

The Volunteer Experience: A chat with Huriat Aklilu

Written by NUEYS Admin

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NUEYS' Menesay (Youth) magazine had conducted an interview with Huriat Aklilu. Huriat spent a year and a half to complete her full national service. Here are some excerpts of the English version of the interview as translated into English by Hermon Gedle

Q: Let us begin by your name; who picked it for you?

A: It's my parents who chose it. They were in their youth still; it was during the late 80's that they went to Canada and I am told that they used to have a breath taking love even before I was born. During the time I was born, there was a glowing sight of the coming of peace in Eritrea and every Eritrean was waiting desperately to feel the air of freedom. My Dad's name is Aklilu Yehedego and Mom's is Yodit Gebre Ezgiabher, the two of them have a love of their country and they always believed that the secret of the Eritrean people's existence is entirely dependent on their unity; so somehow to dedicate to this unity and the great thirst for freedom led them to come up with my name, Huriat, which means Freedom.

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Q: When were you born?

A: 1989; I was born in Calgary, West Canada

Q: When was your first visit to Eritrea?

A: During the summer of 2001, it was at that time; I was celebrating my twelfth birthday. I came for my aunt's wedding and I was able to see Asmara, Nefasit, Ghindae, Gergesum and Massawa.

Q: So how did the life of Sawa welcome you?

A: Good. It was not something new to me. Before Sawa, I was able to take the political class given by NUEYS at Tsaeda- Christian. During my time there, I was experiencing the same life style as Sawa. There was a social life of eating together, learning together and spending the day and night together, which is more like Sawa

Q: What did you learn from Sawa?

A: I increased my confidence and I started to believe that I can overcome any challenges that I face in life.

Q: What message would you want to pass to the youth all over the world via our youth magazine?

A: I don't have much to say. I took my country's national service and the military training, and it has helped me to express myself more than any other time and to be strong when hardship comes on my way. I want every person of my age to be part of this experience.

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