Yonas Abebe is a PhD candidate at the Ethiopian Institute of Water Resources, Addis Ababa University. He is also 2014 Norman Borlaug Leadership Enhancement in Agriculture Program Fellow. Mr. Abebe’s research objective is to identify the impacts of land use and cover on the Lake Hawassa catchment by developing a quantitative tool that can adequately simulate surface and ground water resources, and characterize and estimate hydrologic fluxes for water resource management applications under changing climate. During his fellowship at Montclair State University, Mr. Abebe is working with Dr. Clement Alo, Assistant Professor Earth and Environmental Studies Department. Previously, he has worked as researcher in a Regional Agricultural Research Institute and as a faculty member and department chair at Hawassa University, Ethiopia and currently he is staff member in the Ethiopian Institute of Water Resources, Addis Ababa University.

The presentation will offer an overview of the history of Ethiopia, Africa's oldest country, its people and their culture. Abyssinia, ancient name for Ethiopia, is located in eastern Africa, commonly known as the horn of Africa. Ethiopia is a country where 93 million people of more than 86 ethnic groups, speaking over 83 languages live and coexisted for centuries. It has a unique cultural and religious heritage, being the home of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, one of the oldest Christian churches in the world and home of the fourth holy city of Islam, Harar. Along with Christianity and Islam traditional Waaqa and many other religions are practiced by its people. Ethiopia served as a symbol of African independence throughout the colonial period, and is a founding member of the United Nations and the African Union and is the base for many international organizations. It is as well the source of Blue Nile River. Mr. Abebe will discuss issues related to Ethiopia’s developmental needs and its water resources.

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