NEWS RELEASE

The Rotary Club of Fremont will mark historic progress toward a polio-free world while urging the community to help end the paralyzing disease

Event is among thousands to be held by Rotary clubs around the world on World Polio Day, 24 October

Seattle, King County, Washington October 2021 — Rotary members in **Seattle** are taking action on World Polio Day to raise awareness, funds, and support to end polio, a vaccine-preventable disease that still threatens children in parts of the world today.

> **WHAT: A Celebration for World Polio Day**
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> **WHO: Rotary Club of Fremont**
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> **WHEN: Tuesday, October 19, 2021, 5:30 pm Social, 6-7 pm Program**
>
> **WHERE: Hale's Ales Brewery & Family Restaurant**
> **4301 Leary Way NW**
> **Seattle, Wa.   98107**

When Rotary and its partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, there were 350,000 cases of polio in 125 countries every year. We've made great progress against the disease since then. Today, polio cases have been reduced by 99.9 percent, and just two countries continue to report cases of wild poliovirus: Afghanistan and Pakistan. And we remain committed to the end.

With polio nearly eradicated, Rotary and its partners must sustain this progress and continue to reach every child with the polio vaccine. Without full funding and political commitment, this paralyzing disease could return to polio-free countries, putting children everywhere at risk. Rotary has committed to raising US$50 million each year to support global polio eradication efforts. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has pledged to match that 2-to-1, for a total yearly contribution of $150 million.

"Our guest speaker is Rotarian Ezra Teshome of Seattle. He will share information about his World Polio efforts in Ethiopia, Africa. We are fortunate to hear from such a humble, dedicated volunteer for this noble cause." Beth Tesh, Fremont

Rotary has contributed more than $2.1 billion to ending polio since 1985.

About Ezra

Ezra Teshome of Rotary District 5030
Eradicating Polio in Africa

Ezra Teshome will update Rotarians on the success of efforts to eradicate Polio in Africa. He will describe the hard work that resulted in ensuring the last pandemic country, Nigeria, was declared polio-free last August.

Ezra is an entrepreneur who has earned accolades worldwide for his philanthropic endeavors and efforts within Africa to impact the lives of children. He is passionate about global health issues, particularly focusing on the eradication of polio and bringing clean water to villages in rural Ethiopia. Ezra built a successful insurance and financial services business for over 35 years, and is also very involved in his local Ethiopian community, where he helped build the first church and establish the community center.

Ezra is the recipient of many community honors, including the World Affairs Council's World Citizen Award; Seattle University's Alumni Community Service Award; Highline Community College's Distinguish Alumni Award; Rotary's Service Above Self Award; Rotary International's Service Award for a Polio-Free World; University of Washington Health Science's Martin Luther King, Jr. Distinguished Service Award; and being named a Time Magazine Global Health Hero.

Ezra served as the Rotary District 5030 Governor in 2013-14. He is married to Yobi and they have 4 children and 4 grandchildren.

About Rotary

Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who unite and take action to create lasting change in communities around the globe. For more than 110 years, Rotary's people of action have used their passion, energy, and intelligence to improve lives through service. From promoting literacy and peace to providing clean water and

improving health care, Rotary members are always working to better the world. Visit endpolio.org to learn more about Rotary and the fight to eradicate polio.

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endpolio.org

www.rotarydistrict5030.org