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MEDIA ADVISORY

MEET ISRAEL'S FIRST ETHIOPIAN LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW, YITZCHAK "ITZIK" DESSIE

Yitzchak "Itzik" Dessie is one of Yemin Orde Youth Village's most successful graduates. He is known throughout Israel for his leadership in advocating for education and job opportunities for Ethiopian-Israelis, and is especially noted for his achievements in the fields of civil and human rights.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Bethesda, MD – Yitzchak "Itzik" Dessie, the first Ethiopian-Israeli attorney in Israel and graduate of Yemin Orde Youth Village, will be in the Washington, D.C. area for meetings on



Wednesday, Nov. 9 and Thursday, Nov. 10, 2016, and will be available for interviews. Dessie is one of Yemin Orde's most successful graduates. He is widely credited throughout Israel for assisting generations of Ethiopian-Israelis through Tebeka, a nonprofit organization he created in 2000 that provides free legal assistance to thousands of Ethiopian immigrants a year. [Click here to read](#) more about Itzik Dessie.

Dessie's story reflects an arduous path from the ancient communities of Ethiopia to the knowledge-based and technology-driven economy of Israel. He arrived alone, as a 13-year-old boy after making a seemingly-impossible 800-mile trek, at times on foot, from Ethiopia, north into Sudan and then a flight to Israel.

"I remember with excitement the way the asphalt felt to my lips when, like many others on my plane, I kissed the ground when we finally landed in Israel," said Dessie. "I laugh remembering my first few years in this new country. Learning to fit in, to be Israeli was such a challenge."

A short time later, he arrived at Yemin Orde Youth Village where he learned Hebrew language skills, developed self-esteem and leadership skills, received a quality education and graduated to serve as the Israel Defense Forces' first Ethiopian combat medic.

Currently, Dessie is studying for his J.S.D. degree (Doctorate in the Science of Law) at Bar Ilan University, an advanced law degree that will enable him to become a law professor and teach in one of Israel's universities.

Yemin Orde Youth Village is a home, school and safe haven for more than 400 at-risk and immigrant youth from around the world. Most of the children at the Village have suffered trauma: from

abandonment and isolation to extreme poverty and homelessness. The Village's Ethiopian population comprises youth whose parents are first generation Israelis and who come from the lowest end of Israel's socioeconomic scale.

At Yemin Orde, the lives of fragile youth are transformed through its highly-successful Village Way educational methodology. At-risk teens learn to embrace hope and the belief in a bright future as productive Israeli citizens. Visit www.yeminorde.org or email info@yeminorde.org for more information.

Friends of Yemin Orde is the U.S. fundraising arm of Yemin Orde Youth Village and Village Way Educational Initiatives.

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