

# 2023 Annual Report

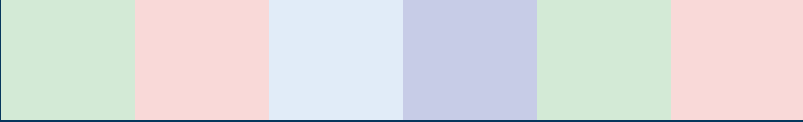
NACOEJ:  
41 Years of  
Critical Education,  
Aid, and Advocacy  
for Ethiopian Jews





## **Mission Statement**

The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ) is a 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 the absorption of Ethiopian Jews into Israeli society.**
  - **To help preserve their unique and ancient Jewish culture.**
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# Message from Our Executive Director



**Barbara Ribakove**  
Founder and Executive Director

**A**s I reflect on our accomplishments in the 2022-2023 academic year, I am grateful that NACOEJ has continued to provide invaluable aid to our Ethiopian-Jewish communities in Israel and in Ethiopia.

I am even more grateful that we are still here, after October 7, 2023, which changed our Jewish world in ways we could never have fathomed. Today, we continue to reel from the shock and violence.

Our Ethiopian-Israeli family has been impacted in many ways just as all their fellow Israelis have.

Many of our Adopt-A-Student (AAS) college students have been called up to fight Hamas on the frontlines in both the south and north of Israel. They are proud to serve their country.

We hope to have more sponsors like you who will step up to support more college students in this one-of-a-kind program that is their gateway to academic success and meaningful contributions to their beloved homeland.

The children in our Limudiah programs need the academic assistance, reassurance, and comfort that our wonderful teachers can provide.

In war and peace our NACOEJ programs are essential for the Ethiopian-Israeli community. During this time of so much pain and fear as the war in Israel continues unabated, our help is needed more than ever.

In Ethiopia, this past year has seen severe hunger as well as deadly conflict raging close to where the Jewish community lives.

Our food distributions for the Jewish community have saved lives. And our feeding programs for children under five have staved off malnutrition which can result in stunting, both physically and cognitively, while our feeding programs for pregnant and nursing mothers have helped the mothers give birth safely and nurse successfully.

We deeply appreciate your partnership with NACOEJ as we work to help our Ethiopian-Jewish communities on both sides of the Red Sea.

*Barbara Ribakove*



# NACOEJ/Limudiah Intensive Education Program for Ethiopian-Israeli School Children

The Limudiah is a unique program, providing ten hours of Hebrew, math and study skills, working within schools to close scholastic gaps for Ethiopian-Israeli children.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, NACOEJ registered for, and was accepted into, a new Israel Ministry of Education program, which grants schools and local authorities a flexible budget to use for programs such as the Limudiah. (All the municipalities in which we work contribute thirty to forty percent of the cost of the program.)

During the 2023 academic year we served 370 students in 12 schools in six cities: Bat Yam, Beit Shemesh, Jerusalem, Kiryat Ekron, Lod, and Rishon Lezion.

In some schools the Limudiah runs in the mornings. Students taken out of the classroom to learn Hebrew are taken out during their grammar or text lessons. They are taken out of math classes to learn math, etc. In other schools the Limudiah is held after the school day is over, in which case the students first receive a nutritious meal. In all situations, if a Limudiah class has more than 8 students a teacher's aide is hired.

At the beginning of the year Limudiah staff meet with schools' administrative staff to fine tune goals and choose the students for each learning group. Participation in the program depends on the educational, emotional, and social situation of each student. Students with disciplinary issues and special education students are not included in the Limudiah. At year-end meetings with school administrations and municipal partners, every school expressed appreciation for the program and recognition of its accomplishments. ■

In addition to the formal Limudiah Program, in Rehovot we partnered with the municipality and Ethiopian community members who run the Awakat ('knowledge' in Amharic) Center. The community sought programs to reinforce children's skills in language, English, and math. Because of the Limudiah Program's excellent reputation, NACOEJ was asked to run the Awakat Center's after-school educational programs.

During the 2022-2023 academic year 51 students from third to eighth grades studied at the center. The students came from eight local schools. ■

## 2022-2023 Limudiah Programs: 370 students ■ 14 schools ■ 6 cities

<b>Beit Shemesh</b>	<b>16 students</b>	Uziel School
<b>Bat Yam</b>	<b>88 students</b>	Ben Gurion School: 16 Harel School: 23 Yitzhak Sadeh School: 29 Jerusalem School: 20
<b>Kiryat Ekron</b>	<b>26 students</b>	Ohel Meir School
<b>Jerusalem</b>	<b>47 students</b>	Guatemala School: 27 Reishit School: 20
<b>Lod</b>	<b>170 students</b>	HaMaapilim School: 47 Levi Eshkol School: 16 Noam Hameiri School: 28 Noam Neriya School: 24 Rambam School: 83
<b>Rishon Lezion</b>	<b>23 students</b>	Yeshurun School

## Middle School Limudiah: AL – Rising to Excellence

In Jerusalem and Lod we continued work with municipal figures and the heads of schools such as the Hebrew University High School (one of the most prestigious high schools in Israel) toward the goal of having our Limudiah students be accepted into such highly regarded high schools.

This year we expanded our activities in Jerusalem at the municipality's request and added the Guatemala School. In our second year working at the Reishit school, the AL students led activities for the general school population and were well-respected as a group. Out of ten students, six were accepted into the best schools in the city, while the remaining four students were accepted into very good schools.

In addition to teaching English, language, and math, NACOEJ connected with Intel's Jerusalem office. Once a week, the AL students traveled to the Intel office and were instructed by Intel staff in beginner's coding (5 to 6 instructors per group). Meeting with high-tech workers and receiving a warm welcome empowered our students and opened a window for them to dream big and believe in their abilities.

We also opened a new program in the Levi Eshkol School in Lod for excelling eighth grade students, again with the goal of channeling our students into high-quality high schools in the city. The program employs two teachers: a math teacher, Dr. Tarwerk Molet, an Ethiopian Doctor of Mathematics, and an excellent English teacher. ■



## NACOEJ High School Sponsorship Program

**T**he NACOEJ High School Sponsorship Program enables Ethiopian-Israeli teenagers to take full advantage of educational opportunities in their schools. Basic tuition is covered by the Israeli government, but schools charge additional fees which are often beyond the means of Ethiopian families. While the children cannot by law be left out of the activities, the schools bill the parents for money they often do not have.

Further, better quality schools with higher expenses may not accept Ethiopian students, knowing that they cannot afford these extra costs. The NACOEJ High School Sponsorship Program provides these crucial funds, allowing more students to study on a full matriculation track.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, 24 donors sponsored 105 students in 15 schools. ■

## NACOEJ/Barney & Rachel Landau Gottstein Adopt-A-Student (AAS) College Sponsorship Program

Starting in 1987, the NACOEJ/Barney & Rachel Landau Gottstein Adopt-A-Student College Sponsorship Program (AAS), has given thousands of Ethiopian-Israeli college students the financial support they urgently need in order to complete their degrees.

The Israeli governments covers full tuition for many Ethiopian Israelis, but students must pay for living expenses that include rent, food, transport, textbooks, supplies, and more.

Most Ethiopian families cannot help their children financially. An AAS sponsorship helps a student stay in school, earn a degree, enter a profession and break the cycle of poverty. Sponsorships are a wonderful investment in the Ethiopian-Israeli community and in Israel itself.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, 38 donors sponsored 166 students in 33 institutions of higher learning. ■

**T**he ALEKA program trains leaders and influencers from the Ethiopian community in the Israeli education system to create a cadre of managers for key positions. The two-year program promotes social mobility and fair representation of Ethiopian teachers in senior positions in the public sector. In the first year, the participants attend group sessions and learn administrative tools and leadership skills via workshops or meetings with senior figures. In the second year they receive personal mentorships. The mentors help them reach personal goals and accelerate their careers within the education system. The participants also attend monthly group sessions where they receive additional tools for leadership. Seventy percent of the first group of graduates were appointed to higher positions, and one was appointed as a principal. This NACOEJ program partners with the Israeli Ministry of Education and Herzog College. ■

# In Ethiopia



NACOEJ provides indispensable assistance to the Jewish community in Gondar City and Addis Ababa Ethiopia. NACOEJ funds most of the food aid and educates the American public about the issue.

In the past year, the civil war encroached on Gondar Province and several Jews were killed, while the impact of the worst drought in 40 years continued (and will likely persist for the foreseeable future). Food remains both scarce and extremely expensive.

To meet the needs of the community, we expanded our crucial meal programs for children under five and pregnant and nursing mothers, those most vulnerable to malnutrition. We are now serving about 1,200 children and mothers.

The death rate for children under five in Ethiopia is 5.7%. For those in our NACOEJ feeding

program, once again it was zero. These meals also prevented stunting, which causes irreversible physical and cognitive harm to children.

In addition, NACOEJ funds distributions of tons of grain to the entire Jewish communities in Gondar City and Addis Ababa, about 13,500 people in total – 11,000 people in Gondar and 2,500 people in Addis Ababa. As in past years, many people have clearly said that the teff grain distributions saved their lives.

Finally, NACOEJ funded meals for almost 2,000 Jewish children in summer camp. ■



# Statement of Financial Position and Activities

## North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, Inc. and Affiliate

### Combined Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2022

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,172,451	\$ 187,342	\$ 1,359,793
Contributions receivable, net	8,456	12,388	20,844
Prepaid expenses	63,730		63,730
Investments	4,672,829		4,672,829
Right of use assets	164,403		164,403
Security deposits	15,553		15,553
	<u>6,097,422</u>	<u>199,730</u>	<u>6,297,152</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 6,097,422</b>	<b>\$ 199,730</b>	<b>\$ 6,297,152</b>
<b><u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u></b>			
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 167,792		\$ 167,792
Lease liabilities	164,403		164,403
Deferred public support	187,342		187,342
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>519,537</b>		<b>519,537</b>
<b>Net assets:</b>			
Without donor restrictions	5,577,885		5,577,885
With donor restrictions		199,730	199,730
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>5,577,885</b>	<b>199,730</b>	<b>5,777,615</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 6,097,422</b>	<b>\$ 199,730</b>	<b>\$ 6,297,152</b>

See Notes to Combined Financial Statements



# North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, Inc. and Affiliate

## Combined Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2022

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b><u>Operating Activities</u></b>			
<b>Revenues and Other Support:</b>			
Public support	\$ 810,557	\$ 442,269	\$ 1,252,826
Sales (net of cost of goods sold of \$384)	2,916		2,916
Other income	891		891
Interest and dividend income	214,283		214,283
Net assets released from restrictions	473,976	(473,976)	
<b>Total revenues and other support</b>	<b><u>1,502,623</u></b>	<b><u>(31,707)</u></b>	<b><u>1,470,916</u></b>
<b>Expenses:</b>			
<b>Program services:</b>			
Relief in Ethiopia	781,313		781,313
Assistance in Israel	1,298,689		1,298,689
Information and Education - USA	209,224		209,224
<b>Total program services</b>	<b><u>2,289,226</u></b>		<b><u>2,289,226</u></b>
<b>Supporting services:</b>			
Management and general	187,675		187,675
Fundraising	281,003		281,003
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<b><u>468,678</u></b>		<b><u>468,678</u></b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b><u>2,757,904</u></b>		<b><u>2,757,904</u></b>
<b>Change in net assets from operations</b>	<b><u>(1,255,281)</u></b>	<b><u>(31,707)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,286,988)</u></b>
<b><u>Nonoperating Activities</u></b>			
Investment return, net	(1,146,829)		(1,146,829)
<b>Total nonoperating activities</b>	<b><u>(1,146,829)</u></b>		<b><u>(1,146,829)</u></b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>(2,402,110)</b>	<b>(31,707)</b>	<b>(2,433,817)</b>
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b><u>7,979,995</u></b>	<b><u>231,437</u></b>	<b><u>8,211,432</u></b>
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b><u>\$ 5,577,885</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 199,730</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 5,777,615</u></b>

# Barbara Receives Well-Deserved Honor

**O**n November 30, ten Ethiopian aliyah activists and ten American Jews were officially declared “Heroes of the Zionist Movement of the Beta Israel community.”

The honors were bestowed at the fifth annual conference of the Jerusalem Forum. NACOEJ Founder and Executive Director, Barbara Ribakove, was one of the American Jews honored.

The conference was held under the auspices of President Isaac Herzog, former senator Rudy Boschwitz (one of the American honorees), and Chief Kes (Ethiopian Rabbi) Berko Tegegne.

David Mihret, NACOEJ-Israel Director, an Ethiopian Israeli who made the dangerous journey through Sudan to get to Israel, accepted the honor for Barbara.

Shmuel Yilma, who founded the Yerusalem Forum to educate the Israeli public about the Ethiopian-Jewish community’s devotion to Zionism and willingness to sacrifice to get to Israel, said: “We are moved by the Israeli government’s determination to rescue every Jew from danger, no matter where they are, yet we have heard nothing of those determined activists – Israelis of Ethiopian descent and American Jews – who dedicated and risked their lives to make the dream of aliyah.”

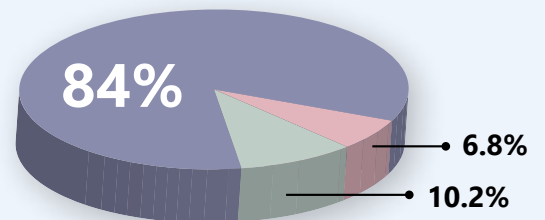
We are very proud that Barbara received this exceptionally well-deserved honor.

## Our Donors

We deeply appreciate the loyalty and dedication of our wonderful donors to the Ethiopian-Jewish community through good times and bad. We are profoundly grateful to each and every one of them.

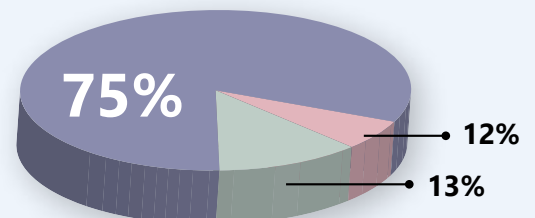
### How Donor Contributions were Spent

<b>Program</b> .....	<b>83.0%</b>
Fundraising .....	10.2%
Admin.....	6.8%



### Sources of Funding

<b>Individuals</b> .....	<b>75%</b>
Israel Dept. of Education & Municipalities.....	12%
Foundations & Synagogues.....	13%



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Feeding Program for Children under 5