



Breaking News from JDC-Ethiopia: This week, twelve of our patients left for Cochin, SW India for heart surgery at AIMS Amrita Hospital. We still need contributions, from small gifts to full sponsorships of \$7,500 per patient.

These surgeries are so urgent that when we called patients to inform them of their eligibility, two had died since we last saw them. Please give our group a chance to live normal lives.

Send tax-deductible donations to JDC's heart project at: www.RickHodes.org

CONTACT us at: EthiopianHearts@gmail.com

Thank you!

Dr. Rick and the JDC-Ethiopia heart team



AZIMERA

ALMAZ

BETELEHEM

ZUFAN

CHERU

TILAHUN A.

Azimera shared a taxi this year with a priest in her hometown, Bahir Dar. After noticing Azimera's painful cough, the priest, a cardiac patient of Dr. Rick, suggested that she travel to Addis Ababa to attend Dr. Rick's clinic. The 27-year-old daughter of farmers, Azimera is the middle child of seven and lives in a mud hut with a younger brother. She was devastated when her weak heart forced her to suspend her education and shelve her dream of starting a business. She hopes to restart school after surgery in India.

Almaz is a courageous 13-year-old girl from a rural region called Marabete. Six months ago, her father brought her to Addis Ababa to seek medical care, but suddenly abandoned her on the street. Thankfully, a kind woman took Almaz into her home, and has since provided food and shelter. One of six children, Almaz is a bright student who hopes to be an engineer. Although her mitral valve disease forced her to leave school, she is eagerly awaiting surgery in India and is optimistic about her future.

Betelehem is a cute five-year-old girl from Gondar. She lives with her mother in a rented mud house and sees her father occasionally. She has suffered from a complex problem called Tetralogy of Fallot since she was six months old. A visiting Israeli pediatric cardiologist confirmed this diagnosis, and a doctor in Gondar suggested that she travel to Addis Ababa to find Dr. Rick. Her family jumped at the opportunity.

Zufan, a 14-year-old from the Tigray region of Ethiopia, aspires to be a doctor. She loves traditional Ethiopian singing and playing with her best friend, Salamawit. She comes from a family of farmers; her dad is also an Orthodox priest. Zufan left her parents and 6 brothers when she embarked on an arduous journey to Addis Ababa to seek medical help. She has had mitral regurgitation for seven years, which severely hinders her breathing and ability to walk. Now living at a Catholic mission, Zufan is excited for surgery and a return to family life.

Cheru is a 28-year-old fellow from Gurage, Ethiopia. After suffering from severe mitral stenosis for over eight years, he left his home in the countryside to see Dr. Rick in Addis Ababa. Now living at a Catholic mission, he frequently helps with other patients, always smiling. Cheru ranked 4 out of 100+ students, but dropped out of school to support himself. He hopes to get better and return home to friends and family.

Tilahun A, an 18-year-old from rural Wello, Ethiopia, has suffered from rheumatic heart disease and mitral stenosis since childhood. He is often in bed and never attended school. Despite his heart problems, Tilahun is remarkably upbeat. He enjoys laughing with friends, listening to Ethiopian pop music, and watching soccer. After surgery, Tilahun wants to finally attend school. He can't wait to learn how to read and hopes to teach English.



American Jewish
Joint Distribution
Committee



TILAHUN B



TOLOSA



DANAIT



WORKENESH



GENET



BEKEMA

Tilahun B is a 20-year-old from Gojjam who lives in a mud hut with his parents and five siblings. He is quite bright, ranking #4 out of the 65 students in his school. His favorite subjects are English and ethics, and after surgery, he hopes to become a teacher. His heart condition, severe mitral stenosis, has troubled him since he was 7 years old. His life took a turn for the better when he traveled to a Catholic mission and met Dr. Rick. He wants return to school and support his family.

Tolosa has been married for twenty-four years and is the father of five sons. He worked at a gas station until recently, when his heart condition - severe mitral stenosis - forced him to quit. While Tolosa's family in the countryside provide him with some support, his immediate family still faces economic hardships. One of Tolosa's sons had to drop out of college, and surgical treatment was unaffordable. When he returns home, Tolosa hopes to continue to support his family.

Danait is a seven-year-old girl from Addis Ababa. Her father is a private driver, and her mother was a housemaid until she quit her job to care for her daughter. Danait has suffered from Ebstein's Anomaly of the tricuspid valve since she was two years old, a life-threatening congenital heart defect. Danait loves fashion and dancing, and hopes to pursue these hobbies after her surgery. When she grows up, she wants to be a doctor who cares for other sick children.

Worknesh is the mother of three - a daughter and 2 sons, all students between ages 13 - 17. They live in a small house in Addis Ababa, sharing a communal bathroom with neighbors. Worknesh worked as a vendor in the sprawling mercato in Addis until she developed mitral stenosis, which recently forced her into unemployment. She and her children now depend on already poor family and friends. Worknesh hopes to return to work in order to support her family.

Genet, a 23-year-old from Gurage, Ethiopia, was 11 when her mother died. She cannot remember her father—he died when she was very young—and she has no siblings. Life would have been hard enough as an orphaned only child, but Genet has also suffered from severe mitral stenosis for 13 years. This forced her to quit her job as a maid, and she consequently has no money to pay for treatment. She has lived at a Catholic mission for the last five months. In her spare time, Genet likes watching dramatic television shows and listening to religious music—these hobbies keep her mind off of her illness. After surgery, Genet hopes to finish her education and support herself.

Bekema is a 25 year old from the rural town of Assosa. He studied nursing at university and became a midwife. Unfortunately, Bekema had to suspend his nursing career four months ago, when he learned that he has a large tumor in his right ventricle. He now stays at a Catholic Mission, confined to bed for most of the day. This has presented a series of financial challenges for Bekema's family, as they take time off from their own jobs to care for Bekema and struggle to afford his expensive medication. After surgery, Bekema hopes to return to nursing and make a much-awaited comeback as the singer for his band, named Red Cross.

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