# AN INTRODUCTION TO TECH-CAREER FROM CEO NAPHTALI AVRAHAM

NAPHTALI AVRAHAM

If you are not familiar with Tech-Career, the premise of our NGO is simple: We make a transformative difference in the lives of young Ethiopian-Israelis. We achieve this by training young men and women in professional skills to qualify them for well-paying jobs in Israel's high-tech industries.

Tech-Career was established by and for Ethiopian-Israelis, to serve the young adult children of immigrants who made every sacrifice to reach the Promised Land. I am among those who made the perilous journey through the Sudan to reach Israel. Our dream is for a new generation to lead the way to full participation in Israeli society.

When Tech-Career was established in 2002, there were only four Ethiopian-Israelis working in the Israeli high-tech industry. Today, there are over 500 Ethiopian-Israelis professionals employed in high-tech industries, commercial enterprises and the public sector.

Tech-Career enrolls young men and women in courses that offer both technological training and "soft" business skills—including insight into Israel's high-tech culture, business English, mentoring and on-the-job training. In less than a year, our students earn international certification in market-relevant skills and gain entrée to sustainable careers. Tech-Career provides the first step forward to economic independence and full integration into Israel's professional workforce.

When our graduates accept their first job offer, they are often the only Ethiopian-Israelis in their departments—and in many cases, the first Ethiopian-Israelis in the entire company. We prepare them to enter the workforce as confident and qualified professionals. They fulfill their personal potential and broaden the horizons of their colleagues. Our Alumni Forum nurtures our graduates to be leaders in the community at large. One by one, they open new doors to economic inclusion and social equality in Israeli society.

We believe that the Tech-Career model is relevant to young adults from diverse communities and we hope to adapt our programs for young adults from all backgrounds.

Our graduates are paving the way for a better future—alongside the high-tech executives, philanthropic friends and government authorities who support Tech-Career.

We invite you to be our partner to this vision.

# FACTS ABOUT TECH-CAREER

## WHO?

Established in 2002 by and for Ethiopian-Israelis—when only four Ethiopian-Israelis were employed in Israel's high-tech industries. The target participants are young Ethiopian-Israelis, ages 22-30.

## WHAT?

The program today: Five professional courses each year—Between 600 to 800 hours of instruction in market-relevant skills and 200 hours dedicated to mentoring, on-the-job training and the unwritten rules of Israel's high tech industry.

## WHERE?

Tech-Career moved to Lod in November 2016, after it outgrew its original campus on Kibbutz Nachshon.

## WHEN?

Tech-Career courses take place throughout the year; each course is 6-8 months long with the anticipation that over 85% of graduates will achieve employment in their fields.

## WHY?

To create a fast-track for talented and motivated Ethiopian-Israelis to achieve full economic and social integration—and to advance diversity and inclusion in Israeli society.

# TECH-CAREER: OPENING THE DOOR TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The vast proportion of Ethiopian-Israeli young adults grow up in struggling immigrant families. Statistically, their parents achieve the same rates of employment as other Israelis, yet their household incomes are 40% lower, since they often work in unskilled and low-paying jobs. Young Ethiopian-Israelis do not lack the love or support of their hard-working parents—but they do not have access to the insider's track and social networks leading to professional careers and high-level wages.

Tech-Career, a certified Microsoft Academy, was created by Ethiopian Israelis to bridge this gap. The guiding principle is that gaining technological skills and qualifying for professional positions in Israel's high-tech industries is a natural fast-track to full economic and social integration.
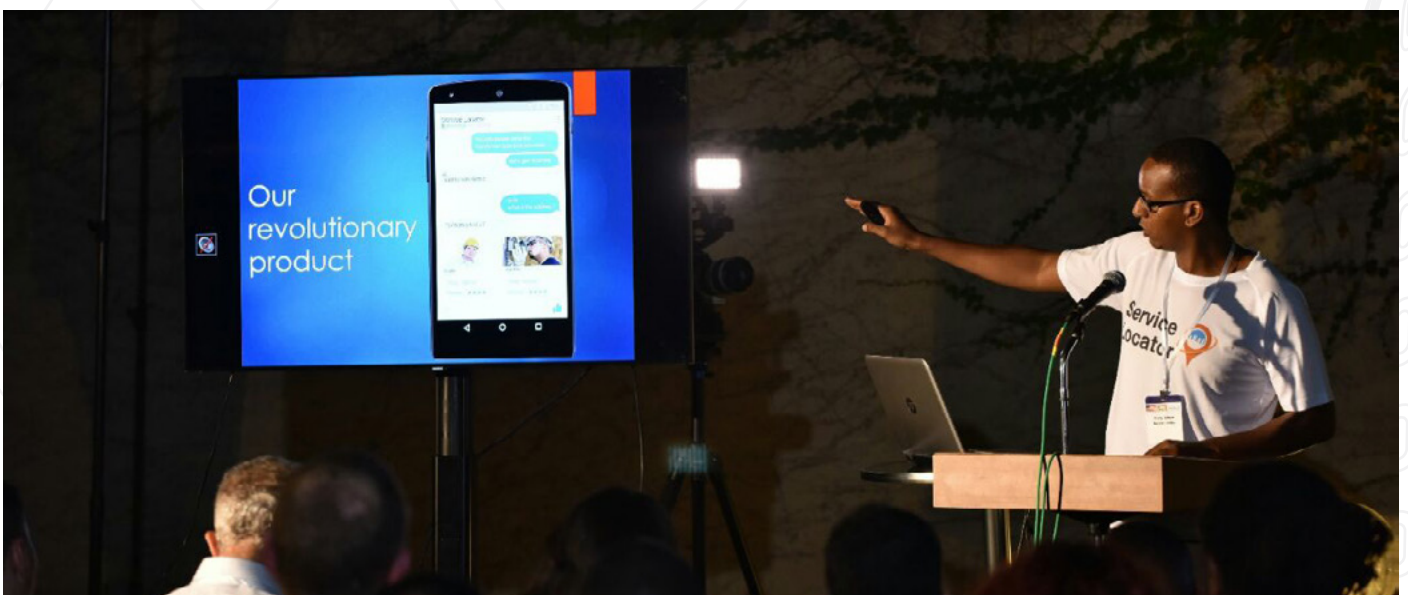
# TECH-CAREER: HOW IT WORKS

Every year, Tech-Career conducts four to five courses in specialties that offer a promising career path. The courses include network management, software development, quality assurance and data security. These courses enable our graduates to develop high-level professional careers in the high-tech industry.

To gain admission to the courses, young Ethiopian-Israelis must have completed their mandatory military or national service and high school matriculation.  Admission standards include aptitude tests and interviews to assess suitability and motivation for the program. Tech-Career recruits at least three times as many students as it accepts, to assure that the best possible candidates are chosen.

The courses are 6-8 months long, and participants invest some 600-800 hours in technological studies and practical work during that period.

Students live in dormitories with access to computer laboratories around the clock. They receive individualized guidance and tutoring as needed and take regularly scheduled exams to monitor their progress—and take international certification tests at the conclusion of the program.

In addition to their technological studies, participants invest some 200 hours in mastering the soft business skills critical to success. The program includes CV writing, job interview training and personal development – time management, team work, interpersonal communication, conflict management and other relevant skills. Moreover, the agenda includes business English, tours of high tech companies to gain insight into Israel's high-tech culture, and on-the-job training opportunities.

During the course, students also receive one-on-one mentoring from volunteer high-tech executives to familiarize them with the high-tech work culture, introduce them to their social network, prepare them for job interviews, and facilitate their integration into the high-tech work force.

Tech-Career identifies employment opportunities, and establishes and strengthens relationships with high tech companies to assist graduates with placement at the end of their training. Tech-Career's staff provides all students with counseling and support during the rigorous job search and multiple interviews that are integral to landing their first professional position. Graduates also have the support of Tech-Career staff members during the first challenging months of their new positions.

## THE OUTCOME? NINETY PERCENT OF CERTIFIED TECH-CAREER GRADUATES—THAT IS, 132 OUT OF 147 CERTIFIED GRADUATES WHO PARTICIPATED IN NINE TECHNOLOGICAL COURSES FROM 2013-2016, ARE NOW WORKING IN THEIR FIELD OF TRAINING.

# CERTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT FIGURES
## 2013 - 2016

## PLACEMENT FIGURES 2013-2016
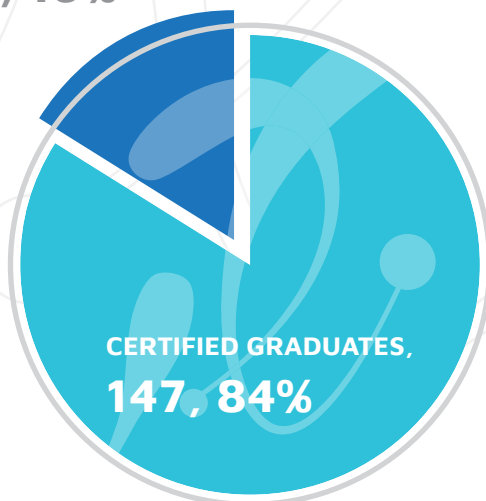
**15** CERTIFIED GRADUATES SEEKING WORK
**10%**

**132** CERTIFIED GRADUATES EMPLOYED
**90%**
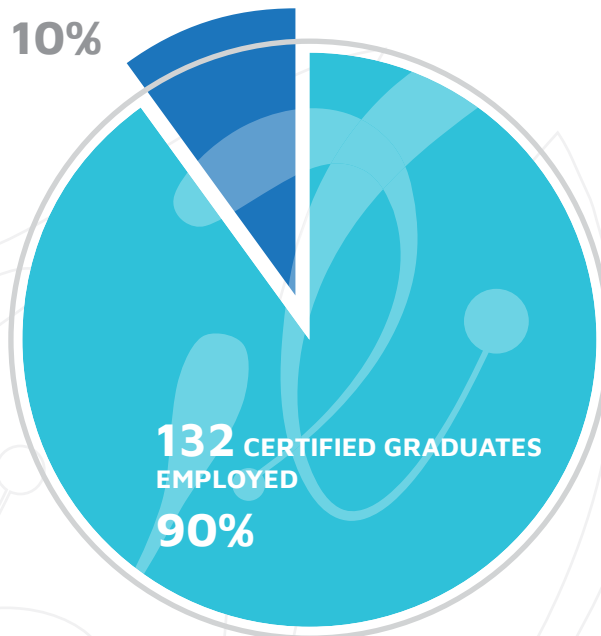
- ■ EMPLOYED
- ■ SEARCHING FOR EMPLOYMENT

## CERTIFICATION FIGURES 2013-2016

NON-CERTIFIED GRADUATES,
**29, 16%**

CERTIFIED GRADUATES,
**147, 84%**

- ■ CERTIFIED GRADUATES
- ■ NON-CERTIFIED GRADUATES

In 2016, Tech-Career conducted four courses and to date the accomplishments exceed rates previously achieved: 77 students completed their training; 64 graduates received international certifications (83%) and 61 certified graduates are working in their field of training (95%). Notably, 100% of the graduates of the CCNP (Cisco Certified Network Professional) course of September 2016 conducted in collaboration with Bynet Data Communications, have been certified and 89% achieved placement in their field of training within one month after the completion of the course.

# TECH-CAREER'S ROAD TO SUCCESS

TECH-CAREER COURSE COORDINATOR AND RECRUITMENT MANAGER URI RADA was born in Ethiopia and his family made aliya when he was a young child. He served in the Israel Defence Forces in a reconnaissance platoon and his commander described him as a dedicated soldier who strives for excellence in every endeavor.

Uri explains, "I travel across the country to find the suitable candidates for Tech-Career. We give special emphasis to Israel's peripheries, with outreach to young adults in communities that are remote from Israel's high-tech industries.

Our candidates are young Ethiopian-Israelis, ages 21-30, who have earned high school matriculation and completed their army service or national service. We work with Israeli government offices and municipal services to identify potential students for Tech-Career. We reach out in all kinds of ways, from street posters to Facebook and other social media. Many of our students have heard of us via word-of-mouth. Our community is relatively small. There are some 140,000 Ethiopian-Israelis and people know us because their siblings, cousins or friends graduated from Tech-Career and are now pursuing successful professional careers."



URI RADA

TECH-CAREER PROJECT MANAGER AND ADMINISTRATOR MICHU WANDEMAGEN earned a BA in Public Policy Administration and a certificate in computer applications. She worked in the public sector and was active in a grassroots volunteer initiative before joining Tech-Career in 2013.

"Israeli high tech firms, tech divisions of commercial companies, and government agencies support us in many ways: They provide some 88 volunteer mentors each year to guide our students and offer us on-the-job training and volunteer tutors and lecturers. A very generous gift from Microsoft has given us vital software programs and licences for our courses."



MICHU WANDEMAGEN
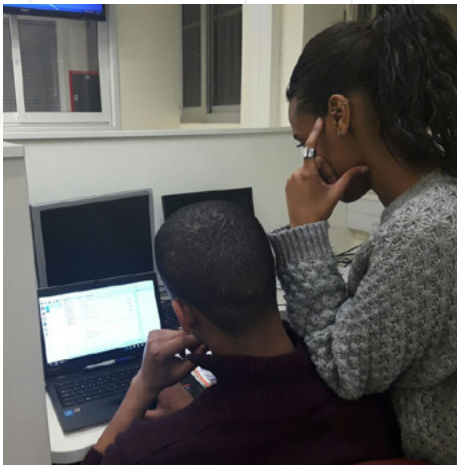
# TECH-CAREER GRADUATES SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

**AVI, TECH-CAREER SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT CLASS OF 2015:**

"I was born in Gondar and my family immigrated to Israel in the 1990s when I was a small child. I am the fifth of six children and I grew up in a rough-and-tumble neighborhood in Beit Shemesh.

After I completed my army service, Tech-Career helped me find my way. For me, what was most important was the support of the staff. I felt they were behind me from the moment I began the course to the day I landed my first job as a software checker.

There were many job interviews, high hopes, dramas and disappointments on the path that led me to my current job. There was always someone from Tech-Career to guide me and give me a good word along the way. I was the first Ethiopian-Israeli to work at my company. Today, there are six Ethiopian-Israeli graduates of Tech-Career working at my company. I know we are making a difference."

**SARAH, TECH-CAREER QUALITY ASSURANCE CLASS OF 2013:**

"When I arrived in Israel in 1984, I was a one-year-old child. I am from a family of ten children and we made our journey to Israel through the Sudan. Like thousands of others, we lost family members to disease and hunger. Despite the tremendous hardships, we held on to our faith that Israel is our home.

When we first were settled in Nazareth Ilit, my parents struggled with a new language and culture and earning a living. Although they couldn't help us with our homework, they encouraged us and motivated us to succeed.

Three years ago, I was accepted to Tech-Career's software testing course. Today I work at a leading Israeli firm. I couldn't be where I am today without Tech-Career. It is not just a feeling—it's been confirmed by my experience. Human resource directors and managers look for very specific qualifications—and Tech-Career helps us to meet that standard."



TECH-CAREER STUDENTS AND STAFF

# TECH-CAREER PARTNERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

## JUDY EFRIMI, VP OF HUMAN RESOURCES, BYNET DATA COMMUNICATIONS LTD

"We have been collaborating with Tech-Career since 2010 and our partnership is very fruitful.

We have conducted three successful Cisco Certified Network Professional courses in collaboration with Tech-Career and the Ministry of Economy. As part of our collaboration, we ensure that students are taught applied skills tailor-made to meet industry needs. At the end of the courses, we offer a high-level on-the-job training under the close supervision of our professional tutors and engage the graduates in projects with experienced technicians. Through the on-the-job opportunity, students acquire important skills and experience in a real production environment which heightens their chances to find employment in the field. We commit to the employment of at least 50% of the certified graduates. At present, there are more than 20 Tech-Career graduates employed at Bynet.

Tech-Career graduates gain the opportunity for sustainable careers with our firm, Israel's largest integrator company.  We benefit from the opportunity to cultivate well-trained and committed employees. Senior employees at Bynet and Tech-Career alumni serve as mentors to Tech-Career students, creating a dynamic of new opportunities, growth and inspiration for all.

We also are pleased to be involved in Tech-Career's innovative new programs--we provided facilities and advisors to Tech-Career's Entrepreneurial Incubator.

We anticipate that our work together will continue to create an important model for the full integration of Ethiopian-Israelis into Israel's high-tech industries."

## DAVIDI BOYARSKI, HYBRID CLOUD SALES LEADER, IBM ISRAEL

"My IBM colleagues and I volunteered to mentor Tech-Career students. Our mission was to prepare them for the job search after graduation. Each one of the students we mentored received a job offer.  IBM provided small but crucial funding that was a bridge grant for job seekers until they landed their first job. Word-of -mouth encouraged new IBM volunteers to join us.  IBM Marketing and Communications Leader, Mazal Galor and Corporate Citizenship Affairs manager, Noga Levy paved the way for our achievements.

I am also proud that I participated in Tech-Career's entrepreneurial incubator, a pilot program to enable experienced Tech-Career graduates to develop their dream start-ups. Their projects focused on nurturing social communities as a market force for cooperation."



DAVIDI WITH TECH-CAREER STUDENT

## ALON KANAT, BI AND PROJECTS MANAGER, CHECKPOINT

"Tech- Career is an amazing "greenhouse."
In a very short period of time, students gain the tools to begin their career journey.  Graduates have become knowledgeable, motivated and reliable Checkpoint employees. Along with colleagues, I have mentored Tech-Career graduates and the process has proved its promise."



ALON KANAT

## CHEN HALIO, QA DIRECTOR, PHOENIX INSURANCE COMPANY LTD

"I feel deeply connected to the values and goals of Tech-Career. Over the years, I've volunteered in a number of ways, from providing in-class drills to bringing in professionals for lectures. Most meaningful, from my perspective, is mentorship.

It is a tremendous privilege to mentor a graduating student, to help during the first steps toward a career and provide support during this critical period. My most important work as a mentor is to:

- Guide students in writing their CV in the right format
- Provide job interview simulations and give graduating students helpful tips
- To prepare students for the occasional inevitable disappointments and help earn the lessons that will help create the next opportunities.

The most exciting thing for me as a mentor is to get a phone call from my student and to understand that he or she has received the job offer!"



CHEN HALIO WITH TECH-CAREER GRADUATE

# MILESTONES AND HORIZONS FOR TECH-CAREER

MELISHU SAMAI, TECH-CAREER'S PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYER-RELATIONS MANAGER, has worked for ten years in the nonprofit sector, and she believes that Tech-Career alumni will be a key force in shaping an organization's future.

"Our new Alumni Forum will enable our graduates to support one another as they advance their careers. Our goal is for growing numbers of graduates to serve as mentors and tutors to our students. Their voices and experience are very important to us as we expand our horizons."



MELISHU SAMAI

Tech-Career's most prominent new horizon is its new campus in the central Israeli city of Lod. In November 2016, Tech-Career moved from its long-time home on Kibbutz Nachshon, which was not able to provide the space Tech-Career needed to expand its course offerings and serve more students.

We now work in a city immersed in urban renewal. Tech-Career's new agenda includes outreach to Lod's community and partnerships with municipal authorities, local businesses and like-minded NGOs.  Tech-Career's courses are now conducted in temporary facilities and the plan is to create a permanent campus that will be a model for tech education as a springboard for economic and social integration.

How will Tech-Career bring this new phase of its vision to life? The generous support of philanthropic partners is vital. A third of Tech-Career's funding is from the Israeli government, including the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Defense services for discharged soldiers. But philanthropic investments provide the leverage for Tech-Career to build on the momentum of its success.

We seek your commitment in enabling young Ethiopian-Israelis to achieve their potential and change the face of Israeli society.