

# Global Youth Connect

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## Rwanda Program Report

*Human Rights Delegation for Young Leaders*

*June 14, 2008 – June 13, 2008*

*Organized in Collaboration with AMANI Africa*



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## Liberation Song

Resolution in the sky  
I can see it I can feel it  
Resolution in the sky  
I can smell it as I breathe it.  
Scars on the arms/  
Burns on our legs/  
Past, Present, Future, is still up for debate/  
Grab the torch of freedom and end the strain/  
Nearly a million got killed/  
Billions stood still/  
Don't turn a blind eye it'll make you ill/  
Get involved in rights/  
Stand up using verbal fight/  
We yell the words of demons yet instill equal  
right/  
Cause opportunity among all/  
We reconstruct our failures/  
With practical tools/  
Using Collaboratory groups/  
To pressure the press, inspire the youth/  
Leaders, open your eyes  
Open your ears/  
That's truth/  
Focus increase, recruit our change  
Coordinate  
Delegate  
Collectively rearrange  
Resolution in the sky  
I can see it I can feel it  
Resolution in the sky  
I can smell it as I breathe it.

*The above lyrics were composed and recorded onto a CD by Global Youth Connect delegate AJ Nunes-Zeller and GYC staff Pascal Rbuerwar as part of the summer 2008 GYC Human Rights Delegation to Rwanda.*

*The lyrics express a deep faith in the progress Rwanda has made since the devastation of the 1994 genocide, as well as an impassioned plea for the continuation of the progress that has been seen here despite all the odds against it, both internationally and in Rwanda.*

*Indeed, the turn around in Rwanda has been remarkable and the efforts exhibited here are infectious and inspiring to most all who come to*

*Rwanda, including Global Youth Connect delegates.*

*But is there truly resolution in the clear, blue Rwandan skies? Some would disagree. In a June 22, 2008 Los Angeles Times article entitled "Reinventing Rwanda," Stephen Kinzer summed it up well: "No other country's government is so highly praised by development specialists but also so roundly condemned by human rights advocates. In fact, Rwanda's spectacular rebirth since the shocking genocide of 1994 has reignited an old debate about the very nature of human rights—and about whether the West's obsession with this concept can undermine innovative solutions to problems that hold entire nations in misery."*

*The sixth GYC delegation to Rwanda delved into the heart of the issues that figure at the center of this debate, especially land rights and land reform, freedom of expression and freedom of the press, judicial reforms and transitional justice, not to mention poverty reduction, economic and social empowerment. As always, the delegation addressed these issues cross-culturally, analyzing them and comparing them with experiences from the "Western" world, yet with a firm footing in the local Rwandan setting: a learning community workshop, site visits, and volunteer fieldwork with local NGOs in Rwanda. The aim of this delegation was to spark even more action on the ground in Rwanda, through action campaigns linked mostly to our fieldwork organizations, and to solidify and embolden both our Rwandan and international alumni networks so as to identify the particular and unique achievements of the GYC delegations in Rwanda, for their future continuation.*

*Our main partner organization for this program was AMANI Africa. AMANI is a grassroots Rwandan-based organization striving to establish sustainable peace in Central African post-conflict communities by engaging young leaders in cross-cultural dialogue and providing opportunities to orphans and street children through education and training. It is presided over by GYC alumna Gasana Mutesi, and is a combination of two organizations that GYC placed volunteers with in 2006/7 (AMAHORO Great Lakes and Sports and*

Culture for Peace Foundation). See their website at [www.africagrassroots.org](http://www.africagrassroots.org).

*The following program report is a series of commentaries and write-ups from the international delegates themselves with minimal editing from Global Youth Connect.*

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## First Impressions

By Amy Lambe

Climbing down from the plane and walking across the tarmac at Kigali International Airport is somehow surreal and perfectly ordinary all at once. I had General Dallaire's words running through my head "that first breath of Africa...it's like you're on a different continent." Deep, I know. Really, the airport is like any other airport you've ever seen – smaller and older, but not distinct in any particular way.

I've never been outside of North America before this summer, and since I had no idea what to expect, I had given up on trying to prepare for the experience. The culture shock upon arrival was virtually non-existent, everything seems pretty standard, and works the same way as home. The most remarkable thing about Kigali is that it's not all that remarkable – paved streets, tree lined boulevards, multi-storey buildings.

But of course, Kigali *is* remarkable – the sparking point of the 1994 genocide and the focal point of the country's impressive development. It turns out that the most energy consuming part of being in Rwanda is remembering that you're standing in the midst of incomprehensible history, because if you don't think about it, you might never know it happened.

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## Gisozi Memorial

By Amy Lambe

We were met by a very eloquent young man who took us down to the 'gardens.' The gardens, while beautiful and serene, are actually where the town of Kigali has buried their dead. Fourteen mass graves. Four meters deep. As many as 20 people held in each coffin. Nearly 300,000 buried. A black wall that stretches for maybe 100

meters with the names of the victims. A minute of silence observed at a grave not sealed. What can you say? What can you do? You hardly even know what to feel. Awe, anger, sorrow, grief...shame. Fourteen mass graves.

After the 'educational' part of the museum, you enter a rotunda with three rooms shooting off of it. The first is where family members have bought pictures of the loved ones they lost – twelve panels with ten-meter long wires on each. The worst part is the space left on top of the panels – room for so many more. The next room displays some personal possessions unearthed at mass graves. Scarves, shirts, pants, dresses. A Superman bed sheet. A child's t-shirt that reads Ottawa, Canada. A Cornell University sweatshirt. It's impossible not to sense the abandonment. The last room is a collection of remains – skulls, arm and leg bones – cases and cases of them. In the background you hear a recording...it takes a minute to realize that the narrator is reading the names of the victims. These are the moments you won't ever forget.

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## Human Rights Learning Community

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008, GYC participants and young Rwandan human rights activists came together for the first of four days of a human rights workshop which provided an opportunity for dialogue and discussion, skill-building, and the sharing of ideas. Interactive workshops that bring young activists together for in-depth training on critical issues surrounding human rights are an integral part of GYC's mission. This workshop was co-organized and co-facilitated by GYC and AMANI Africa, and expanded on themes discussed in previous GYC workshops, including: human rights in pre- and post-genocide Rwanda, action planning to improve human rights in Rwanda today, and cross-cultural discussions about the universality of human rights.

The workshop began with the Rwandan delegates generously welcoming the international participants with a small gift in their traditional clothing. The international delegates enthusiastically performed a song and an introductory clapping exercise that celebrated the

opening of the workshop. Before long the Rwandan delegates had encouraged many of the international delegates to join them in traditional Rwandan dance.



The goals of the workshop were:

- To learn more about “human rights and explore a common definition of “human rights”;
- To identify important human rights problems and achievements in Rwanda, the United States (and in other countries around the world, time-permitting);
- To consider solutions to human rights problems in Rwanda and the US, placing special emphasis on Rwanda;
- To identify and develop skills to raise awareness and take actions – both together and individually – so as to defend and advance human rights;
- To create action campaigns; and
- To build a more cohesive group movement for change by sharing and exchanging what we have accomplished in our workshop with alumni of previous GYC workshops in Rwanda, and potentially involving them in our action campaigns and vice-versa.

In reviewing the goals of the workshop, we placed greater emphasis on creating action campaigns that utilized the topics discussed in the workshop. We focused on action campaigns that

would deepen GYC’s impact in Rwanda by encouraging collaboration and synergy between current GYC delegates and Rwandan alumni.

The workshop began with an exercise called “Human Rights Squares”, which required the delegates to walk around the room and introduce themselves to the other delegates by asking for an example of certain ideas associated with human rights. In the discussion that followed, people discussed topics from books associated with human rights to countries that deprive human rights today.

We then discussed basic ground rules for the workshop, which were introduced during an exercise called “Knots”. During this activity, delegates were tied together in pairs with a piece of string and then divided into groups of eight. Working as a team, the groups were given 5 minutes to tie the biggest knot possible with their string by weaving in and around each other. At the end of the five minutes, the group with the biggest knot was declared the winner of part one of this game. Next, the teams were told to untie their knots as quickly as possible, and the team that did this most quickly was again declared a winner. The goal of this exercise was to remember how working together while respecting every individual member in the group enables us to get things done effectively. Expanding upon this idea the group discussed basic ground rules, which helped guide the workshop.



Next, the delegates were asked to think about the definition of human rights. We wanted to note the similarities and differences of opinion between people of different cultures and backgrounds. After breaking up into small groups, some were

gender specific, some nationality specific, and some mixed – the delegates brought their discussions to the whole group. Surprisingly, the primary differences of opinion on the definition of human rights emerged within groups defined by nationality or gender, rather than between the groups. Ultimately the group agreed on a common definition of human rights.



We asked ourselves questions about human rights, including:

*Does the phrase “human rights” imply that there is a set of rights that are equal for all human beings regardless of background, origin, culture, tradition, gender, or any other category of difference?*

*If you agree that there are at least some rights that are equal for all human beings regardless of difference, what are they?*

After hearing the small groups present about their discussions on these questions, the group began to explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Initially, the delegates learned about the history of the UDHR in general, and then began a silent voting exercise on five selected articles of the UDHR. The voting was designed to anonymously reveal the perceptions of the degree to which specific human rights had been achieved in the US and Rwanda today. Each delegate voted by identifying their nationality and the percentage to which they believed each article had been achieved in Rwanda and the U.S.

The results were analyzed, noting the nationality of the respondent in the analysis. In general,

there was a pronounced difference between the degree to which delegates saw human rights being achieved in their own countries versus the other country. Most Rwandan participants felt more optimistic about their own country’s respect for human rights, while the US participants were more pessimistic, and also displayed a greater range of opinions about the U.S.’s respect for human rights on certain articles.

After several discussions about human rights in small and large groups, the delegates were divided into pairs to discuss their personal commitments to human rights. Each pair was given an hour to ask each other questions, including “Have you ever been deprived of your basic human rights?” and “What motivated you to become an advocate and activist for human rights?” After these discussions, the group reconvened and delegates ceremonially placed a written description of their personal commitment to human rights in an *Ageseke*, a traditional woven basket where Rwandans keep things that are treasured.



Other activities at the workshop included:

**“Power Walk”:** Each delegate was assigned an identity, such as teacher, single parent, doctor, orphan, etc. GYC moderators asked a series of questions about opportunities each person may or may not have had, such a “Do you have a bank account?” or “Do you have access to quality health care?” Based on the nationalities and identities of each delegate, individuals took steps forward if they had been afforded that opportunity. Before long, participants were spread out across the room, indicating the range

of opportunities individuals are given based on the country they are born in and their identity.

**Guest Speakers:** We were thankful to welcome representatives from AJPRODO and the National Youth Council to share their views on human rights in Rwanda with the workshop.

A central highlight of the workshop was the informal discussions between delegates, and the lasting friendships that emerged out of the week. Many participants drew off the energy of the group to create collaborative action campaigns to support human rights in Rwanda.

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## Action Campaign Reports

### Action Campaign: Cross-Cultural Dance-Drama Exploration

*Submitted by Rebecca Davis*

Working with a group of Rwandan and American GYC delegates, this team of academics and artists fused their skills to construct a dance-drama work exploring the relationship of genocide survivors and perpetrators living together in present-day Rwanda. The GYC workshop shed light on the many nuances of conflict-resolution, and this group was anxious to accept the challenges of humanizing shocking stories and statistics through artistic interpretation.

After significant discussion and debate, a structure was developed for the first phase of the artistic work: a family (represented by the color red) lives happily together with the neighbor's children (represented by the color blue); then, the 1994 genocide erupts; one parent and one child die (cast members in red); the surviving parent refuses to let the neighbors play with his one surviving child; however, when the parent leaves, the children find a way to get along and live together in peace.

Several GYC alumni and participants worked together on the scenario and the choreography, and ultimately, a short three-minute excerpt was taught to the AMANI street children. Expanding the talents of four male Rwandan hip-hop dancers

into the realm of contemporary dance was a particularly rewarding part of the process. These youth ranged from ages 10 to 16 years and demonstrated courage, maturity and professionalism throughout the creative process.

Ultimately, the dance excerpt was performed for the public on two occasions: the July 4<sup>th</sup> Independence/Liberation Day celebration, and GYC's July 11<sup>th</sup> wrap-up event. The latter performance was accompanied by a written synopsis handed out to the viewers, and a follow up discussion with the audience to debate the human rights depicted in the piece.

This experience was certainly an eye-opening opportunity to have an artistic cultural exchange that extended to talented street children living in Kigali. Personally, I hope this inspires collaborations far into the future so that the talent of Rwandan artists can reach the hearts of the international community.

### Soccer Clinic

*By Matt Ballenger and Najad Sheik*

**Objectives:** Our objective was to hold an all day clinic for street children who wanted to play soccer. Within the clinic we wanted to promote personal development as well as educate the children about Human Rights. In addition, we wanted to promote AMANI Africa's mission, which is to take the children off the street and assist them in returning to school and returning them to their homes and their families where possible.

The clinic took about a week to assemble. Although the planning phase went very smoothly, the implementation of the clinic was difficult due to many scheduling conflicts and unforeseen cancellations. However, once the children and coaches were assembled at the field, everything was executed very well. The exercises that had been written into a module for AMANI were shown to thirty street children, two coaches and one interpreter. A major difficulty in helping the street children to perform the desired activities was the language barrier. Even though the translator was fluent in English, soccer terms are not part of the average English vocabulary, so

explaining drills was sometimes problematic. Another issue was the lack of equipment, as the GYC delegate only had three balls and AMANI could not provide any more. With greater access to goals and equipment, the soccer clinic could have been even more successful than it was.

After the skill development section was over, we took the street children out to lunch courtesy of AMANI Africa and Global Youth Connect. This lunch was the best chance the coaches and aides had to connect with the street children and really get them invested in the idea of returning to school or learning more about AMANI Africa. One youth was particularly interested after he got to know the people running the clinic and afterwards promised to stop by the AMANI office for more information about returning to school and finding a way off the streets. The lunch was especially important because it allowed for a more intimate environment. The youth were more able to get to know each other and the coaches, and to speak their mind without fear of judgment from their peers.

After lunch, we returned to the field and played a brief forty minute scrimmage. The street kids were given uniforms by AMANI and they played against the boys currently living in the AMANI house in Nymirambo. This part of the clinic was also a success. The two teams successfully coalesced and after about fifteen minutes both sides looked like soccer teams. It is important to note that the street children did not really know each other coming into the clinic. They came in small groups and had to learn each other's names and learn to work with them in order to beat the AMANI kids, which they did.

Following the game, there was a discussion about how to relate development in sport to development in life. Many issues were stressed in this discussion, including developing moral integrity, personal development, hard work and cooperation. This part of the clinic was a little more difficult to implement, as it was hard to discuss such a serious topic with so many kids.

All in all, this action campaign achieved many of its objectives. We successfully reached youth who are now interested in AMANI's help in

returning to school or being reunited with their families. We also successfully ran a clinic about skill development and everyone had a lot of fun scrimmaging. This test of running a soccer clinic definitely provided AMANI with a clear example should they wish to reach out to street children in the future through sports.

***“Working for the football clinic for AMANI was by far the highlight of my trip. To see the excitement dedication resilience and honesty of the 30 street kids who participated was a life altering experience. I have never been so consumed by others’ energy pain and hope as I was when I was present for a period of 8 hours on a rainy day with 30 brilliant kids.”***

### **Reproductive Health Action Campaign**

*By Lisa D’Annunzio and Kathleen Peters*

In collaboration with AMANI Africa, under the guidance of Mutesi Gasana, a reproductive health and sexual assault awareness training module was created that will be used to train women in reproductive health and sexual assault awareness education. These women, who will most likely be volunteers from the community, will be trained in these issues so that they can lead reproductive health and sexual assault awareness workshops for young girls, aged roughly 15-24.

We first went to Gasana, wanting to start a gender empowerment project, and she mentioned that AMANI had wanted to start a reproductive health center for young girls where they could go to get information on their bodies and their reproductive choices. Gasana said that a large problem facing young Rwandan, as well many other African, women today is that they are not aware of their bodies or how to practice safe sex. She said that while gender empowerment is important, it would do little good if girls do not first know about their bodies and how to make informed choices about their own sexuality.

Thus, we were tasked with creating the training module, as well as creating a resource manual of the same information that could be left at the women's center where girls could look up the information on their own if they wished. By the end of the program, the resource manual was completed and we hoped to have the lesson plan portion of the module completed by the end of July.

Gasana also asked us to help fundraise for the creation of this center. At the time of writing this report, we have already made preliminary contact with a U.S.-based AMANI employee and board member, and Lisa will be meeting with them to discuss funding strategies after having returned to her home in San Francisco. Kathleen will be reconnecting with Lisa to help continue the fundraising process when she returns to the U.S. in early October 2008.

### **Film Project: Conflict Resolution in Rwanda** *By Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm*

Throughout the delegation, Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm worked with Rwandan and U.S. participants on the creation of a small film project. The film, funded by a grant program at Willamette University, focused on the conflict resolution process in Rwanda. With the help of many, the producers of the film interviewed a wide range of people on important topics. From journalists to NGO leaders to genocide survivors, there were many people with great insights on whether or not Rwanda was headed towards true peace and security through the systems put in place currently. The film analyzed the efficacy of *gacaca*, the media situation, and the role of the international community in the conflict resolution process. The film is to be completed by fall of 2008 and eventually shown in Rwandan and U.S. high schools, possibly paired with curriculum on conflict resolution created by AMANI Africa intern Joelle Miller.

### **Transitional Justice**

*By Joyce Kasee and Ellie Stevenson*

Transitional justice may be loosely explained as a sub-field of criminology that seeks to address the innovative compromises that have arisen in societies seeking justice in the wake of systemic violations of human rights, as they are emerging from conflict. It is focused on a movement towards peace, democracy, the rule of law, and a respect for individual and collective rights. This focus is intended to promote reconciliation and healing within the affected community. Inevitably, the process of transitional justice raises a variety of dilemmas, constraints, and challenges for any pursuit of peace and justice. Rwanda's *gacaca* system, which was designed as a method to promote transitional justice, illustrates these obstacles.

After completing the human rights workshop, it became clear that there was an inability to think critically about *gacaca* among delegates. Frustration on the part of some delegates would make it clear that there had to be mechanisms in place that would allow for critical analysis of transitional justice here in Rwanda. The transitional justice toolkit was developed as a way to confront and think analytically and constructively about the *gacaca* system. It includes several required readings, critical thinking questions, a personal survey, a guide to conflict resolution, and a comparative analysis for other attempts at transitional justice. It will be utilized in the AMANI human rights workshops and Amahoro human rights clubs.

It is imperative to recognize the laudable accomplishments of the *gacaca* system here in Rwanda. However, blanket approval of this transitional justice model can be potentially harmful for promotion of the rule of law and strengthening Rwandan judicial institutions in the post-genocide context.

Encouraging Rwandans to think critically on how to improve their own judicial and transitional justice systems will stem conflict in the future and lead to a more sustainable peace with the rule of law supreme and universal in the Rwandan context.



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## **Murambi**

*By Kim Ostrum*

Murambi was a school where a massacre of 50,000 took place. The Tutsis of the town had asked the leaders of their town where they could go to seek shelter, and they were sent to this school on one of the hills. However, after gathering many of the Tutsis in one place, the Hutu leaders then turned on them. Only five or six survived there. The bodies were buried in mass graves, but about a year after, the survivors decided to exhume about 1500 of the bodies, preserve them in lime, and lay them out in the rooms of the school where they had fallen. We didn't realize how many rooms there would be – the first one was opened, and it wasn't as bad as I had expected it to be at first. But then our guide just kept unlocking door after door after door, and the sheer enormity of it just hit us head on like a truck.

The second room was where I started feeling upset because all of the bodies in the first didn't seem quite human because the lime just made them look hard and white. In the second, however, many of the bodies still had hair coming from their heads and in some of the rooms shortly after the first the lime had been brushed off of the bodies to reveal the coloring of clothes (a little girl wearing pink in one of them), rosary beads, places where their bodies had been slashed. Some of the delegates said you could see their internal organs. And when looking into the faces of some of the bodies, it was just so upsetting to see the looks of horror frozen on the faces, even though they are now decomposed and just skulls. I got so angry and frustrated thinking, how could humanity let horrors like this happen again and again and again?

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## **Institute for Research & Dialogue for Peace**

*By Kim Ostrum*

Global Youth Connect had the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace in Kigali, an organization that helps to facilitate the process of reconciliation post-genocide. Creating dialogues

in 5 provinces and 25 secondary schools, IRDP brings together a diverse group of Rwandans in each community – consisting of survivors, families of perpetrators, young people, authority figures, and many more individuals – every month to talk about controversial issues such as democracy, genocide, poverty, and the rule of law. Last year's theme of discussion was arbitrary power and power-sharing, a direct response to the recent policy of decentralization of power in Rwanda. Films are often used to facilitate discussion, and the conversation that results out of the monthly meetings is used in both research and to address policy recommendations to a steering committee composed of senators and people in the presidential office.

The IRDP representative that met with our group also happily noted that because the same set of individuals comes together at every meeting, many dialogue groups have begun to form the very first bonds of trust and have worked together to directly solve problems that their immediate community faces.

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## **Global Grassroots: Sustainable Water Project**

*By Rebecca Davis*

This year, the American GYC delegates had the opportunity to visit one of the most successful Rwandan social change projects under the direction of Global Grassroots (GG). GG is a 501(c)(3) organization designed to provide social solutions to disadvantaged women in post-conflict countries. The founder, Gretchen Steidle Wallace, created the organization in 2004, and it is headed by Allison Huggins in Rwanda.

This particular project focuses on a water system to improve the lives of women living in a rural community of Kigali. Formerly, women had to walk 1.5 hours each way to collect a jerry can of water from the nearest water source. Many elderly or physically disabled women could not make the trek, and consequently, they exchanged sexual favors for water delivery by men.

Led by a remarkable woman named Sarafine, this project involves the capture and purification of rainwater to distribute to the community. The group has used start-up funding from GG to purchase and install large water tanks. Now, people come and buy water for 100 Rwandan francs (about \$0.20) per jerry can and avoid making the long, dangerous trek to the primary water source. By selling this water, the women's cooperative becomes self-sustaining.

There was one particularly memorable aspect of our GYC visit. When a delegate asked, "How does creating and running this project make you feel?" The women answered their role in the community had changed: instead of being victims, they were now successful social entrepreneurs and role models.

Through these women's actions, they are showing other females how to control and change their lives. That is a message the whole world needs to hear, and we were fortunate to see that social change before our very own eyes in Rwanda.

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## **Hospital at the National University of Butare**

*By Lisa D'Annunzio*

When a good friend from our workshop (and a 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student at the National University in Butare) offered to escort a few of us through the pediatric ward of the University's teaching hospital, I knew this was an opportunity I could not pass up. We bought some small treats and headed off to the hospital with hopes of gaining important perspective on the medical situation in Rwanda and making a few kids smile.

The first room we entered held young mothers with their very malnourished infants. As I walked in, a young boy, not older than 3, grabbed my hand and pulled me towards his mother's bed. She cradled her infant (I assume the 3-yr-old's sibling) and smiled as I approached her. We shook hands and exchanged hellos in Kinyarwanda. The other mothers in the room seemed to be in equally good spirits. We greeted all of them, introduced ourselves, played with

their children, and left behind a few candies and soaps.

Visiting the following rooms felt much more difficult. Families crowded around small beds containing their sick children. They must pay a daily fee to rent these beds, but then they are additionally responsible for providing food and cleaning bedpans and linens. For many families this daily bed fee is subsidized by a government insurance policy. If you have insurance (1,000 Frw/person/year) the government covers 85% of your medical bill. However, the remaining 15% can still be way too expensive for poor families. Plus, when a child has a chronic illness, huge amounts of debt can accumulate. Fortunately, for the family, there is no deadline for repaying this debt. Unfortunately, this is quite detrimental to the hospital because it continues to lose money that is badly needed. Hospitals here are horribly under-funded and lack the money to buy even basic medical supplies and equipment.

We moved our way from bed to bed, greeting children and family members. Many children were very sick and in serious pain. It was heartbreaking to watch a child cry and moan. We continued to greet people and hand out candies; however, I felt myself become increasingly uncomfortable about our presence there. Did I have the right to come in here, stare at these families' sick children, and hand out candy? I wondered if mothers felt that our presence was an intrusion on their privacy. I eventually became so uncomfortable that I handed my bag of candy to our medical student friend and had him pass it out for the remainder of the visit.

Though I struggled with whether or not we should be there, I ultimately believe our presence was well received and appreciated by those in the hospital. The mobile and seemingly healthy children held our hands, hugged us, played with us, and escorted us throughout the facilities. Even children confined to beds smiled when we came up to greet them. I'm happy we were able to brighten their days, even if it was only for a short while. We all left the hospital with better perspective on the medical conditions in Rwanda and a new commitment to helping these conditions improve.

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## Nyamata Catholic Primary School

Close to the Nyamata Church Memorial lies the vibrant Nyamata Catholic Primary School, where GYC's local partner organization AMANI Africa has a chapter. AMANI started by training 8 teachers from the school in how to use sport games for peace-building skills and leadership development. They then identified 200 of the 1200 youth at the school to take part in the chapter, the criteria being a combination of vulnerability and leadership promise. In addition to the technical support that AMANI provides to the chapter, AMANI also supports 30 vulnerable youth (some from the streets) with school fees and materials so that they can attend the school and join in the club activities there.



*GYC Participant Rebecca Davis and children from the Nyamata Catholic Primary School*

During the GYC visit, delegation members observed some after school game sessions, played with kids from both the AMANI chapter and the entire school, and met with a few of the teachers to find out more about the way the school works. In response to a question about whether genocide ideology is ever observed in the attitudes of the kids at the school, the teachers stated that they have a class every morning at 7:45 am to address genocide ideology and promote unity and reconciliation. They provide breakfast to those students who arrive on time for the meeting, and this has not only lessened any instances of

genocidal ideology, but also reduced dropout rates at the school.

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## Ntarama & Nyamata Genocide Memorials

*By Kathleen Peters*

The other two main genocide memorials we visited were Ntarama and Nyamata. The Ntarama memorial is much smaller than the memorial at Murambi, and not nearly as jarring. Ntarama had been a Catholic church where people had been advised to go to seek refuge, and they were there for three days before the *genocidaires* came to kill them. Five thousand people died, mostly women and children.

There is one large building, and two smaller buildings in the back. The large building had been the main church, and it had the purple mourning banners hanging over it, one saying in Kinyarwanda: "If you knew me, and if you knew yourself, you would not have killed me."

You walk in and to your left are metal racks holding the bones and skulls of the victims. One row had leg bones and pelvises; the next had all skulls, the next arm and leg bones, the next, another kind of bone. Then you turn to your left and there are the pews where people were sitting waiting to be "rescued" and "saved" from the genocide. Along the walls are the clothing of the victims, with the same tears and stains in them as in the Murambi memorial. On the far wall where the alter would have been, were flowers and some of the victims' belongings that they must have brought with them, such as thermoses, dolls, plates, and pots.

Behind the main church building were the two smaller buildings. The first was an open room with the floor covered with debris on the floor, and the next building had been used to teach Sunday school. It also had small pews in it, but was ultimately empty. The most memorable part of that room was a large bloodstain on the back wall where one child was crucified.

## **Nyamata Catholic Primary School**

*By Noah Gehling*

This site visit with GYC was an unexpected learning experience for me. As our last group stop of the day, the primary school came as a pleasant end to our day after a rather emotional morning consisting of two genocide memorial visits.

My first impression was that every student in the entire country must be in attendance at this primary school. At least it sure felt that way when hundreds of school kids came swarming towards us screaming Muzungu! It was pretty overwhelming for some members of the group, but with all those smiling faces it was hard not to be put into a good mood.

The children somehow organized themselves, with the assistance of their teachers, and played some of the school games that they play normally before the teachers lead them in discussions about basic health issues and how to be good leaders.

Soon after the games our group split up and with some of us playing volleyball, basketball (there were no baskets, only backboards), and football, others were being greeted and questioned by mobs of kids. In my case I had many kids touching my arms and comparing my skin to theirs, as well as touching and pulling on my hair and beard.

I am still not quite sure what to think about this experience – it was something that has never occurred in my life before. Even as I write this article I am still trying to digest my feelings from this experience. The visit to the school however, was great overall, and, like the schoolchildren, many of the delegates left with smiles on their faces.

We spent about a half hour walking around the different parts of the memorial before getting into the minibus to head to Nyamata. I was not feeling very excited to go to Nyamata at the time, and I thought I would have the same numb, desensitized feeling to Nyamata as I did to Ntarama. If there was any neutrality within me, however, regarding the memorials and how the genocide is remembered in these spaces, the Nyamata Memorial cracked it.

The Nyamata Memorial was on the other side of Nyamata. It is another Catholic church people had been told to go to for safety, and 10,000 people were killed there. Once again it had the purple banners out-front, and when I looked up at the metal awning over the entrance I noticed holes in the ceiling. I thought they might have been bullet holes, but I was told they were holes from the shrapnel from the grenades. They were surprisingly, and eerily, pretty, almost looking like stars on the ceiling.

We walked into the Nyamata church, and there were rows and rows of pews covered with the clothing from the victims. A tense feeling hit me immediately when I walked in and saw the huge hall covered with what seemed like the ghosts from the victims. In the front of the church there is a glass box holding a rosary given by the Pope, as well as some of the knives and weapons used on the victims. There is a staircase that leads down to a small basement of the church, where there were skulls and bones in a class case. Then deep below those there is a coffin with a white sheet over it and a purple cross above that. It holds the body of a victim who had been brutally raped and killed, and she was buried there with her child who also died in the massacre.

I walked up the stairs out of the small basement feeling a mix of sadness, shock, and mostly anger at the entire situation. Some of our group sat inside the church for a while taking everything around us in, while others went outside to see the rest of the memorial. Behind the back of the church were two large crypts, both with white and glass casing over the ground. Down the steps to each crypt were several coffins and skulls lining the shelves of the crypt. It was beyond overwhelming to sit inside the crypts and sense

all the souls and death that happened on this spot. Our group spent the rest of our time at the memorial walking around the different sites or sitting on the grass outside with each other, some in silence, some trying to talk through what they had just seen.

I went to sit inside the church and think for a while. Another Rwandan man we'd been working with came over to sit with me and another girl from our group. He consoled us for a bit and talked a little about his experience and shared some of his thoughts. He explained how these memorials not only serve as a reminder of the past, but also that when Rwandans see these memorials, it makes it harder for them to imagine committing another one of these genocides again. Up until then I'd been torn as to what I thought about these memorials, about whether they had to be as graphic and raw as they are, but hearing him explain it in those terms made me understand them more.

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## Fieldwork

### AMANI Africa

*By Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm*

AMANI Volunteer Fieldwork: For two weeks, several delegates enjoyed working with AMANI Africa on various volunteer fieldwork projects. AMANI is an organization committed to building peace through leading trainings and dialogue groups for students and street children that focus on post-genocidal issues such as HIV/AIDS and conflict resolution. From supporting drama clubs in schools to leading football clinics with street kids, AMANI utilizes the variety of skills and interests of Rwandan youth and lets people grow in the areas they wish. This method of social change applied to the volunteer fieldwork program as well.

Each person who volunteered for AMANI had unique skills to offer to the organization in the short time they were there, and Gasana Mutesi and her husband Charles, the leaders of AMANI, took advantage of those offerings. Rebecca led dance workshops with AMANI street kids, the final products of which they performed on two

different occasions for the community. Matt and Najad worked with Charles, AMANI intern from Dartmouth Reggie, and others, on compiling a training module for sports for conflict resolution and applied them at several football and basketball clinics for street kids and students. Joyce created an "Intern Experience" for AMANI and compiled a program and fundraising report. Kaeley provided a training module for film as a tool for social action and organized a participatory film project workshop to be held for AMANI kids this year by FilmAid's founder, Dominique Chadwick. Many projects blossomed during the AMANI fieldwork time, and the relationships and teamwork created will continue to grow beyond the delegation.

### HAGARUKA

*By Raven Brown and Lorraine Githiora*

During our two week volunteer term at Hagaruka – a local non-governmental organization that provides legal representation to women who have been the victims of domestic violence, helps women with other legal needs such as land disputes, and advocates for land reforms – we worked to develop a grant and land reform database.

The grant database builds on work that other GYC volunteers have done with Hagaruka. We identified organizations that give grants to women's organizations in Rwanda and elsewhere in Africa, and compiled that information into an easy-to-use spreadsheet. We also researched the history of post-genocide Land Reform Acts passed by the Rwandan government to help provide easy access to legal references for Hagaruka lawyers and support staff.

### Centre for Information and Social Mobilization (CIMS)

*By Noah Gehling*

During the fieldwork portion of the delegation I had the privilege of working with the Centre for Information and Social Mobilization (CIMS). It was truly a rewarding experience to work with such an important and vital organization like CIMS during my time in Rwanda. CIMS deals mainly with mediating land disputes, and through

education about the 2005 Rwandan Organic Land Law promoting equal land rights.

Along with the other two GYC delegates who volunteered with CIMS, I was able to truly obtain a deep understanding and appreciation for what CIMS was trying to accomplish in Rwanda. With over 90% of major conflicts in Rwanda today revolving around land conflicts, the work CIMS does is vital in protecting both people's human right to own property as well as helping maintain peace in post genocide Rwanda.

With CIMS we had the great opportunity to go out into the field with their volunteers and see first hand the kind of work that the organization does. We also helped collect testimony of people who had their land-based conflicts resolved successfully because of the work of CIMS. Through the work we did in the Kigali headquarters as well as in the field in Musanze in the Northern Province, our group of delegates was able to help further this organization by creating a 5-year strategic plan, as well as a website for the organization. We felt both of these tools are vital to the continued success of CIMS in Rwanda, and would help greatly in both and increasing and securing funding globally for CIMS.

Being involved with this group of committed individuals was one of the greatest learning experiences I had while in Rwanda, and as a recently added member of the international board of directors, I wish CIMS continued success and feel confident that the work we did as GYC delegates will be crucial to the continued success of CIMS.

### **Uyisenga N'Manzi**

*By Kim Ostrum*

Uyisenga N'Manzi is a local Rwandan NGO dedicated to serving the needs of orphans of the genocide and orphans of HIV/AIDS and overseeing their organization into child-headed households. Through its support services, Uyisenga N'Manzi provides psychological counseling to victims of trauma, facilitates the reintegration of orphans into the community, supports the income-generating initiatives of the

local orphan organizations, encourages orphans to go back to school and financially provides for their school fees, educates orphans about HIV/AIDS and its prevention, and supplies guidance and some health services to those already diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

During our two weeks of volunteer fieldwork during the GYC delegation and our time spent at Uyisenga N'Manzi after the delegation (all three of us stayed longer), we taught the staff members English or helped them to improve their skills.

During the second half of our time with Uyisenga N'Manzi, we also taught English to a group of orphans in secondary school and helped in the process of writing several grant proposals.

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### **Home Stays**

*By Noah Gehling*

For me, my home stay was by far one of the most impacting experiences I had in Rwanda. This opportunity gave me real insight into what an average middle class family's life is like in Kigali. One other GYC delegate and I stayed with a family in the Remera district in Kigali for four days. While cultural differences were present, and at times trying, the family was very understanding and willing not only to teach us, but also eager learn from us about U.S. culture.

During our stay, the family went far out of their way to make our time with them most enjoyable and full of interesting things to do. With our host family, we got the chance to experience multiple traditional Rwandan meals, the local elections (where the voters had to line up behind the candidate that they were supporting), friendly gatherings, church, and even a Rwandan wedding.

I can safely say that without the home stay my trip to Rwanda would not have been nearly as satisfying or complete as it was. Often when people travel and stay in hostels or hotels they miss out on essential learning experiences, which can only be obtained in a home stay setting. From washing yourself with water from a jerry can, to eating fantastic traditional food, the home stay portion of this delegation offered an unforgettable

experience. The time spent with our host family is something I will cherish, and forever be grateful for.

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## **And The Hills Fell Silent**

*By Joyce Kasee*

And the hills fell silent  
A mass grave befell the hill and silence crept outward.  
Bones with Fresh expressions of horror and uncertainty followed door by door by door.  
And the hills fell silent  
There was no discrimination in this truly gruesome death.  
No machete halted at the scene of crying newborns or fleeing grandparents; there was no bravery at the deepest core of humanity.  
The French played volley and WE fell silent  
And the hills fell silent  
A mass grave befell the hill and silence crept outward.  
Skulls too numerous to count were surrounded by a sudden inability to comprehend,  
Comprehension was lost... just as reason, trust and humanness perished alongside generations of Rwandans.  
And now these hills, once silent  
Permeate with the eerie sounds of life, life and sounds, which had ceased under genocide ideology  
And these hills, once silent,  
Surround this horror with natural beauty and new life,  
But a mass grave still befalls this hill, even though the silence now creeps inward;  
Into the deep core of our conscience, our hearts, it seeps out through our tears and leaves our mouths dry and our breaths sporadic.  
And the hills fell silent  
Never again and always again;  
Stop the silence.

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## **U.S. Participant Biographies**

### **Matt Ballenger**

Matt is a junior at Illinois Wesleyan, double majoring in international studies and music. His interest within international studies lies primarily with assessing and understanding the social structures of developing nations and how to protect the human rights of societal minorities. In high school, Matt served as a peer counselor for first and second year students, helping them adapt to their new environment and then deal with any social issues that arose during the year. He has volunteered at his local junior high school to help teach the bands there, as well as independently led small ensembles within his community. He has also served as the Alumni Relations Officer of his music fraternity, Phi Mu Alpha. While not directly related to human rights issues, Matt believes these experiences have blessed him with an understanding of how delicate conflict resolution can be and have given him an appreciation for the need for understanding across both age and culture. In the future, Matt hopes to serve in the US Foreign Services, preferably for USAID or another aid organization.

### **Raven Brown**

An MA candidate in the graduate program in international affairs at the New School University, Raven is concentrating her studies in socio-economic development and is focusing on post conflict development, gender empowerment, and African development. She graduated with a BA in anthropology from Bennington College, where she became very interested in Rwanda academically and spent a semester studying the genocide. Raven has recently worked as a research associate at TMGI Economic Development Firm, where she prepared marketing research on consumption patterns of middle class Chinese urban and rural women, and was the assistant to the program director of the Global Gender Equality Forum. She has also interned at the United Nations in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and traveled to South Africa to do research on gender, empowerment, participatory governance, and HIV&AIDS. She is currently a co-chair of a student organization at the New School

University called Project Africa that organizes events about issues affecting Africa and Africans.

### **Lisa D'Annunzio**

Lisa graduated from Pomona College in 2006 with a BA in music. After college, she moved to New York City to work with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, the Venice Music Festival, and PollyRhythm Productions, a company dedicated to classical music education. She has since returned to California, where she is currently working as a paralegal for Kaplan Fox & Kilsheimer LLP, a law firm that specializes in high-end civil litigation. Lisa is starting law school, and she intends to focus her studies around international human rights law.



### **Rebecca Davis**

As a 26 year-old entrepreneur, Rebecca has constantly sought opportunities to deepen her academic knowledge to broaden the artistic scope of her organization, The Rebecca Davis Dance Company. She founded this not-for-profit organization two years ago with the mission of using contemporary ballet to deepen the public's knowledge of famous literary works, significant historical events and modern social issues. Rebecca graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelors of business administration from Temple University in 2004. Upon graduating, she spent 10 months in Russia on a Fulbright scholarship to study choreography under the tutelage of Nikolai Boyarchikov (Artistic Director, The Mussorgsky Ballet of Saint Petersburg). One year later, she returned to Philadelphia to start her dance company. As the Artistic Director, she choreographs original

ballets and teaches Vaganova (Russian) ballet in the pre-professional training program. Her recent choreographic works have included "Antigone" (2006), "Helen Keller" (2007) and the upcoming "Darfur" (2008).

### **Noah Gehling**

Noah is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, double majoring in international studies and political science. He is also working towards obtaining a certificate in peace studies. Before attending UW-Milwaukee, Noah lived and studied in Germany for over two years at an international university. He is currently a law clerk at a law firm in Milwaukee. After graduating from college, Noah hopes to work for either a non-profit organization or non-governmental organization where he can promote and help secure human rights, or where he can help humanitarian efforts in places of need around the world.

### **Lorraine Githiora**

Having always had a strong commitment to social justice, Lorraine considers human rights central to the development and advancement of a more just global society than that in which we live. Since graduating from Wesleyan University, she has become intensely interested in the similarities and differences between her peers from across the globe and herself. Lorraine believes in "cyclical living—that experiences that take place now in one part of the world will tangibly affect my life in another part of the world later and that my actions, too, affect lives elsewhere in important ways." She has worked as an organizer for a non-profit organization and has involved herself in local movements dedicated to creating avenues through which to look at global problems differently. Her current goals include pursuing work with international social justice work through advocacy, policy planning, and community development. Lorraine would like to plan to develop experience through serving in the Peace Corps while also working toward achieving a Masters degree in international/non-profit management or public administration.



**Joyce Kasee**

Joyce is currently pursuing her Master's at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, focusing on international studies and diplomacy. She plans to complete this program later next fall. She is currently researching for her dissertation, entitled "When is Reconciliation? Analyzing the four major strategies of Reconciliation in Rwanda and making the case for reconciliation in Darfur." She has professional experience on the local level with youth and community involvement, more specifically, issues of homelessness, HIV/AIDS awareness, substance abuse and campaigns against violence in favor of conflict resolution. Before studying in London, she was the director of the Youth and City Government Program in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she was responsible for building the program and its conference. Joyce has been an intern with the Labour Party in London, has experienced language immersion while living in Cairo, attended the International Youth Conference in Prague, served as an ambassador for MTV Rock the Vote, participated in Model United Nations, and acted as president to the Political Science Student Association as an undergrad at the University of Cincinnati. Joyce plans to work in the human rights field, in the field of transitional justice, community development and international law. She has been applying for jobs in Iraq, through which she hopes to engage in community development and reconstruction post-invasion.

**Amy Lambe**

Amy attended a French immersion school from ages 4-14 and pursued other French language courses in high school and in college. It was during this formative period that she developed an appreciation of other cultures (by being exposed to French Canadian culture, as she is Anglophone). At the University of Alberta, Amy studied political science and history, focusing on international relations. She is close to completing her Certificate in peace and post-conflict studies. As a part of some of her undergraduate courses, she did community work at a Centre for Immigrants as an ESL tutor, and at the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights (JHC). With the JHC, she worked at two international conferences: "Building World

Peace: The Role of Religion and Human Rights" and "Global Youth Assembly 2007." Amy has also spoken at the JHC event "Youth Voices on Racism," and completed JHC's "Youth Action Project – Facilitator Training" program, a part of which she facilitated a workshop for high school students on the culture of peace and action planning for community development.

**Jeff McGuire**

Jeff is a junior at the University of Oklahoma, with a major in political science and a minor in religious studies. He has tutored children in the past, and he just recently became a Big Brother in a mentor program in his community. After graduating from college, Jeff hopes either to work for the Peace Corps or to work for an NGO or NPO such as Global Youth Connect. The thought of working for a cause like human rights excites him more than anything else.

**Aaron Nunes-Zaller**

Aaron will soon complete his Associate's degree from Edison College, where he made the Dean's List last year, and is looking to transfer to The New College of Florida for his Bachelor's degree. He has been an intern at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, as well as a volunteer for Youth in Action. Aaron has extensive experience traveling around the world and living in different cultures. He has spent time working different jobs in the US and abroad, from building huts in Maui to constructing a water stand and selling cold water on the island of Pico in the Azores. In the future, Aaron would like to work in the non-profit field.

**Kim Ostrum**

Kim is currently a sophomore at Princeton University, where she plans to major in international relations with a certificate in Near Eastern studies. While her academic life focuses on political theory, public policy, the Middle East, and Islamic religion and culture, she has dedicated a large portion of her extracurricular time to issues concerning human rights, poverty, and the state of children. She is an officer in her campus's chapters of UNICEF and Amnesty International, in addition to being a member of STAND (Students Taking Action Now: Darfur), the International Relations Council, and

Sustained Dialogue (a group dedicated to negotiating the racial/religious/cultural divide), and a volunteer with Academic Success Today (a tutoring/mentoring program). In five years, Kim hopes to be working for an international NGO that deals with issues of human rights, conflict resolution, or poverty/economic development, or to be working for the U.S. Foreign Service. She is looking to transcend cultural boundaries by working directly with foreign communities.

### **Kathleen Peters**

In her fourth year at Simmons College in Boston, MA, Kathleen is majoring in philosophy, with a psychology minor. She has a deep passion for traveling and learning about different cultures. Last spring, she took part in the School for International Training (SIT)'s Ireland peace and conflict studies program. She also spent the summer of 2006 working in a women's center in Kolkata, India. The primary organization she volunteers for is the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, where she has been working as a crisis hotline counselor for the past three years and a peer supervisor since August. Kathleen has also been a peer educator at the Health Department at Simmons, Board member of the Simmons chapter of Amnesty International, and a volunteer in the Alternative Spring Break/Habitat for Humanity program. In the future, she hopes to work for organizations similar to the women's and crisis centers she has worked in the past before going to graduate school for applied cultural anthropology.



### **Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm**

Kaeley is a freshman at Willamette University in Salem, OR, and comes from a background as a liberal anomaly in an ultraconservative, small town in northeastern Washington. Her passions include journalism, politics, music, theater, international travel, activism, and much more. She plans to major rhetoric and media studies and political science/sociology at WU. She is involved in the college newspaper, various musical, political and social justice groups on campus. Kaeley also wrote (controversial) columns for the regional paper in eastern WA, worked at the library and regional radio station, and is extremely involved in musical theater and composing contemporary music on voice and piano. Her interest in international relations and conflict resolution was expanded when she was hired as a peace activist trainee for the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Seattle, during which she met with legislators, made a documentary, and gave public speeches regarding militarism in schools. She was a summer Rotarian exchange student in Italy, and was a youth ambassador with a Quaker delegation to El Salvador in summer 2007.

### **Najad Sheikh**

Najad is currently a student at the University of Washington at Bothell, majoring in global studies with a minor in human rights and French. She is originally from northern Somalia, currently called Somaliland (although not formally recognized by the international community). She has been living in the States for the past 17 years. She plans to graduate with a Bachelor's and then return to school for graduate studies. She would ultimately like to work for a NGO or for the United Nations. As she pursues her academic goals, she hopes to travel more to war-torn areas and to learn even more to become a better global servant.

### **Laura Snider**

Laura graduated from Lewis & Clark College with a BA in studio art photography. In her sophomore year of college, she organized two documentary screenings of "Invisible Children," and participated in the committee that organized Portland's Global Night Commute (GNC) in April 2006. Lewis & Clark student participation in GNC led to the start-up of an African

Awareness Group on campus that now works alongside Amnesty International and the Health, Culture, and Society Club (HCSC) on campus. Through HCSC, Laura has become involved with The Archimedes Movement, an Oregon-based healthcare reform campaign led by former Governor John Kitzhaber. Laura has also participated in an off-campus theatre and arts based program in New York City through Lewis & Clark College, and last fall she was the media coordinator for the Student Global AIDS Campaign, a student-led grassroots movement and offshoot of Global Justice, stationed in Washington, DC. She has been a resident assistant for three years, and this year she has been the resident assistant for the Green Floor, an environmental and socially conscious themed residence hall floor dedicated to service, activism, and social progress, that is also involved with Focus the Nation. Over the past year, she has been working with fellow students on a social networking website start-up that is specifically designed for social activists and organizations called Squarepeg ([www.squarepegged.org](http://www.squarepegged.org)). This spring she co-lead an HIV/AIDS focused alternative spring break trip to San Francisco through Lewis & Clark. After college, Laura hopes to travel and to pursue a Master's in Public Health with a possible focus in either international health or maternal health.

### **Elinor Stevenson**

After spending three years at Babson College with the intention to pursue a career in business, Ellie went abroad for seven months to South Africa. While there, she spent time with several individuals involved in conflict resolution and international law and took a variety of courses at Stellenbosch University thematically set in the context of human rights. She also had the opportunity to volunteer at a primary school in the local township of Kayamandi. Ellie is in currently in the middle of a year-long thesis project, examining the role of the International Criminal Court in reconciliation and conflict resolution. Her research process has involved travel to the International Criminal Court in The Hague and to the United Nations in Geneva. She is now applying to law school, and will begin her studies in the fall of 2008. She intends to focus on international human rights law while at law

school, and to further her involvement in human rights activism. Wherever she ends up later in life, her goal is to be working in international law as it relates to conflict resolution, particularly as relates to Africa.

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## **Rwandan Participant Biographies**

### **MUKUNDWA Oliver Fify**

Olive Fify is 27 years old, and attended to Kigali Independent University where she earned a Bachelor's degree in administrative science. She is currently a social worker, and has worked as an administrative assistant for the Ministry of Sports and Culture. She has lead Anti-AIDS club and is the leader of a Rwandan Red Cross group. She has worked for Rwanda Youth.

### **GASANA Didas M.**

Didas M. Gasana was born a Rwandan refugee in Uganda on November 23, 1980, where he had his primary education. In 1994, he returned to Rwanda, where he was able to continue his education. In high school, Didas studied history, economics, literature and divinity. In 2000, after high school, he partnered with his colleagues to form Umutara Anti-AIDS Association, of which he was the vice-chairman. In 2001, following his passion for journalism, Didas began working as a journalist at the English weekly *The Rwanda Herald*. Two years later, Didas began studying undergraduate law studies at the National University of Rwanda, while working at the same time for the Rwanda Independent Media Group as a journalist. He also reported for the Kinyarwanda weekly *Umuseso* and the English weekly *The Newslines*. For the past three years, he has been the managing editor of the *The Newslines* and a senior writer for *Umuseso* – the two most influential independent papers in Rwanda. Didas has participated in many journalism and human rights workshops, both in Rwanda and abroad. He is a vigorous activist for press freedom in particular, and for human rights in general, both in Rwanda and elsewhere in Africa. Early in 2008, he was elected by the independent journalists in Rwanda as the Commissioner for Information and External Relations for the Association of Rwandan Independent Journalists.



### **NSABIMANA Youssouf**

Youssouf is 28 years old, with a Bachelor's degree in business administration. He studied at the Kigali Institute of Science Technology and Management (KIST), and has worked for Uyisenga N'Manzi dealing with orphan problems and child-headed families as an accountant.

### **RUZINDANA Kenneth**

Kenneth is a 23 year old, and is currently in his final year in the medical school at the National University of Rwanda. Kenneth works for Rwanda United Nations. He is an active member of the World Federation of United Nations Association Youth Wing, and is a member of Global Youth Coalition Against HIV/AIDS. He has also attended an organization development seminars in quantitative and qualitative research methodology organized by Harvard School of Public Health.

### **AKINTIJE SIMBA Calliope**

Calliope is 27 years old, and is a student of medicine. She works for Human Right and Conflict Management Group (CMP) as the general coordinator. Calliope was president of University cultural troupe INDANGAMUCO, chairman of the Voice of Children Association in Rwanda. She is the executive secretary of National Electoral Commission of Rwanda at the district level. She is also the chairman of IKIREZI cultural troupe.

### **MUKAGAJU Françoise**

Françoise is 23 years old, and the regional coordinator of CINEDUC. Françoise is her 5<sup>th</sup> year in the school of medicine at the National

University of Rwanda. She coordinates activities for CINEDUC, such as education at a cinema about children and women's rights, peace and reconciliation. She leads to the formation of Medical and Mental Health Students Association of Rwanda.

### **INGABIRE Phionah**

Phionah is a 23 year old, and a student of management majoring in finance at the National University of Rwanda. She currently works for the National University of Rwanda Students Association and Entrepreneurship Club as a public relations officer. She has skills in developing partners and keeping the, and believes all people will have their desired rights one day.

### **RWAMAMARA Lionel**

Lionel was in Bujumbura city and he is 24 years old. He is a lawyer by profession and studied at Kigali Independent University. He worked for Never Again Rwanda as the legal assistant in charge of research of judicial studies. Has worked in many conferences in charge of protocol of VIP with symposia, promote and ministry of foreign affairs. He has done a workshop with Human Rights First Rwanda on monitoring and evaluation, organized by Legal Aid Forum in collaboration with Legal Research Foundation from Kenya as assistant program coordinator.

### **HASHAKINEZA Jean Claude**

Jean Claude is a 26 year old student of journalism and communication, majoring in communication for development at the National University of Rwanda. He is working for the same communication school. He is the producer of a culture show at the National University of Rwanda Radio station whose mission is to train future Rwandan broadcasters to enhance and diversify radio programming and democracy building.

### **JACQUES Bugingo**

Bugingo is a 26 year old, who is in his 2nd year as a student of management at Kigali Independent University. He works for Urungano Youth and Media (D.O.P, sound designer, and music). He coordinates projects in Kimisangara Youth Centre, and is a composer, movie editor, scriptwriter, film festival organizer. He has peace

building experience, and has attended several workshops on the role of journalism in peace building.

#### **MUKARURANGWA Peace**

Peace is a 29 year old, and holds an advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management. She studied at the Independent University of Rwanda and is working for Centre for Information and Social Mobilization (CIMS) as volunteer Human Rights Activist Organization Treasurer. She has experience in human rights research on child rights violations. She is an accountant in charge and council for women vulnerable group victims of social injustice.

#### **UFITINEMA Josepha**

Josepha is a 23 year old, who is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student at the medical school of National University of Rwanda and works for Conflict Management Project as assistant coordinator, and Medical Students Association of Rwanda (MEDSAR) as its vice president. She is a member of Gender Empowerment Group's task force.

#### **MUSONI Gilbert**

Gilbert is 28 years old, and has a degree in law. He is the branch manager Haguruka in Huye.

#### **BUDANDI Henry**

Henry, the director in charge of human rights, conflict management and education for AMANI Africa, is a 27-year-old and has a Bachelor's degree in social work and social administration from Uganda Christian University. He is studying to be a lawyer at Makerere University. Henry has worked for Assistant Mbale as deputy human resource officer in charge of training and junior officer recruitment. He worked for the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Development Uganda as a general inspector. Before, Henry worked as a production day shift supervisor for the Daily New Vision. While at university, Henry worked for Uganda Christian University guild office as a public relations officer. Henry is the original founder of Uganda Christian University Banyarwanda Students Association based in Uganda.



#### **RWIBUTSO Yves**

Yves is a 21-year-old Rwandan, working for AMANI Africa as an advisor on culture. Yves is currently taking a managerial course at Kigali Independent University. He has worked for ULK as an advisor on conflict resolution with a gender promotion club (GBU). He has also worked for Kigali Independent University as the president of the discipline committee. He was the president of ULK Good Changers International Family for Assistance. He worked for the UNICEF/RTP project evaluation of province survey. Yves was elected temporary secretary for Youth African Parliamentary Affairs. He has worked for WE ARE THE FUTURE CONSTAZIONNE PROJECT as its head leader. He is currently working for City Radio 88.3FM inshuti yabose as French and English news and programs presenter.

#### **UWERA Aline**

Aline is a 21 year old working for Uyisenga N'Manzi. She has an advanced certificate in mathematics and physics. She has a certificate in computer lessons, and a certificate in fighting against HIV/ AIDS.

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## Staff Biographies

### **Marie Berry**

*Special Program Assistant  
Global Youth Connect*

Marie began her college career at Claremont McKenna College in California. While there, she was awarded a travel research fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum where she studied “The Politics Behind the Words ‘Never Again’”. Marie transferred to the University of Washington for her junior year to pursue a degree in international studies in greater depth at the Jackson School of International Studies. While a student at the University of Washington, Marie was a Carlson Center Civic Fellow, a position that allowed her to work in depth with Save Darfur Washington State. In addition, she conducted research on the reconstruction of gender roles during conflicts in Kenya, and on the impact of the “War on Terror” on human rights across the world. After graduation in 2007, Marie traveled to Rwanda with the 2007 GYC Summer Delegation. Upon her return, she joined the staff of the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center, where she is the Speakers Bureau Coordinator for Holocaust and genocide survivors living in the Northwest. In the fall of 2008, she will begin graduate school at UCLA in Sociology with an emphasis on ethnic conflict and genocide.

### **Jesse Hawkes**

*Program Director  
Global Youth Connect*

Jesse is an accomplished social activist, professional actor and youth development worker currently living and working in Kigali, Rwanda. In addition to serving as GYC’s Rwanda Program Director, Jesse volunteers as Program Director for RAPSIDA, an HIV/AIDS prevention program of Rwandans and Americans in Partnership, an organization Jesse co-founded in 2003 ([www.rapsida.blogspot.com](http://www.rapsida.blogspot.com)). His work at RAPSIDA has included developing and managing a creative, engaging HIV prevention program for six Rwandan high schools utilizing a combination of innovative theatre methods, peer education, and outreach activities. He has also

written episodes of Ishuti Solange for Population Services International (PSI-Rwanda), a popular radio drama series on HIV/AIDS and other public health concerns. In collaboration with the Rwandan Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sport, Jesse performed at the 10th memorial service of the 1994 genocide at Amahoro Stadium, Kigali. As a founding member, assistant program director and chair of the Board of Directors for Centers for Social Responsibility, Jesse led outreach campaigns to schools for the Rwanda By Invitation program, chaired the Sister Schools program where he led secondary school students on a trip to Rwanda, and designed and delivered presentations on Rwandan history and culture to local high schools in Vermont. He also served as a visiting artist at the Community Arts Project in Cape Town, South Africa where he directed, wrote and facilitated a community development theatre project in collaboration with the South African government, township youth and South African artists. As an educational consultant for Parents, Teachers and Students for Social Responsibility, an organization implementing educational programs and projects designed to empower young people with the knowledge and attitudes needed to become proactive citizens for social justice, he led a group of high school youth from the US on a visit to Haiti. Jesse graduated cum laude from Harvard University in 1999 with a bachelor’s degree in history, after which he acted in profession theatre in the US for 4 years prior to coming to Africa.

### **Pascal (Pasi) Ruberwa**

*Local Project Coordinator  
Global Youth Connect*

Pasi is a high school graduate who is currently taking business Management courses at Kigali Institute of Management (KIM). He first became connected with Global Youth Connect through Jesse Hawkes, GYC’s Rwanda Program Director. Jesse first met Pasi through his work with RAPSIDA in a village community called Ndera outside of Kigali where Pasi lives with his mother and his brother Eddy. Pasi is involved with his reconciliation and anti-AIDS youth clubs in his home area and he has recently initiated a Never Again club.