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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROBEL TEKLEMARIAM TO REPRESENT ETHIOPIA AGAIN IN UPCOMING VANCOUVER WINTER OLYMPICS

Four years ago, Ethiopia Ski Team's cross-country skier, Robel Teklemariam, made history when he entered Ethiopia into the Winter Olympics for the very first time. Still living the dream, Teklemariam is bound for Vancouver 2010, aiming to make Ethiopia a mainstay in the world of winter sports.

Richmond, VA – December 21, 2009: The year 2010 will mark two important Olympic moments for Ethiopia; the 50-year anniversary of Abebe Bikilia's legendary (barefoot, world-record setting) gold medal Marathon win in Rome, and Robel Teklemariam's return to the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada in February.

Bikila's historic moment not only inspired today's young Ethiopian champions of long distance running, but especially Teklemariam, a trailblazer for a field of sports that are non-traditional to Ethiopia, but would likely translate well for young Ethiopian athletes. Mr. Teklemariam has always stressed that his dream to participate in the Winter Olympics was mostly driven with interest in displaying his passion for the wonderful sport of cross-country skiing, hoping to spark interest among young Ethiopians worldwide.

“What I think this does for Ethiopia is it opens the road...if you really want to go to the Olympics in skiing, the avenue has been opened. Endurance sports are what Ethiopians are good at. I think if you get an Ethiopian started in cross-country skiing when he/she is young, maybe 8 or 9 years old, I really don't see any reason why they cannot be winning medals.” -Robel Teklemariam

With the Ethiopian Ski Association (ESA) established, ready to groom young Ethiopian skiers into competitive world-class athletes, the hopes of Teklemariam and ESA rest in his Olympic participation to bring about exposure to this young organization. ESA can only survive and achieve its goal through the continued support of individuals, businesses and organizations.

ESA strives to extend the tradition of Ethiopia's success into the winter games for years to come. Sponsorship opportunities, and online donations are available at www.ensf.org.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Yoseph Teklemariam at yoseph@ensf.org

Background Info:

ESA was established in 2005, as a non-profit ski association, with the initial goal of sending our only athlete, Robel Teklemariam, to the 2006 Winter Olympics held in Torino, Italy. He was the first ever Ethiopian to compete in any sport of the Winter Olympics. Having accomplished that major task, we are currently in the process of raising funds and promoting the organization while supporting Robel to make his second appearance at the Winter Olympics to be held in Vancouver this coming February. Robel is currently in Europe, competing in qualifying races and training daily.

Why our partnership would be a good fit:

We believe we would be a good fit for _____ as we participate in a sport with international appeal, and quite frankly, Robel is rather charismatic and would be a great representative for _____

Please check out the following links to learn about Robel.

Panasonic is giving Robel exposure at the following site which is updated regularly about his activities. The Panasonic video interview held in his home country is also available at the link provided. <http://5dreams.panasonic.net/?Robel+Teklemariam=>

http://5dreams.panasonic.net/robel_teklemariam/2009/11/my-youtube-video.html

To learn about his vision and dream please check out the following NY Times Interview from the past.

<http://video.nytimes.com/video/2006/02/18/sports/1194817104456/robel-teklemariam.html>

Regarding our sponsorship opportunity and its potential exposure:

The Olympics is obviously a major worldwide event. Our athlete will also continue racing the remainder of the winter season, and depending on the terms of our partnership, _____ could have continued exposure into the 2011 skiing season. Because our story is unique and that of a true Olympic dream—one of overcoming any and all obstacles to making a dream become reality, we have unrivaled exposure to a worldwide audience.

During his 2006 debut in Torino, the media loved Robel and had several interviews both before and during the Olympics. Below are just a few examples of what the media had to say:

[Chron.com Ethiopia's lone Olympian.htm](http://Chron.com/Ethiopia's%20lone%20Olympian.htm)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4695166.stm?Robel+Teklemariam=>

<http://www.postindependent.com/article/20051228/VALLEYNEWS/112280019?Glennwood+Springs+Post=>

http://www.ethiomeia.com/courier/robel_at_turin.html

Welcoming and Celebrating One of Our Own, Robel Teklemariam for 2010 Winter Olympics, Vancouver, BC

This community celebration is a family oriented event with two objectives:

- to recognize the dedication and hard work of Robel Teklemariam who is a ski competitor representing his country, Ethiopia
- to inspire the youth of Ethiopian origin that live in Vancouver to pursue their dream as Robel did

Event: Dinner and Music celebration

Confirmed Date: Saturday, February 20th, 2010

Time: 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. (will hold the place 3-8 p.m. for set up and take down)

Venue: Kiwassa Neighbourhood House aka Meseret's play ground.

Catering: Addis Café

Entrance Fee: \$5 for adults and kids for free—this is to cover all expenses incurred.

The event place has under ground parking for about 14 cars with 1 space designated for disability. People can also park around Oxford St. in front of the Neighbourhood House and nearby secondary streets. Parking is not allowed at Nanaimo and East Hastings because of the games happening around the area.

Event Planning Details and Time Table:

4:00- 5:00 p.m. Welcoming and registering guests, dinner will be served as guests come for time efficiency purposes

5:00 – 5:05 p.m. Receiving Robel with flower girls

5:05 – 5:35 p.m. Music show (Ethiopian youth cultural group or Mulu's kids)

5:35- 6:00 speech by representatives from community association, Edir members, soccer team coach and Ethiopian media with 5 minutes allocated for each of them

6:00-6:15 Robel will give an inspirational speech and what he did to get where he is and advice for the youth who will follow in his footsteps

6:15-6:25 Award ceremony by a prominent Ethiopian and 5 minutes speech

6:25-6:35—one of the soccer player kids and one girl from the cultural group will speak

6:35-7:00 – We will ask Robel to wear his jersey and sign kids' jerseys and take pictures with them and their families

7:00 – end event

7:00-8:00 –Taking down and cleaning up room

Communication Plan: Robel's organization will send press release and we will prepare a public invitation for the event that will be sent along with the press release to the 4 Ethiopian radios and two Canadian media (CBC and CTV). We will do the communication through the Ethiopian radios in two rounds

First round of radio press release and interviews will be with 4 radio stations on Jan. 31. that Meseret and Masresha will do, if possible, we will make sure that radio stations can contact Robel to interview him.

Second round will be on week of February 7th where Robel will be on all radios. This is also where we will make arrangements with the Canadian media, CBC-Canadian Broadcasting Television most probably Rick Mercer's show in the morning and CTV as well. We will how far in advance we can set the interview up with Canadian media by next week.

Action Plan and Roles for Volunteers

Week of Jan. 3rd

- (Meseret) Confirms with organizers about Robel's schedule for Feb. 20th

Week of Jan. 18th- 24th

- Space and time confirmed (Meseret)
- Food catering and menu organization with Addis Café (January 24th—Masresha and Meseret)
- Meetings on January 24th at Addis Café: with soccer team (1:00 p.m.), EDIR reps. (1:30 p.m.), Community center Reps (2 people) for 2:00 p.m., media (by phone) and to invite them to the event and fundraising
- Musicians confirmation will be done here (Masresha will check with Mulu)

Week of January 25th-31

- Robel's organization will send press release and we will prepare a public invitation for the event that will be sent to all Ethiopian and Canadian media (Meseret and Frank will do writing and editing)
- Tekle will translate press release to Amharic for local media
- We have Robel's contact information for week of 31st and we are hoping he will be here by Feb. 7th since the opening ceremony is Feb. 12th
- Flyer design (Meseret has asked Ephrem and if he can't do it...Masresha, Tekle and Orion will be able to do it)
- First round of press release and interviews to 2 Ethiopian radios will be on Jan. 31st for 8-9 a.m. Melaku's radio (Meseret) and 9-10 a.m. Worku—Masresha Tekle's radio on Saturday—Masresha and Thomas' radio—Meseret

Week of Feb. 1-7th

- Flyer will be completed, printed and Masresha and Tekle will distribute
- Sound system Arrangement (Orion has volunteered here)
- Gift assembly decisions (Preliminary ideas: trophy with custom writing, Ethio-Canadian flag with embroidery that says from Ethiopian community in Vancouver and certificate (to make a decision by e-mail on week of 18th-24th)
- Ordering gift materials
- Banner printing for event decoration if the finances allow (Masresha)
- Second round of press release and interviews to be given by Robel to all radio stations
- Press release and interview will be arranged for Robel on CBC-Canadian Broadcasting Television, most probably Rick Mercer's show in the morning and CTV as well (I will ask Frank to check with CBC and CTV as he knows some people there how in advance we can set the interview up by the beginning of January)
- We will also invite the radio and TV to come to the community event

Week of Feb. 14th- 20th

- Mass e-mailing and radio announcements with all local radios one more time and call for volunteers to help out on the event
- Watch or attend opening ceremony and ski competition on January 15th and cheer Robel!!
- Assemble gifts and buy decorations

Event Date: February 20th

Time:

- Set up room: (decorations: Balloons, Banner, flags and chairs and tables and sound system (We need up to 8-10 volunteers to be efficient and set up in 1 hour)
- Event MC (Masresha and Meseret)
- DJ and sound system monitor (Orion with help from one other person)
- Picture taking with kids and family members (Ato Worku)
- Taking down room (We again need 8-10 volunteers here)

February 21st evening—organizer’s appreciation dinner at Fasil Restaurant with Robel.

Fundraising:

The total budget for this event is 450 CAD which is not that bad so we are thinking of asking for donation from the community organizers when we meet with them to see if they can cover some portion of it. We then will charge \$5 for adults where kids are admitted for free at the door.

If we are able to cover all our expenses and we still have money left over, we will donate it to the music performers. If we make \$100 or less, the Ethiopian cultural youth club will get the money so they can buy more cultural outfits.

Budget items and Total Cost:

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House Rental—CAD 60

Gift (trophy, flag and certificate) –CAD 200

Flyer color printing for 30 flyers –CAD 30

Decoration including banner—CAD 80

Sound system—CAD 30

Organizers dinner—CAD 250

Total: CAD 450