachicago.org](http://www.ecachicago.org).

Sincerely,

Erku Yimer  
Executive Director

Fasika Alem  
President, Board of Directors

If you are interested in additional youth programming, ECAC also offers an after-school recreation and tutoring program Monday-Thursday from 2:00-5:00pm.

For more information, please contact M'aza at 773.728.0303 ext. 18.

### Thank You!

This winter, 14 students from Loyola University's Department of Anthropology served as volunteers at ECAC. They have helped integrate newly arrived refugee families into their new communities by helping them network and navigate job markets, tutoring them in English, and introducing them to free events in and around Chicago. A big THANK YOU goes out to all of our volunteers.

If you would like to learn about volunteer opportunities at ECAC, please click here.