

*MATANEL FOUNDATION*

**Development Scholarships for Excelling and "Trailblazer"  
Students from the Ethiopian-Israeli Community**

*ACTIVITY REPORT*

**Academic Year: 2016-2017**

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**Program Update**

In the 2016-2017 school year, thanks to generous support from the Matanel Foundation, thirty-one underprivileged students of Ethiopian descent, grades 7-12, were granted scholarships toward their personal needs, which made it possible for them to integrate more fully into their respective schools. Scholarships were distributed among students from ten schools in seven different cities across the country; they were transmitted directly to the students and addressed one of the following three areas, depending on the individual needs of each recipient:

1. **Academic Assistance** – Quality schools are characterized by competition and striving for educational excellence. As such, many parents with means invest large sums out of pocket in order to strengthen their children's skills in subjects that are challenging for them. Such sums are not available to families of Ethiopian descent. Without this kind of assistance, they are likely to drop-out of these institutions or lag behind. This will not only affect them on a personal level, but will also send a message to the community that quality schools are not "intended" for them. Therefore, we decided to fund tutoring and/or enrichment classes, which will help students having difficulty to enhance their educational achievements and integrate more fully into the school.
2. **Educational Tools** – In this day and age the laptop computer is an essential tool for students' successful integration in the education system. Particularly at the middle and high-school age level, a laptop computer is an important and even necessary tool, without which it is difficult to get by. Furthermore, the lack of a computer is bound to create a technological gap among the students. Therefore, we provided scholarship recipients with the option to obtain a laptop computer for their studies.

3. **Enrichment Courses & Personal Needs** – Due to the socioeconomic gap that exists between the students of Ethiopian descent, who tend to come from a low socioeconomic background, and other students attending high quality schools, who tend to come from a high socioeconomic background, we decided to dedicate part of the scholarship funds to personal needs such as school supplies, clothing, etc.

### **The main achievements during the last year of activity:**

Recipients from the following schools benefited from the Matanel Scholarships for Excellence:

1. Six students from **Hebrew University High School**, Jerusalem
2. One student from **Ulpenat Gila**, Beit Shemesh
3. Two students from **Ulpenat Noga**, Beit Shemesh
4. One student from **Amit Yeshiva**, Be'er Sheva
5. Three students from the **School for the Arts**, Ashkelon
6. Five students from the **Mae Boyar High School**, Jerusalem
7. Five students from the **Hebrew Reali School**, Haifa
8. One student from **Atid School for Science**, Lod
9. One student from **Pelech High School for Girls**, Jerusalem
10. Six students from the **Hartman School for Girls**, Jerusalem

### **Matanel Scholarship Ceremony**

On Tuesday, April 25, 2017, a ceremony took place at the Mount Herzl Museum, where the students received their scholarships in the presence of their classmates, parents and school representatives. Eitan Moran, Director of the Society for the Advancement of Education, thanked the Matanel Foundation for their generosity, spoke about the importance of success and wished the students much luck in their studies. A representative from the Matanel Foundation greeted the students and spoke about investing in education. The participants of the ceremony listened to a moving lecture on "Perceptions of the Future Among Young Adults" by Lilach Tsagai-Nim, a woman of Ethiopian descent, with a PHD in Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The students and their parents left the ceremony feeling excited about being part of something bigger, and left with the feeling that there are people who care about them and want to invest in them and in their future.

### **The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):**

Methodology:

1. Scholarship Committee – The scholarships committee was expanded this year to include six people, in light of lessons learned from previous experience.
2. Selecting the Schools – The committee decided to narrow down the number of schools so that the scholarships would be significant for the students. Furthermore, narrowing down the number of schools and students allowed

us to keep contact with the students throughout the year and gather them for a national meeting, where they were introduced to figures from the community who would be a source of inspiration for them and their future endeavors.

3. Scholarship Recipients are students of Ethiopian descent, grades 7-12, who study at top level schools.
4. Application Process – We built an application form in which students, parents and school representatives were asked to rank their preferences for support. The form was transferred to each of the relevant schools. Ten schools responded to our call for applicants and proposed a total of forty students.
5. Selection Process – The committee selected thirty-one out of forty applicants from ten different top level schools who received scholarships in the amount of 3,000 NIS each.
6. Distribution – The scholarships were comprised of two parts:
  - a. At the Scholarship Ceremony, held at the Mt. Herzl museum in Jerusalem on April 25, 2017, each family received a check for 500NIS intended for the personal needs of each student.
  - b. The second part of the scholarships was distributed differently depending on the support approved:
    - Nine students received an HP laptop computer, which they picked up from their school.
    - Twenty-two students received a 2500NIS scholarship for academic assistance and/or enrichment courses through their respective schools.

### **Vignettes about Scholarship Recipients:**

**Adi Shimon**, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student at Hebrew University High School, lives in a single-parent household and has two sisters and a brother. Adi is a hardworking student and sees the fruits of her labor. She has joined advanced study groups in a number of subjects. The pace and demands of her studies constitute a challenge for her but she always perseveres and never gives up. Adi is also advancing in the field of music; she studies cello at the Conservatory and performs at concerts. She is a natural leader and stands behind her values of mutual respect and human rights, both inside and outside the classroom. Adi's mother is the family's sole income earner and she is currently studying alongside her work in order to improve their financial situation.

**Rachel Tigist-Takalo** is a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Hartman School for Girls. She has a high capacity for educational excellence, plays an active role in the classroom, always completes her homework and achieves high grades on exams. However, Rachel, who made Aliyah from Ethiopia at the age of five, lives in a single-parent home. They lived in Haifa for several years and spent some time in an abused women's shelter. Their financial situation is very difficult. The support she has received will help her along the path to fulfilling her potential and reaching new heights.

**Meserat (Messi) Abebe**, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student at Boyar High School, is not only a serious student but also a good leader who takes initiative and responsibility over

different projects. Messi's family is very proud of her and does everything they can to support her in her educational endeavors. However, their economic situation constitutes an obstacle for them. Messi's father works as a security guard and her mother works as an aid for special education. Messi receives funding for transportation from the municipality, her family pays a discounted tuition price, and her mother calls the school often for assistance with various payments.

### Program Budget

	Budget	Actual	Balance
<b>Expenses</b>			
Scholarships (3,000 NIS per student)	₪ 93,000	₪ 93,000	₪ -
Ceremony and programming	₪ 6,000	₪ 2,130	₪ 3,870
Program Coordinator (20%)	₪ 51,240	₪ 51,240	₪ -
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>₪ 150,240</b>	<b>₪ 146,370</b>	<b>₪ 3,870</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Matanel Foundation	₪ 99,000	₪ 89,000	₪ 10,000
The Society for Advancement of Education	₪ 51,240	₪ 51,240	₪ -
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>₪ 150,240</b>	<b>₪ 140,240</b>	<b>₪ 10,000</b>

Additional programming for the recipients will take place at the beginning of the 2107-18 school year.

### Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

The scholarship program this past year was very successful and responded to the true needs of the students. In light of the success of the project in addressing the actual needs presented by the recipients, we would like to continue with the scholarship program in the same fashion next year and in years to come.

The Society for Advancement of Education would like to thank the Matanel Foundation for their generosity and continued partnership in assisting children from the Ethiopian Community to excel in their studies and help widen their horizons for a better future.