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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For immediate release**  
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***Multicultural event in Axia Taverna in Tenafly brings community together in raising 23K towards completion of construction of K to 10 school in Ethiopia, sponsored by the Global Care Unlimited student club at the Tenafly Middle School. The project was threatened by skyrocketing raw material prices due to the explosion of gas and food prices worldwide.***

**Tenafly, NJ.** – A multicultural flavor and a communal feeling prevailed at the Axia Taverna in downtown Tenafly, NJ on June 23, 2008, where a “Greco-African” fundraiser dinner attracted a large crowd of local residents showing their support to the student club of Global Care Unlimited (GCU) at the Tenafly Middle School (TMS) and its Ethiopian School Construction Initiative.

While eating *mezedes*, small Greek dishes, drinking Greek wine, enjoying a live performance of traditional western African drums, and participating in an auction of a Shona sculpture from Zimbabwe, donated by Spirits in Stone, a San Francisco art gallery, those gathered, and those who could not attend but had sent in donations, managed to raise \$23,000 bringing the Ethiopian school building project to its successful completion.

The project had hit a major stumbling block in April, when the explosion of gas and food prices worldwide gravely impacted Ethiopia and raw material and construction prices skyrocketed. “With the funds we had sent to Ethiopia by late April, our on the ground partner and founder of the school, Yohannes Gebregeorgis, could potentially have built a handful of rooms, but clearly not enough to accommodate his entire student body,” explains Mark Hyman, the TMS reading skills teacher and human rights activist, who is the founder and president of Global Care Unlimited, the student led organization that is also a registered 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization ([www.globalcareunlimited.org](http://www.globalcareunlimited.org)).

The situation was grave, since the lease to the rental building Gebregeorgis had been using (largely with his own funds) expired in early June, and he was facing the serious possibility not to be able to house his entire K-6 student body by September as the new site sponsored by GCU may not have been completed by then.

**“The event on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, organized in a near miraculous one week by two Tenafly families whose children participate in GCU, the Anastassiou and Leventis families, brought us to the realization of our entire fundraising goal for the 12 room school block of our Ethiopian sister school in Awassa, Ethiopia,”** said Mark Hyman. **“That**

**means that school construction will be completed this summer and our Ethiopian students will be attending their new schoolhouse in September!!”**

The GCU student organization has already raised approximately \$40,000 through a variety of events organized by its Tenaflly and Demarest chapters which have already been wired to the founder of the Ethiopian School, Yohannes Gebregeorgis, who in May 2008 had been recognized as a CNN Hero for the literacy programs he brings to thousands of Ethiopian children,

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2008/cnn.heroes/archive/yohannes.gebregeorgis.html>

**The event on June 23d was done in partnership with Axia Taverna in Tenaflly that agreed to charge only the cost of the food and drinks which the two families covered with personal funds. Tim Vlahopoulos, Axia’s general manager and one of its co-owners, explains why supporting this project meant standing behind the name of his restaurant: “Axia, means “worthy” in Greek and when we heard about this worthy project that the GCU Tenaflly Middle School students were sponsoring, we felt the urge to support it and simply live up to what our name is all about!!”**

The community’s response to this last minute effort was equally amazing. “We are grateful to everybody who came to Axia on June 23d and to those who did not make it but very generously supported our students and this very worthy cause,” said George Leventis, co-organizer of the Axia fundraiser. Alex Anastassiou, the second co-organizer, added: “We had no other choice but to respond to the distress signal sent out of Awassa by Yohannes, our GCU partner, and with the support of all the members of this burgeoning “community of conscience” that Mark Hyman and his students are creating around GCU, we were able to succeed in raising the remaining funds needed to build our Ethiopian sister school”.

“This achievement, in which we all share, certainly marks a major milestone in the growth and life of Global Care Unlimited,” concluded Mark Hyman. “Buoyed by the commitment of current and future Global Care students, more exciting events, experiences and milestones are on our horizon and we look forward with great anticipation to the next visit of our partner, Yohannes Gebregeorgis, this November, when we will be able to learn firsthand the impact of our collective efforts on his Ethiopian students.”

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