

# ECMAA Newsletter

DECEMBER 2021



## FEATURED EVENTS

### Enetewawek: A singles mixer

**Saturday, December 18th, 5:30pm  
Ginjan Cafe, 85 East 125th St, NYC**  
**Single and ready to mingle?  
New to the area and looking  
to make new friends? Join  
ECMAA as we bring back our  
matchmaking magic in time  
for the holiday season! Sign  
up [here!](#)**

### Yekatit 12 and Battle of Adwa **\*\*COMING February**

**2022\*\***

**ECMAA is proud to  
announce our yearly  
commemoration event for  
Yeaktit 12 and the Battle of  
Adwa, that will take place  
in person this year. The  
event will feature guest  
historians, live  
performances and  
auctioned Ethiopian  
artwork. Stay tuned for  
official dates and location.**

## From the Board

Our thoughts continue to be with our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia. It's a tumultuous time and there are so many feelings we must each be feeling. As usual, we hope that you find a way to give back in ways that make sense to you while you take care of yourselves.

We're looking ahead to transition and new beginnings at ECMAA. On December 5, we had our annual Board transition meeting where the existing board and the new board met to discuss what's ahead, designate the Executive Board and identify tasks and events for the coming year. We met in person and virtually for a potluck dinner with the cake from our picnic from Settepani.

We recommitted to ECMAA and its strategic plan and most importantly, we identified the next round of our community leaders. We're going to take the time to introduce you to our new board members in this newsletter but we're excited to announce the next Executive Board members: Tegest Hailu, President; Lili Wondwossen, Vice President; Samrawit Solomon, Vice President; Phoebe Asrat, Secretary and remaining in her Treasurer role, Rediate Derebe. Martha Solomon, Selam Alemu, Kasahun Neselu and Tiberah Berhane will be on the general board. Abeba Negatu, Adem Ali and Amanuel Leminih will continue on the Board.

Dinsiri Fikru will shift from the Executive Board to the general Board and Rahel Getachew, Hanna Yesuf, Tezeta Roro and Yishak Desta have shifted to the advisory council. Please congratulate our new ECMAA leaders. Our community is in good hands, the group is passionate, smart, dedicated, fun, planful and ready to get to work. We have a lot to do to strengthen our community. Welcome, best wishes and congratulations to our new leadership!

We have also included ECMAA's Holiday Gift Guide in this newsletter, for shopping ideas from some of our local Ethiopian businesses. Please sign up [here](#) if we missed you, we will share. Happy Holidays!

# MEET THE BOARD

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

### Tegest Hailu, President



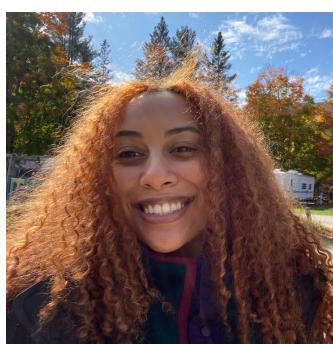
Tegest Hailu was born and raised in the tri-state area; she's an ECMAA "legacy" as both her parents helped establish the organization in 1981. She's humbled and excited to serve as president of ECMAA and knows that she stands on the shoulders of the volunteers who came before her. Tegest is interested in further building ECMAA's capacity as a platform for networking and sharing Ethiopia's rich culture and history with the community. Professionally, she works as a nurse in critical care medicine. She enjoys yoga and fitness and has strong interests in health and wellness.

### Lili Wondwossen, Vice President



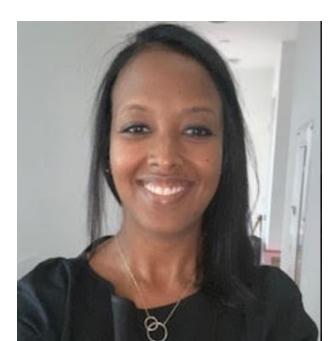
Lili Wondwossen is a Global Health & Social Impact Manager at Pfizer. An alum of two educational organizations—The Jackie Robinson Foundation and Bottom Line, she is passionate about mentoring and contributing to the success of young students in her community. When she lived in Boston, she was very active in the Ethiopian community and served on the Ethiopian New Year Committee in which she led the children's component of the program. An active advocate for maternal health care and female empowerment, her vision and mission are to empower young girls all over the world. She also looks forward to working with the community and teaching young children about their Ethiopian culture through the art of dance and other artistic forums. Lili attended Boston University and earned her bachelor's degree in Health Science with a concentration in Public Health.

### Samrawit Solomon, Vice President



Samrawit Solomon is a lifelong New Yorker and a recent college graduate excited to further her involvement in the Ethiopian community through ECMAA. While in college, she held several executive board positions in Columbia University's Ethiopian-Eritrean Student Association, including president, secretary and public relations chair. She facilitated professional networking events, community service projects, social media outreach, and increased the club's annual allocated budget by 300% during her tenure as president. She finds community building fulfilling and looks forward to organizing community service-related events, contributing to social media outreach, and involving young Ethiopians of the tri-state area in ECMAA.

### Phoebe Asrat, Secretary



Phoebe Asrat lives in New York City with her husband and two daughters. She grew up in Addis and has lived in- Virginia, Georgia, New Jersey, Texas and Washington DC. She loves New York and is excited to be part of ECMAA. She's interested in expanding the programming for Ethiopian and Ethiopian American families in the tri-state area.

### Rediate Derebe, Treasurer



Rediate Derebe has lived in the U.S. for over 20 years and has been a New York resident for the last six. Rediate is currently a Vice President at a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) and oversees the Company's and its Operators financial reporting risk mitigation practices. She has 14 plus years of experience in finance, accounting, compliance advisory, and internal audit. Rediate is passionate about giving back and being a resource to help strengthen the Ethiopian community. She also enjoys the arts, travel, music, running and hiking.

# GENERAL BOARD



## Abeba Negatu, Board Member

Abeba Negatu has been living in New York City for the last 35 years. She works for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection as a Chemist. She loves music and loves to dance. Three years ago, she joined ECMAA and strongly believes it's one of the best decisions she ever made. Abeba feels that ECMAA is a place where she can be herself without being judged for who she is. She values the organization's independence and the fact that it is not affiliated with any religious or political group. The inclusive nature of ECMAA attracts her and she is happy to help her Ethiopian community and friends of Ethiopia.



## Adem K. Ali, Board Member

Adem Ali grew up in Addis Ababa and moved to New York City sixteen years ago. He works as an education data analyst for the city of New York. Outside of work, he enjoys soccer, biking and learning skills that expand his capacities for his work. Adam believes that by building a vibrant community, we can add value to each other's lives, and help alleviate the challenges that come with living in New York City.



## Amanuel Leminih, Board Member

Known to most as Aman, Amanuel Leminih is an ardent football fan and a foodie. He came to the US six years ago and has lived in New York City for the past 5 years. When he's not watching/playing football, eating, or exploring NYC, he works as a Software Engineer at IBM. He is passionate about Education and Mentorship and hopes to expand youth engagement in ECMAA.



## Dinsiri Fikru, Board Member

Dinsiri Fikru has lived in New York for 38 years. She works in housing policy and social work for the City of New York. Her interests include connecting people with each other, playing soccer and working to improve the lives and opportunities available to women and girls. After living through childhood, college, young adulthood and parenthood in NYC, she looks forward to sharing anything she's learned along the way to make it easier for others.

## Kasahun Neselu, Board Member

Kasahun Neselu moved to New York 5 months ago and has so far attended several ECMAA events (soccer games and the Ethiopian day picnic). Participation in these events revealed ECMAA's welcoming spirit and sense of community, which influenced his decision to join the board. Kasahun completed his undergraduate study at Morehouse College and graduate research work at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Ga; Kasahun's area of expertise is biology (molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics etc.). He plans on serving as a resource for school-related programming including applying to college, highlighting one's skills and achievements in applications and navigating the process of choosing one's field of study. He also looks forward to participating in sports events, as he's an avid runner and plays soccer. Kasahun's strengths include working collaboratively, time management, listening, and his research skills.



**Martha Solomon, Board Member**

Martha Solomon grew up in New York City and through the years has witnessed ECMAA's commitment to assisting and empowering the Ethiopian community in the tri-state area. ECMAA's collaborative spirit and willingness to always be an ear to the people that it serves is what draws her to the organization. She recently began her psychiatry residency training in Brooklyn, NY. Martha's interests in serving ECMAA include helping to expand the opportunities for career mentorship and networking and strengthening the sense of community amongst the youth. Her life experiences as an Ethiopian-American navigating higher education and career-building informs the work that she wishes to do with ECMAA. She looks forward to sharing what she's learned and working with others with similar interests to serve the community in the tri-state area.

**Selamawit Gebru, Board Member**

Selam Gebru has lived in New Jersey for just a few years and is excited to serve, participate and contribute to the Ethiopian community in the tri-state area. Professionally, her background is in social work and community development. With regards to ECMAA, Selam is interested in areas that relate to bridging the gap between generations and harmonizing cultural differences. Her past community work involved creating spaces for recognizing and practicing elements of Ethiopian culture. In her short time in the tri-state community, she has led a church youth group. She looks forward to being more involved in building ECMAA.

**Tiberah Berhanu, Board Member**

Tiberah Berhanu, lives in New Jersey and looks forward to organizing events, participating in ways to engage our community, and helping with the website and newsletters, etc. Tiberah recently joined her son's PTA board and in this role facilitated a visit by the Mayor of West Orange and other local leaders to one of the school events. Tiberah looks forward to planning events that connect the youth to their culture. She is a natural storyteller, with a knack for connecting with audiences and has recently published a children's book called "My Uncle is an Alien."

# ADVISORY COUNCIL



## **Assefash Makonnen, Advisory Council Member**

Assefash Makonnen was born and raised in New York and is currently living in D.C. Serving her community is a core value for Assefash and the reason she joined the ECMAA team in 2020. Assefash has worked in the non-profit sector for over 10 years, currently serving as a communications manager for African Communities Together. Assefash is extremely passionate about mental health and has coordinated several events and initiatives in NY, DC, and virtually, focused on addressing the stigma associated with mental illness in the Ethiopian and Eritrean community. She is happy to be able to maintain her tristate roots as a member of the Advisory Council.



## **Berhane Tadese, Advisory Council Member**

Berhane Tadese has lived in the tri-state area for 43 years. He is a licensed electrical engineer in the state of New York. He has over 35 years of experience in the design and construction of technically complex railroad signaling projects for the MTA New York City Transit. He works as a System Engineer at Siemens in design checking, testing and commissioning of Railroad Signal Systems. His interests are Advocacy for Social Justice, community service, reading and travel. He cares deeply about ECMAA's mission. Serving as part of the advisory council will help ECMAA benefit from his past experiences in the organization. He is glad to have a chance to continue to give back in a different capacity and have the opportunity to stay engaged in our community.



## **Bethlehem Bekele, Advisory Council Member**

Bethlehem Bekele, previously a longtime resident of New York, is currently living in the Washington D.C area. She's the founder of KinetBet— a multi-faceted online platform that focuses on using culture as a healing agent for positive change. Its aim is to serve as a bridge between communities, highlight how traditions and heritage play a central part in our lives and explore how culture can be changed for the better while retaining the parts that define our identities. Through the arts and creation of safe spaces for dialogue, Kinetbet addresses the holistic wellness of our community and discusses topics that are relevant to us.



## **Hanna Yesuf, Advisory Council Member**

Hanna Yesuf has lived in NYC for a decade and recently moved to Charlotte, NC. She works in the Financial Services industry as a Vice President at Bank of America Private Bank. She's passionate about her culture and history and wants to contribute to ECMAA's efforts to promote Ethiopian heritage.

**Rahel Getachew, Advisory Council Member**

Rahel has lived in the US for 32 years and in New York for 24 years. She works in Healthcare Administration. Her interests include reading, traveling and spending time with family and friends. She joined ECMMA because she's interested in preserving and passing Ethiopia's rich tradition and culture to our children. ECMMA's wide appeal to all age groups and varying interests, its laid back and accepting nature is what draws her to the organization.

**Tezeta Roro, Advisory Council Member**

Tezeta Roro has been in the tri-state area for 21 years. She's a Real Estate professional who's also interested in community building, storytelling and being a connector. Tezeta joined ECMMA because she wants to contribute to strengthening her community, preserving our culture, sharing her time, talent and resources to help others grow personally and professionally. She loves the BOARD and spending time with them. They complement and elevate her energy!

**Yishak Desta, Advisory Council Member**

Yishak Desta has lived in the US for about 13 years and in the NY area for 1 and a half years. He works as a DevOps Analyst in Digital Surgery at Johnson and Johnson. He loves music (creating playlists and such), picture/video edits, fitness and leveraging technology to automate/simplify redundant action items. He joined ECMMA because it will provide the platform to be able to realize his passion to uplift, empower and connect the young Ethiopian community.

*We are looking forward to an exciting new year of service to the community!*

*-ECMAA board and advisory committee*

## GET INVOLVED

Visit our website [www.ecmaany.org](http://www.ecmaany.org) for ongoing updates and to [become a member](#). Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the most up to date information on what's going on between the newsletters.

Feel free to circulate information you receive and to encourage others to join. We also welcome volunteers.

Finally, if you or those you know need immediate food and other assistance click on the links based on where you live [New York](#), [New Jersey](#). For more general COVID related assistance, go to [ACCESS NYC](#).

# ECMAA HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Wrapping paper pictured here can be purchased on Amazon.com or Etsy.com, search: Ethiopian/Eritrean wrapping paper

## Handmade candles *Moods, by Yemmie*

<https://moodsbyyemmie.com/>

## Natural hair/skin care



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Tikuri collection

<https://tikuricollection.com/>

## 1 Jewelry

### *Studio Tesfaye*



Handcrafted, lightweight statement earrings for everyday life.

<https://studiotesfaye.com/>



### *My Meskel*

<https://mymeskel.com/>

## 4

### *Admasu Jewelry*

[https://www.instagram.com/admasu\\_jewelry/](https://www.instagram.com/admasu_jewelry/)

## Cosmetics

### *Helaz Beauty*



<https://helazbeauty.com/>

## Clothing

### *Worku Tezera*

<https://workutezera.com/>

### *2 Yema*

26 Mercer St, NY, NY

<https://www.yemacalif.com/>



# Gift cards and merchandise

**3** *Tsion Cafe*

NY, NY

<https://www.tsioncafe.com/shop>

**1** *Buunni Cafe*

NY, NY

<https://www.buunnicoffee.com/products/gift-card>

**2** *Ras Plant Based*

Brooklyn, NY

<https://www.toasttab.com/ras-plant-based/giftcards>

**4** *Bunna Cafe*

Brooklyn, NY

<https://squareup.com/gift/721S65D2WV6BZ/order>

**6** *Settepani*

<https://www.clover.com/online-ordering/settepani-manhattan/giftcard>

**5** *Makina Cafe*

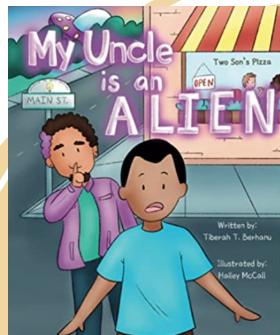
NY, NY

<https://makina-cafe.myshopify.com/>

Injera  
Berbere  
Mitmita  
Shiro



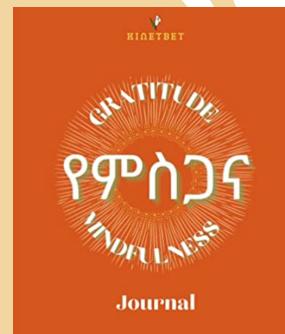
## Books



***My Uncle is an Alien***

written by Tiberah T. Berhanu

<https://amzn.to/2ZzwFW2>



***Gratitude and Mindfulness Journal: የጥሰኑ ስነት***

Written by Bethlehem

Bekele

<https://amzn.to/3DKc53h>



***Things Unsaid***

written by Amaya Sunn

<https://www.amayasunn.com/>



***Yeshashé Guzo***

written by Helena Getahun-Hawkins

<https://amharicreading.com/>

## Design

***Bole Road Textiles***

<https://boleroadtextiles.com/>

