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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 9, 2020

Almaz Negash Receives Silicon Valley Business Journal Women of Influence Leadership Award

SANTA CLARA, Calif., - Almaz Negash, Founder and Executive Director of the African Diaspora Network, has been named one of 100 "Women of Influence" by Silicon Valley Business Journal (SVBJ).

SVBJ honors and celebrates exemplary women leaders and innovators, their contributions to the community, and their impact on Silicon Valley businesses, nonprofits and government.

"I am honored to have been selected by the Silicon Valley Business Journal and thank them for the recognition," said Negash, Founder and Executive Director, African Diaspora Network. "This award acknowledges the contribution of Africans from the diaspora to the Silicon Valley economy and the African continent, but it also emphasizes the important role of women of color business leaders."

Global Changemaker from the Continent to the Silicon Valley Community

The Women of Influence Awards recognizes Negash's ongoing work as a global changemaker whose demonstrated commitment to public service has transformed the quality of life among local and global communities throughout her career.

ADN Board member and Roche executive Naye Makalou says, "Almaz is an amazing, compassionate, and visionary leader for ADN. I always admire her tireless efforts to strategically engage with the friends of Africa in Silicon Valley and her ability to get people engaged and committed to the activities conducted by ADN. This speaks to her love and passion for Africa and the African Diaspora. She is a wonderful role model for all the Africans and her energy, generosity, and joy she puts in her work inspire me every day. I could not think of anyone more deserving of this award."

After earning an MBA from Golden Gate University, she worked with small and medium-sized companies on exports, initiating significant joint venture partnerships and organizing successful trade missions to Japan, Europe, and Latin America with the Silicon Valley Center for International Trade Development.

In her capacity as director of the Markkula Center for Ethics Global Leadership and Ethics Program at Santa Clara University (SCU), Negash worked with global leadership organizations to harness the moral voice of world leaders and the power of media to advance workable solutions to worldwide problems. She led and developed a microenterprise program to help women of low-income backgrounds gain economic self-sufficiency. She co-founded the Global Women's Leadership Network and participated and contributed to the first Women Leaders Intercultural Forum (WILF).

For eight years, Almaz Negash served as the Senior Managing Director of Step Up Silicon Valley, a social innovation incubator of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. Under her leadership, Step Up Silicon Valley incubated Pay for Success (a.k.a. Social Impact Bond), the very first of its kind in California that resulted in a six-year \$6 million social impact financing to reduce homelessness and \$24 million to address mental health in Santa Clara County.

African Diaspora Network (ADN) in Action

Negash's commitment to Africa led to her founding the African Diaspora Network (ADN) in 2010. She noticed that the social entrepreneurship conversation was consistently about Africa, yet absent were the voices, ideas, and financial backings of Africans, both on the continent and of the diaspora. Negash founded African Diaspora Network to connect, empower, and invest in leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators from Africa, the African diaspora, and friends of Africa who are committed to Africa's development and prosperity and the communities where they live.

African Diaspora Network celebrates 10 years of service and social capital building as a go-to resource, strategic partner, and thought leader. Based in Silicon Valley, the center of innovation and entrepreneurship, ADN has built a strong community of 800 members and a network of over 7,500 people. Its primary focus areas include entrepreneurship and business ecosystem development, mentorship and knowledge-sharing, access to capital and philanthropy, and community-building and global citizenship.

In 2016, Almaz Negash launched the first African Diaspora Investment Symposium (ADIS) as part of the organization's mission to bring together Africans, diasporans, and friends of Africa to activate their entrepreneurial spirit and strategically mobilize financial and intellectual resources toward a brighter future for the continent. African Diaspora Investment Symposium has attracted over 1,300 attendees in the last five years who are interested in investing and partnering with African and Africa-focused business leaders and entrepreneurs.

"We believe in the work and role of the African Diaspora Network as a conduit that stimulates, empowers, and activates the diaspora, friends of Africa and young entrepreneurs to catalyze and contribute in building and transforming Africa's development. ADN is a platform that strengthens and connects dynamic contributors to Africa's development with a goal of accelerating social and economic transformation," stated the Conrad Hilton Foundation.

With an approved three-year strategic plan in place, African Diaspora Network is taking its work to the next level, thanks to the leadership of the board, the guidance of the executive leadership council, and the dedication of the ADN team.

Virtual African Diaspora Investment Symposium - ADIS21: Leapfrogging Africa

The African Diaspora Network, for the safety and well-being of participants, has converted its signature annual convening, ADIS21, to webinars curated to address timely issues focusing on innovations and investments that are leapfrogging Africa in the areas of global health, education, connectivity, and finance. Over the next few weeks, ADN will share symposium details on our website at (www.africandiasporanetwork.org).

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Note: Photos available upon request.