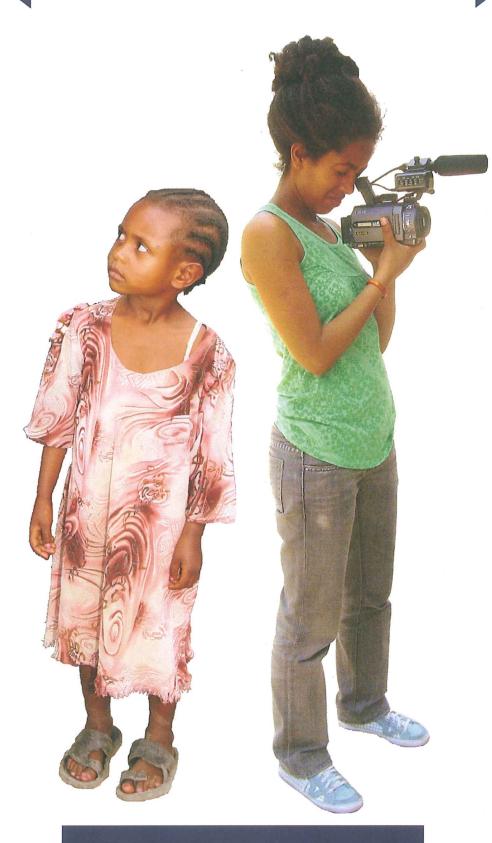
LOOKING BACK

LOOKING AHEAD

The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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Of Angst and Elation: A Message from the President

As with many nonprofits in this period of extended economic difficulty, NACOEJ has had to struggle to bring in revenues sufficient to fund our work that is so vital to the well-being of Ethiopian Jews. That struggle, despite the devotion of our donors, is indeed angst-inducing.

It was only when I visited Israel with my family of 12 this past June that the angst turned to elation. I was no longer looking at columns of figures, hoping to make them align with our projections. Rather, I was looking into the eyes of young people whose lives were being touched profoundly by NACOEJ programs.

Shoshana Ben-Dor, the amazing director of NACOEJ in Israel, and I met with the principal of the school in Lod where NACOEJ runs a *Limudiah* Program. I was touched when the principal commented that the *Limudiah* programs have produced a "revolution" in Lod. In my mind, it is a revolution of realized potential.

I made this trip to Israel for the purpose of introducing my five grandchildren to the Jewish state. We had dinner one evening with university students who participate in NACOEJ's Adopt-A-Student program. They were an amazing group who, in their short lifetimes, have traveled worlds from the place where they were born. On our return, my granddaughter Celia Goldfarb, age 12, wrote the following to me: "I enjoyed all of (the Israel trip), but I especially thank you for setting up the dinner with the Ethiopian Jews. They had some really interesting stories to tell!" Celia, too, experienced the elation. I hope you will afford yourselves a similar opportunity when you visit Israel.





Looking Back—Looking Ahead: A Message from the Executive Director

As predicted, the year 2010 was financially difficult. But as this Annual Report shows, we did our best to maintain essential programs in Ethiopia and Israel, and given the economy, our best was pretty good.

Two events stand out. In August, 2010, we made a painful but necessary decision to cut costs by leaving our long-time New York offices on Nassau Street (where rents had increased dramatically) for less expensive but adequate

rooms on West 36th street, where we are now settled comfortably.

In November, following years of tireless advocacy led by former president Joseph Feit, the government of Israel joined NACOEJ and the Jewish Agency in an agreement to resume the dormant aliyah from Ethiopia and to turn NACOEJ programs in Gondar over to the Agency. The deal wasn't perfect, but we could live with it since it meant that thousands of Ethiopian Jews would live to reach Israel, albeit slowly, and NACOEJ could turn our attention entirely to crucial Israel programs.

At year's end, we were still rejoicing and expecting, rather optimistically it seems, rapid progress in the turn-over in Gondar. In the end, the result of all of our efforts will depend on the goodwill of the great State of Israel, and the continued perseverance and dedication of our NACOEJ Board, supporters and friends.

Barbara Rifahove Gordon

"I like my teachers because they always help and support us. I also like the coordinator of the Limudiah who comes to visit us sometimes. Thank you to all of those who help us, encourage us, and praise us when we succeed. Thank you for this wonderful year." Mazal Lyov, fourth grade student, Lod Limudiah

When the principal of a new highlevel secondary school in Rehovot came to recruit students from one of our Limudiah programs to enroll in his school, we knew we had come a long way. Many elite schools traditionally shy away from enrolling Ethiopian Israelis out of fear that they won't be "good-enough" students or that non-Ethiopian parents may object. This was satisfying proof that our results are slowly but surely changing attitudes. This particular young principal had taught in a Limudiah a few years ago and recognizes the academic and social achievements of its elementary-school participants.

During the 2010-2011 school year, over 850 Ethiopian-Israeli elementary school students participated in Limudiah programs in 18 schools in nine communities: Ramla, Lod, Rehovot, Gedera, Rishon LeZion, Nes Ziona, Kiryat Ekron, Jerusalem, and Beit Shemesh.

The inclusive Limudiah programs operated in schools where Ethiopian Israelis make up less than 10% of the student body, and in schools where they make up over 50%. We work in schools that are in some of Israel's most depressed neighborhoods and cities, giving our children academic success and career aspirations, keeping them away from street culdependency, and we also work in some of Israel's garden communities, helping the Ethiopian children deal with the discouraging fact that they don't have everything their better-off schoolmates have.

Founded in 1993, the Limudiah program began in two schools in the city of Ramla. Today, the program is recognized as being extremely effective in achieving its goals of providing Ethiopian-Israeli children with the general knowledge and specific skills they need to compete with, reach and even surpass the level of their peers, despite a background of little Hebrew language, parental illiteracy and poverty at home. Beginning in first grade, and helping children learn the basics at the same pace as their non-Ethiopian-Israeli peers, the Limudiah programs give their participants a sense of personal success and of fitting in socially, rather than the failure, frustration and alienation that too many of their Ethiopian-Israeli peers experience.

The Limudiah operates according to a few simple but vital principles that have proven themselves over the years:

- Located in the students' own schools and promoting intensive cooperation with their homeroom teachers, we ensure that there is continuity between the two frameworks and that both classroom expectations and individual
 - Highly-trained, professional, caring and hardworking Limudiah teachers ensure that our children receive outstanding pedagogic responses to their

- and are enriched with interesting materials that build their language and math skills and their ability for self-expression.
- Ten hours a week of support in class-level study groups of only eight students to one teacher provide sufficient time to meet a spectrum of needs for both the group and individuals. As a single group often includes some students with remedial needs and others who (with our help) are above class level, our teachers need and use the time to be creative and flexible.
- Lunches allow our students, many of whom come from impoverished families that struggle to provide even the most basic nutrition, to have a good, balanced meal and the energy to devote to studies.
- Creative writing and other activities, including music, art and drama, along with holiday celebrations including parents, provide opportunities for parents to take pride in their children's performances and productions, and to share Ethiopian traditions and skills with the class.

In some cities, notably Ramla, Lod and Rehovot, over 85% of our participants ended the 2010-2011 year with grades ranging from class level to outstanding. The municipalities in these cities are outspoken in noting the advances made by their Ethiopian-Israeli young people in Limudiah classes, citing the continued progress of former Limudiah students who successfully pass their high school matriculation exams and go on to higher education. In other cities, such as Rishon LeZion, Gedera, and Beit Shemesh, we face exceptionally difficult challenges, but our pupils' achievement rates are significantly above the nationwide rate of less than 40% of Ethiopian-Israeli children achieving class level. Our goal is to ensure that all Limudiah participants reach (or even exceed) class level.



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crime

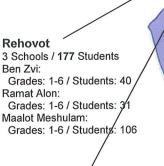
NACOEJ Limudiah students, Rehovot



Rishon LeZion 104 Students Yeshurun School Grades 1-6



Nes Ziona 35 Students Re'ut School Grades 1-6





2 Schools / 92 Students Pines: Grades: 1-6 / Students: 43 Ohel Shalom: Grades 1-6 / Students: 49



3 Schools / 138 Students Rambam:

Grades: 1-5 / Students: 67

Noam HaMeiri:

Grades: 1-5 / Sudents: 36

HaMaapilim:

Grades 1-5 / Students: 35



Ramla

3 Schools / 110 Students Harin:

Grades 1-4 / Students: 43

Bar-Ilan:

Grades 1-4 / Students: 30

Maanit:

Grades 1-4 / Students: 37



Jerusalem

27 Students The Brandt School Grades: 1-3



Kiryat Ekron

40 Students **Ohel Meir School** Grades 1-4



Beit Shemesh

3 Schools / 95 Students Har-El:

Grades 4-6 / Students: 25 Elyakim:

Grades 4-6 / Students: 54

Ahavat Yisrael:

Grades 4-6 / Students:16



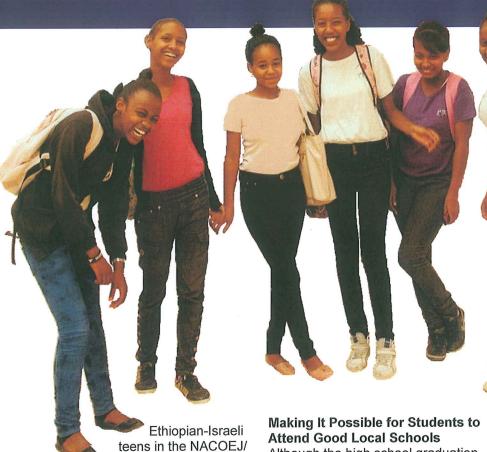
"Our children feel good going to the Limudiah and we can see that they are progressing in their school work." Parent, Rehovot Limudiah

In recognition of our achievements, financial contributions to Limudiah by municipalities and the Ministry of Education increased this past year. However, as we go to press, we look to the coming 2011-2012 school year with some trepidation. Funding our programs is becoming increasingly challenging, not only because of the current economic crisis and the fact that some donor foundations have reached the end of their current funding cycle, but because we must raise our pay scale to keep good teachers just when the value of the dollar has been dropping.

Nevertheless, we view our accomplishments with pride, and our future with confidence. One of our greatest sources of satisfaction is seeing our Limudiah graduates from years past return to us, not only seek-

ing high school scholarships but also qualifying for Adopt-A-Student stipends as college students. This past year, for the second time, we employed a student teacher who was herself a Limudiah student in Ramla in the mid-1990's. As a highly rated program that the Ministry of Education authorizes to supervise studentteachers, the Limudiah has helped to launch a number of Ethiopian-Israeli studentteachers, and many other young Ethiopian Israelis, on successful careers. NACOEJ Limudiah student, Rishon LeZion, Yeshurun School

NACOEJ/Edward G. Victor High School Sponsorship Program



Edward G. Victor High School Sponsorship Program are setting their sights high. Students hope to be doctors, engineers, fashion designers, dancers, dentists, and more. NACOEJ scholarships have been instrumental in enabling them to excel and serve as role models for the entire Ethiopian community.

Looking Back:

- In 1996-1997, 18 students in 6 schools in 3 cities kicked off the program.
- Within 5 years, the program aided approximately 1,000 students per year in over 50 schools in more than 20 cities.
- After 10 years, close to 1,500 students in 59 schools in 17 cities were helped by more than 200 sponsors.

In the 2010-2011 School Year:

- 1.041 Ethiopian-Israeli high school students in 59 schools in 18 cities received NACOEJ scholarships.
- 181 students in the program successfully graduated from high school.
- 220 sponsors participated in the program, donating over \$146,000 for program sponsorships.

Attend Good Local Schools

Although the high school graduation rate for Ethiopian students has steadily grown, many Ethiopian students lag behind in their Bagrut (matriculation) scores. In 2010, only 42.1% earned Bagrut diplomas, as compared to 64.6% amongst the general Jewish student population. Currently only 21% of Ethiopian students qualify for higher education.

One major problem facing Ethiopian teens is the quality of education that they receive. NACOEJ aims to give them better options. Since 1997, the NACOEJ/Edward G. Victor High School Sponsorship Program has enabled countless Ethiopian-Israeli teenagers to attend high-quality local schools instead of leaving home for state-subsidized boarding schools, many of which do not provide a high-level education.

However, while basic high school tuition is covered by the Israeli government, schools charge additional compulsory fees that are often beyond the means of Ethiopian immigrant families. The NACOEJ scholarships, provided by program sponsors, defray most of the cost of these

fees. Today, in part due to NACOEJ, many more Ethiopian students are studying at local schools. With our financial support, they can take advantage of all educational, cultural and social activities that their schools offer.

Good schools prepare students for the Israeli matriculation examinations. which enable them to be accepted in Israeli universities and academic colleges, ultimately leading to professional degrees and gainful employment. A high percentage of NACOEJ-supported students study on a full matriculation track and the numbers of those graduating with full matriculation has increased in recent years.

But last year, more than 800 students on our waiting list did not receive sponsorships, due to a lack of funds.

Looking Ahead

This was the 15th Anniversary of the NACOEJ High School Program. Next year we hope to be able to expand the program to help many more Ethiopian-Israeli teenagers achieve their dreams.

"I want to be a lawyer or accountant when I'm older, and an army officer."

NACOEJ-sponsored student, Lod.



Photos to right and above: NACOEJ students

Acceptance into college is only the beginning. While the first three years of college tuition are covered by the Israeli government for many Ethiopian Israelis, students must pay for living expenses, including rent, food, and transportation, as well as for books and other educational supplies. This places a heavy financial burden on Ethiopian-Israeli students, whose parents are usually not able to help them. In some cases, the result is that students drop out of college (or never begin) and take unskilled jobs to support themselves. Without a professional degree, these young Ethiopian Israelis will be caught in a cycle of poverty.

AAS Sponsorships Enable Students to Succeed

Since 1987, the NACOEJ/Vidal Sassoon Adopt-A-Student (AAS) College Sponsorship Program has given Ethiopian-Israeli students the support they need to make it through college. The AAS scholarships provide Ethiopian-Israeli college students with a modest monthly living stipend that makes it possible for them to attend Israel's best universities and colleges, and participate fully in university life. Ultimately, they earn degrees that enable them to integrate successfully into Israeli society.

Student Successes

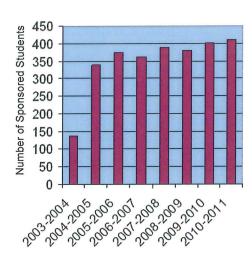
An increasing number of undergraduate students in the AAS program are qualifying for the most demanding majors in universities, attending highlevel academic colleges and pursuing degrees in fields such as computer science, engineering and science.

Taking It To A Higher Level

In two years, the number of AAS graduates who have returned to school to pursue advanced degrees has almost doubled. We had 35 students this year studying for Master's degrees and two pursuing doctorates. We offer a returning student's original sponsor the chance to help at the next stage of the student's educational career, and many are overjoyed to take this opportunity.

AAS alumni are entering professional fields in Israel such as engineering, civil service, education, medicine, law, social work, and nursing.

Looking Back



In the 2010-2011 School Year:

- 411 college students received AAS sponsorships.
- 150 sponsors participated in the program, donating over \$447,992 for program sponsorships.
- AAS sponsorships supported students in 6 universities and 24 academic colleges, including 8 nursing schools, and 7 engineering schools.
- Students' fields of study included medicine, education, computer science, nursing, optometry, film, accounting, guidance counseling, psychology, engineering, and more.
- 106 AAS students earned their degrees.
- 37 AAS students studied for advanced degrees, 6 completed their Master's degrees, and 1 completed a Ph.D.

Barney's Books

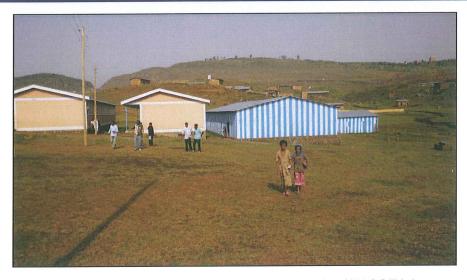
Barney's Books, a venture initiated by long-time multiple AAS sponsors Barney and Rachel Gottstein, has met with great success in its second year. The program, which provides children's books for AAS students to bring home to read to their younger siblings, encourages young Ethiopian children to read. So far, the program has distributed over 1000 children's books to Ethiopian children across Israel. Currently, the program is being expanded to include other AAS sponsors who wish to participate.

Looking Ahead

This was the 25th Anniversary of the NACOEJ/Vidal Sassoon Adopt-A-Student College Sponsorship Program. We hope to be able to expand the program to help many more Ethiopian-Israeli college students realize their potential.

AAS student MARU GETTE (below) was born in Macha, a small village in Ethiopia, in 1983. He was a cattle herder like his parents, until the family made aliyah in 1991. Today, after serving as a commander and officer in the IDF's prestigious Golani Brigade, he is fulfilling his dream of becoming a doctor by studying medicine at Ben-Gurion University, with help from NACOEJ. Maru will graduate in 2013.





Ethiopia: A Year of Survival and Hope

Although poverty and hunger remained devastating among the approximately 7000 Jews in Gondar, there were some positive developments in 2010.

Thanks to a generous grant from the UJA-Federation of New York, we were able to reopen the Feeding Center that had been closed for two years for lack of funds. Additional grants from MAZON, the Moriah Fund and other institutions, a partnership gift from Melvin and Claire Levine of Florida, and

contributions

from thousands of NACOEJ donors, enabled us to start providing two excellent meals a day to pregnant and nursing women, and to children aged three and under, the population most vulnerable to the long-term effects of malnutrition.

But our funds didn't stretch to children aged four through six, (too young for school lunches as first grade in Ethiopia starts at age seven). Heartsick, we found children in that age group waiting, hungry and bewildered, outside the Feeding Center while their mothers fed their younger siblings inside!

Feeding Center while their mothers fed their younger siblings inside!

A passionately renewed fund-raising campaign finally enabled one meal a day for the hungry four-to-six-year olds.

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The year ended with great hopes.

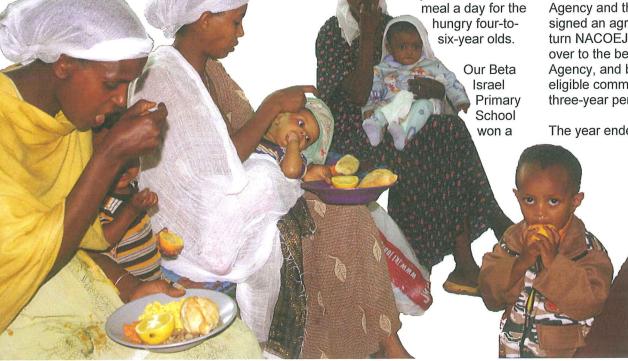
prestigious award as the secondbest private school in Gondar, as our children aced local tests and ate good lunches prepared in the school kitchen sponsored by the Teichman family of New Jersey. We erected a stone tablet in front of the school engraved in English, Amharic and Hebrew, decorated with a Star of David, and identifying the school as founded by NACOEJ for "the children of Gondar". (The school will be in use long after the Jews have left for Israel.) We also opened the school on Saturdays for non-Jewish neighborhood children, staffed by our non-Jewish academic teachers, to the great appreciation of locals, and warm praise from the Ethiopian ambassador to Israel.

A severe summer storm that did much damage in Gondar City demolished some temporary classrooms attached to the school, but left the one-story permanent buildings unhurt and, most important, we received a welcome message from Gondar: "NO PERSON HURTS!"

A limited aliyah for people mistakenly left behind during previous aliyot began after family members in Israel told their painful stories to the Knesset, and late in the year Israeli consuls began checking community members' credentials for an ongoing aliyah. NACOEJ, the Jewish Agency and the Israeli government signed an agreement that would turn NACOEJ programs in Gondar over to the better-funded Jewish Agency, and bring the rest of the eligible community home over a three-year period.

Photo Above: Part of the Beta Israel Primary School, 2010

Photo Left: Feeding Center, Gondar, 2010



NACOEJ offers our supporters a chance to get directly involved in helping Ethiopian Jews through our Mitzvah Projects pro-

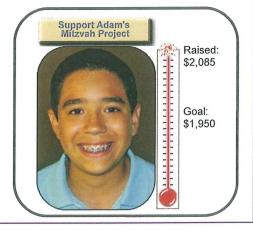
gram. Participants can choose to create a project to help Ethiopian Jews through any of our programs. In 2008, the NACOEJ Mitzvah Project was formally started and several resources were launched on our website, including the ability to set up a personal fundraising page, tools and ideas for Mitzvah Projects, and an on-line curriculum for teachers.

Since 2008, a variety of Mitzvah Projects have been completed for NACOEJ, illustrating the creative directions that the project inspired. Hebrew Schools, B'nei Mitzvah and adults of all ages put hard work into their projects and the result has been a huge success for participants and those they helped.

Looking Back

Since 2008, more than \$60,000 has been raised through NACOEJ Mitzvah Projects. In addition, countless bags full of new school supplies have been collected and sent to Israel for Limudiah children.

For his Bar Mitzvah last November, Adam Cintron took on a Mitzvah Project to raise funds for the NACOEJ Ethiopia School Lunch Program, aiming to feed 13 children for a year. He used a three-pronged approach to his project; educating friends and family about Ethiopian Jewry, becoming a NACOEJ Twin, and setting up his own fundraising web page on the NACOEJ website. All his efforts paid offhe even beat his projected goal!





The NACOEJ Bar / Bat Mitzvah Twinning Program "twins" youths from the US, UK and Canada with Ethiopian-Israeli students who are of Bar/Bat Mitzvah age.

The program encourages Jewish children around the world to learn about Ethiopian Israelis their own age, and promotes friendships and understanding of different Jewish cultures. By participating in the program, Bar / Bat Mitzvah students also give needed financial assistance to Ethiopian students' classrooms in Israel. Ethiopian-Israeli "twins" enjoy having pen pals in another country, and of course, they benefit from contributions made via the Twinning Program.

One of the special features of our Twinning Program is that American families visiting Israel can meet their Ethiopian-Israeli twins. Our Jerusalem office makes all the arrangements.

Such a meeting took place this past July between Joel and Samuel Liss, biological twins, and their "twins" through our program, Netanel Kelo (above, middle, left) and Yonatan Alhin (above, middle, right), who attend the Rambam School in Lod. The Liss family visited the school, where the NACOEJ coordinator, Adaia Sarfati, served as their translator and guide.

The Liss twins brought small gifts for Yonatan and Netanel. Since their return, Joel and Samuel have written to their "twins" and hope to keep in touch with them – an example of the Twinning Program's ability to forge meaningful relationships and understanding between Jewish youths from different backgrounds.



On February 22, plaques were presented to both NACOEJ past president Joseph Feit and founder and executive director Barbara Ribakove Gordon at the Plenary of the Jewish Agency's Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors in Jerusalem, to honor them and NACOEJ for our work.



NACOEJ opened a new Limudiah program in Beit Shemesh.

facebook NACOEJ launched a Facebook page, publicizing our work and keeping our followers up-to-date with breaking news about our programs.

This year, our AAS Program helped 411 college students, the most ever!



We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all those who contributed to NACOEJ in 2010.

Please know that every single gift has made a difference, no matter the size, and we would gladly have listed each and every gift from our thousands of loyal supporters if we had the space to do so.

Thank you!

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We gratefully acknowledge the Isaac and Rose Feiner Fund, established by Samuel Fenner in 1999 for the benefit of the Ethiopian-Jewish community.

NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ETHIOPIAN JEWRY, INC. AND AFFILIATES COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION DECEMBER 31, 2010

	Un	Current Funds Temporarily Unrestricted Restricted		All Funds		
<u>ASSETS</u>						
Current assets: Cash and cash equivalents Investment in marketable securities Contributions receivable Prepaid expenses Total current assets	\$	265,411\$ 11,383 19,271 12,729 308,794	367,595 \$ 894,941 202,937 1,465,473	633,006 906,324 222,208 12,729 1,774,267		
Furniture and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation of \$50,849 Security deposits	_	4,560 12,500		4,560 12,500		
Total assets	\$ _	325,854\$	1,465,473\$	1,791,327		
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u>						
Current liabilities: Accounts payable and accrued expenses Deferred public support Total liabilities	\$ 	290,432 499,061 789,493	\$	290,432 499,061 789,493		
Commitments						
Net assets: Unrestricted Temporarily restricted Total net assets	_	(463,639)	1,465,473 1,465,473	(463,639) 1,465,473 1,001,834		
Total liabilities and net assets	\$	<u>325,854</u> \$	1,465,473\$	1,791,327		

NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ETHIOPIAN JEWRY, INC. AND AFFILIATES COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	Current Fund	Total	
•	9	Temporarily	All
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Funds
Support and revenue:			
Public support	\$1,070,017	\$1,619,449	\$2,689,466
Sales (net of cost of goods sold of			
\$1,659)	17,024		17,024
Other income	24,466		24,466
Interest income		3,713	3,713
Dividend income	128	10,935	11,063
Net realized and unrealized gain/(loss)			
on securities	1,795	116,925	118,720
Net assets released from restrictions -			
satisfaction of program restrictions	1,661,902	(1,661,902)	
Total support and revenue	2,775,332	89,120	2,864,452
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Relief in Ethiopia	548,263		548,263
Assistance in Israel	1,699,016		1,699,016
Information and Education - USA	311,442		311,442
	2,558,721	_	2,558,721
Total program services	2,330,721	_	2,000,721
Supporting services:			
Management and general	159,076		159,076
Fundraising	265,436	_	265,436
Total supporting services	424,512	-	424,512
Total expenses	2,983,233	_	2,983,233
Change in net assets	(207,901)	89,120	(118,781)
Not exacts beginning of year	(255,738)	1,376,353	1,120,615
Net assets, beginning of year	(200,730)	1,010,000	1,120,010
Net assets, end of year	\$ <u>(463,639)</u>	\$ <u>1,465,473</u>	\$ <u>1,001,834</u>

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Leah Barkai, Israel Coordinator of Edward G. Victor High School Scholarship Program and Bar and Bat Mitzvah Twinning program

Martha Baynesegn, Archival and Budgetary Associate

Yonatan Pulik, Staff Writer

Mission Statement:

The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ) is a grassroots, non-profit organization founded in 1982 with four mandates:

- To help Ethiopian Jews survive in Ethiopia.
- To assist them in reaching Israel.
- To aid in their absorption into Israeli society.
- To preserve their unique and ancient culture.

Photo Descriptions:

Front Cover:

Jewish child in Gondar, 2010 Alemwork Marsha, AAS Student, 2009

Table of Contents:

Limudiah students, Rishon LeZion, Yeshurun School, 2011

Back Cover:

Jewish child in Gondar, 2010 AAS graduate, 2004

- A special thank you to Win Robins of Beit Shemesh and NYC for providing many of the photographs in this report.
- Thank you to Dan Futterman and to Myer Daniels for the recent photos of Ethiopia.
- Thank you to all of the NACOEJ staff for their contributions to the Annual Report.
- Thank you to Judy Dick for her assistance with the development of the annual report's content and design.

Report Design: Gary Metzger

LOOKING BACK - LOOKING AHEAD



NACOEJ is a grass-roots, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1982, and is the only major American organization committed exclusively to the welfare of Ethiopian Jews.

