

Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago

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May 2009

MAHEBER Newsletter



Dear community members, partners and friends,

This year, the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago (ECAC) is celebrating its Silver Anniversary, marking 25 years of service!

ECAC's accomplishments over the last 25 years have been remarkable and demonstrate the dedication, perseverance, and vision of the Ethiopian community. ECAC's services have touched many lives, and devoted staff, board members and volunteers have kept its light burning as a beacon to those making Chicago and the United States their new home.

Certainly, we would not have been successful in our 25 years of service had it not been for your support. To thank you for your commitment and continuous encouragement, we invite you to join us in the coming months as we celebrate 25 years of service and many more at various events:

- ESFNA Soccer Tournament from June 28 to July 4;
- ECAC Annual Summer Picnic on July 15, 2009;
- Ethiopia Day on September 11;
- New Year Celebration on September 12;
- 25th Year Celebration in late October (date to be announced).

Keep a look out for more details on these events in the upcoming months.

Sincerely,

Fasika Alem
President, Board of Directors

Profile: United African Organization



The United African Organization (UAO) is an advocacy coalition of African national associations dedicated to social justice, civic engagement and the empowerment of African immigrants and refugees in Illinois. Rooted in the spirit of collective African commitment to unity of purpose and shared vision, the UAO is the legitimate, democratic, representative voice of the estimated more than 100,000 African immigrants and refugees that call Illinois home.

The UAO works to raise awareness about the experience and contributions of the African immigrant and refugee community in Illinois. Additionally, the organization advocates for improved legislation on various immigrant rights and U.S.-Africa policy issues, builds capacity, fosters leadership development in national member communities, and works to build bridges with the African American community, and other immigrant communities, in Chicago. The UAO also serves as an information hub, providing referrals and interpretation/translation services for members of the African community and other Chicago-based social services agencies.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Alie Kabba, the UAO has experienced phenomenal growth in both membership and programs, and has gained visibility and credibility both within the African community, as well as the community at large. Its membership includes the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago, Ghana National Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Organization of the Liberian

Capital Campaign

ECAC's Capital Campaign, aimed at raising adequate funds in order to purchase a Childcare and Cultural Center to call our home, was initiated in 2007. To date, over \$200,000 dollars have been raised in individuals contributions.

At this time, we are engaging foundation and corporate supporters in our campaign and hope that with their support, we will reach our goal. Certainly, every contribution helps strengthen our request and leverage larger funds from these aforementioned sources.

To make a secure, online donation, please click here.

To learn more about ECAC's Capital Campaign, click here.

Quick Links

United African Organization

<http://www.uniteafricans.org/site/>

Ethiopian American Kids Community

<http://www.eakc.blogspot.com/>

Ethiopian Community Development Council

www.ecdcinternational.org

Community in Illinois, Congolese Community of Chicago, Association of the Beninese in Illinois, Sierra Leone Community Association of Chicago, Tanzanian Community Association of the Midwest, Ugandan Community Association, Togolese Association of Chicago, Guinean Community Association, and United Kenyans of Chicago.

To continue reading, [click here](#).

Let Us Get Counted!

Preparations for the 2010 Census are underway by the US Census Bureau. The Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago has become an official Census partner in order to support the Bureau in its efforts to conduct a complete and accurate count of our constituency, as well as to encourage our community to be counted. In order to meet this objective, ECAC, in cooperation with UAO, has developed a program in order to outreach African immigrants in Chicago and encourage them to "get counted".

The United States has constitutionally mandated a census every ten years since 1890; the 2010 census will be the 13th in US history. Additionally, each year the Census Bureau conducts surveys and estimates that they use to add to census data. Knowing the size of a given population, as well as its geographical distribution and demographic characteristics, including age, sex, educational and income levels, can provide critical information used for developing services, budgeting state money, planning for investments, and apportioning as well as determining political representation. Based on the last Census, more than 300 billion dollars are awarded to states, regions and cities by the Federal government; in 10 years, that number is said to rise to 3 trillion dollars. It is necessary to have the African community truly represented in the census to ensure that those dollars are distributed equally.

For more on this important issue, [click here](#).

Press Release: Chicago Blue Nile to Host ESFNA Soccer Tournament



After 26 years since its inception in Houston, Texas, 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, Chicago, Illinois, 60618 and is excited to have the tournament in the home state of President

Obama, as well as the Chicago Bears, Cubs, White Sox, Bulls, Blackhawks and Chicago Fire!

This year's tournament will feature over 28 teams from across the United States and Canada. Opening day will be held on June 28, 2009 and will see various guests of honor in attendance, including gold medalist, and ... Excitement will be high during the course of the entire week, with performances by famous Ethiopian Artists, as well as children's shows during the daytime and evenings. Additionally, booths will be set up inside the stadium, selling food and beverages, as well as innovative Ethiopian artifacts and merchandise.

To read on, [click here](#).

Program Spotlight: Health Education

One of ECAC's core programs is Health Education and Outreach. Workshops are held monthly in order to educate our refugee and immigrant constituents about the various critical health issues that may threaten to affect their communities. Special emphasis is placed on Diabetes education and prevention, as it is one of the diseases that is most prevalent among the African community.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that affects millions of people all over the world; it can be managed, but not cured. Diabetes can be defined as Type I or Type II, and can be caused by obesity and passed down through family generations. When acquired during pregnancy, it is known as gestational diabetes. The refugee and immigrant communities served by ECAC have been educated on awareness and management of the disease via workshops and regular group counseling, held at the ECAC office. Additionally, flu shots are given to diabetes patients each year.

For more information on ECAC's Health Education Program, including important vaccines, HIV/AIDS education and child immunization, please contact Amsale Gabre, Health Education and Outreach Specialist, at 773.728.0303 ext. 21, or [click here](#).

We hope you enjoyed this second edition of ECAC's MAHEBER Newsletter. For more information on ECAC, including programs, activities and upcoming events, please visit our website at www.ecachicago.org. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

Sincerely,

Erku Yimer
Executive Director

Fasika Alem
President, Board of Directors