

THE USAU YOUTH



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INSIDE

The Third Annual Africa 2.0 Leadership Symposium 1

Where There is an Observation, There is an Obligation: Shoe Initiative 2

MACDELLA COPPER - Liberia's Angel 3

Did You Know?... Let's Discuss on Facebook and Twitter (The remarkable benefits of being a volunteer) 4

A Word to the Wise - DR. ABDUL-HAKIM ELWAER 7

The Voice of Volunteers - UDUAK BASSEY - DUKE 9

THE THIRD ANNUAL AFRICA 2.0 LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

For the third year, Africa 2.0 gathered a group of over 200 emerging and senior leaders in order to find practical and sustainable solutions to boost Africa's development. With 37 African countries represented, the gathering was convened at the Federal Palace Hotel in Lagos, Nigeria. The objective was to transform Africa by identifying key actions and collecting pledges to ensure that such plans are put into ACTION.

Covered by media houses such as the Cable News Network (CNN), The Financial Times, Al Jazeera, BBC, as well as CNBC Africa, and attended by eminent personalities such as **Mallam Sanusi Lamido** (Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria), **Dr. Frannie Leauthier** (Executive Secretary of the African Capacity Building Foundation), **Thierry Tanoh** (Regional President International Finance Cooperation), **Jean-Louis Ekra** (Chairman and President of the African Export-Import Bank), and **Amadou Maktar Ba** (Chief Executive of the African Media Initiative). The event, aptly titled "**Coalition for Sustained Transformation,**" was structured around four main topics:

- Disseminating Best Practices for turning Africa into a "Global Food Basket";
- Corporate Champions: Driving Cluster Strategies & Regional Integration;
- Capacity Building: Developing, Sourcing and Retaining African Talents; and
- Upgrading infrastructure to enable accelerated growth across the continent.



The Africa 2.0 team

The following deliverables and action plans for pilot countries were agreed to during the event (some of which have already been implemented):

- The re-branding of agriculture - making agriculture more appealing to the youth. This will be achieved through a website (that is currently under construction) fully integrated with social media.
- The African Capacity Building Foundation will provide support, within the year, and create the first market research report for agribusinesses in Nigeria.
- The University of Lagos, in conjunction with local agri-businesses, will set up an Agribusiness degree program that will merge agricultural practice and business expertise. This degree program was launched in July 2012.
- A regional champions index will be developed and will contain an annual score sheet for each African country. Results from this index will be used to identify future regional champions.
- Africa 2.0 will partner with IHub & Africa's Talking, Ltd. to set up IT training hubs specifically focused on IT program development and mobile technology. The first centers will open in Lagos and Kigali by June 2013.
- Africa 2.0 will also launch the Start-up Weekend Africa Program, a program where youth entrepreneurs are provided with mentoring and professional advice over a weekend of events.
- Africa 2.0 will engage with technicians across Africa, in areas of energy, mining, and construction, providing them with an additional 2 years of training and certification at community colleges in Texas.

A monitoring and evaluation system was subsequently set up to assess progress on deliverables and objectives designed during the gathering. In addition, a mentorship program open to members of Africa 2.0 was inaugurated during the event with the aim of fostering intergenerational dialogue.

Visit www.africa2point0.org for more information on Africa 2.0.

*Clement Banjo
Communications and Partnership Manager - Africa 2.0 Foundation
Johannesburg, South Africa*

EDITORIAL NOTE

Dear readers,

We present to you another edition of your favorite e-newsletter 'The USAU Youth.' In this edition, we give you feedback on the third annual Africa 2.0 Leadership Symposium and the story of a wonderful shoe initiative that was created by young people for young people.

Believe it or not, it has been said 'If Africa is to meet its Millennium Development Goals it's only the youth that can help Africa achieve these goals.' You might be wondering where this statement comes from, and if that's the case, go find out for yourself on page 7 in our interview with Dr. Abdul-Hakim Alwaer of the African Union Directorate of Administration and Human Resource Management. Discover MacDella Cooper, an African youth who transitioned from being a refugee to a mentor and role model for young Liberians. You certainly will be very inspired by her story on page 3. If you wish to discover 'Dar' as the Tanzanian capital of Dar es Salaam is fondly called, then do so through the eyes of Uduak Bassey-Duke, who shares her volunteer experience in Tanzania with us on page 9.

Now you can relax and discover for yourself, what else this issue has in store for you.

Fanso Bari
USAU Youth Liaison to the AU

WHERE THERE IS AN OBSERVATION, THERE IS AN OBLIGATION: SHOE INITIATIVE

In 2004, I went on a mission trip to Lesobeng, Thaba-Tseka (Lesotho) with the association Operation Up. While there, I observed that the children of Lesobeng did not have shoes, so I made a promise to myself that it was my obligation to someday offer these children shoes. In 2012, I began the "*Where there is an observation, there is an obligation*" initiative, as a way for me to fulfill the promise I made to myself and to the children in Lesobeng.

In Basotho, it is said "*kapano ke matla,*" which means "*unity is strength.*" This inspired me to put together an amazing team of 4 people, including myself, who were willing to make this initiative a reality and a great success. Besides providing the children with shoes, our initiative was aimed at promoting economic development in Lesotho and setting an example for other young people across the country. We helped the country redistribute wealth to the less privileged and raised awareness about the importance of caring for others and the principles of giving.

My team and I then sent out letters to sponsors and created a Facebook page (Username: Where There Is An Observation There Is An Obligation: Shoe Initiative). About four months later, 62 people had liked our page, and Life's Comfort Solutions (LCS) Company sponsored 91% of our shoes, the remaining 9% of the shoes came from other individuals. In addition, Herdboys Holdings Group sponsored 100% of our transport expenses. We then went to Lesobeng to collect a list with the total number of children in the community. On April 7, 2012 my vision finally became a reality. It felt like a miracle to me and the children.



**A dream come true:
The children in Lesobeng receive brand new shoes**

Many motivating remarks were made on that day. The Chief of the village, Mr. Lebitso Lephoi was overwhelmed by our presence and said *not many people can do what we have done for his people, especially for the children, the future generation.* Mrs. Mateboho Lephoi, who represented the parents, said *she was very grateful, because many parents could not afford to buy shoes for their children.*

It took us exactly four (4) months to plan and implement this project, and 37 children received brand new shoes. I thank my team and every person who helped to fuel this initiative. In conclusion, I would like to use Maliile Ramashamole's motivational words to the children on that day, "*Dream big and pursue your dreams.*"

Ms. Nthabiseng Mpakanyane
Maseru, Lesotho

UNSUNG YOUTH HERO - MACDELLA COOPER



MacDella Cooper
Liberia's Angel

MacDella Cooper has been called "Liberia's Angel" and "Africa's Angel," which are well-deserved titles when you learn about her life. She was born in Monrovia, Liberia in the late 1970s, MacDella was one of the thousands of refugees who fled Liberia after the eruption of a civil war in 1990, residing in the Ivory Coast. At the age of 16, MacDella and her two older brothers arrived in the embattled streets of Newark, New Jersey where Cooper attended Barringer High School. Her only way out of Newark's culture of gangs, drug dealers, litter, graffiti, and murder was through her hard work at school, which paid off when she graduated 3rd in a class of 1,200 students and received a full academic scholarship to The College of New Jersey.

After graduating, she moved to New York City and began modeling while also organizing photo shoots for the Ralph Lauren division of Jones, New York. The fashion world transformed her life from that of a war refugee to one of New York City's social darlings. Once her dreams had been fulfilled, MacDella thought it was time for her to help fulfill the dreams of the poor orphans and abandoned children from the war in Liberia. From this thought, the MacDella Cooper Foundation (MCF) was founded.

MCF started by sending canned goods and toiletries to Liberia, and then extended to a scholarship fund aid college bound students in Liberia. Overtime, she began renovating orphanages as well. It was the renovation of orphanages that gave way to the idea of starting a boarding school; and that's how the MCF Academy was born.

The MacDella Cooper Foundation Academy raises orphans and abandoned children into outstanding, educated, and kind-hearted adults. It provides three meals a day, a great education, and a safe place for these children to live. MacDella couldn't hide her joy as she said, "The children are thriving and I am so blessed to be able to do this for them; otherwise, they'd be raising their siblings, dealing with a post-war country, and remain uneducated. I hope the MCF Academy will open the eyes of the students to show them that there is a brighter life ahead of them."

For more information on MacDella Cooper and her Foundation, kindly visit

www.africansonthemove.wordpress.com and www.macdellacooper.com.

Sandra Jules-Sendze
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African Union Youth Volunteer
USAU Youth Liaison to the AU

MONTHLY PROVERB



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"Do not curse the creator for having created the lion, be thankful that it was not given wings." West African Proverb

This proverb simply means **in everything give thanks** no matter the lot, the circumstance, or struggle. Nothing should be out of the realm of thanks, for the situation could have been worse.

Bari Fanso
USAU Youth Liaison to the African Union
African Union Youth Volunteer (AU-YV)

DID YOU KNOW? ... LET'S DISCUSS ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER (The remarkable benefits of being a volunteer)

People volunteer for a number of different reasons, ranging from a desire to learn new skills, have fun, or make a difference. When you volunteer for a group, it benefits the group as well as the community you are in. However, it is widely believed that volunteering has a positive impact on the community and the individual. This article shares with you some of the benefits of being a volunteer.

Volunteering will help you connect with your community. It's a truly unique learning experience to interact with new cultures, try new food, speak new languages, and meet new people. Volunteering allows you to become a traveler and not just a tourist. As some volunteer travel experiences offer the opportunity to stay with a local family, you have a chance to really know the local people and experience their lifestyle for yourself. People sometimes discover lifelong friendships through volunteer work.

Volunteering can open up more options for a career. If you volunteer in your career field, it will be considered work experience and strengthen your resume. If you wish to change your field, volunteering would be a good way to start. In general, employers like to see that you are a volunteer because it means that you are willing to work, have compassion, and are a team player.

Paves the way to personal growth. Many volunteers have admitted that volunteering made them better people both professionally and socially. It makes people become more independent, more adventurous, and more courageous but, most importantly; it makes you become more compassionate. Volunteering also informs your worldview, educating you on the experiences of others and enlightening your life along the way.

Learning a foreign language. Volunteering tremendously develops language skills. Knowing a foreign language is a huge bonus in today's job market. International communication is of growing importance due to the rapidly expanding global economy. Employers see great value in the ability to communicate, so a person that speaks three languages is usually more desirable than a person who can only speak one.

Share with us on Facebook and Twitter, how being a volunteer has benefitted you as an individual.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Did-You-Know-Le-Saviez-Vous/181760325263595>

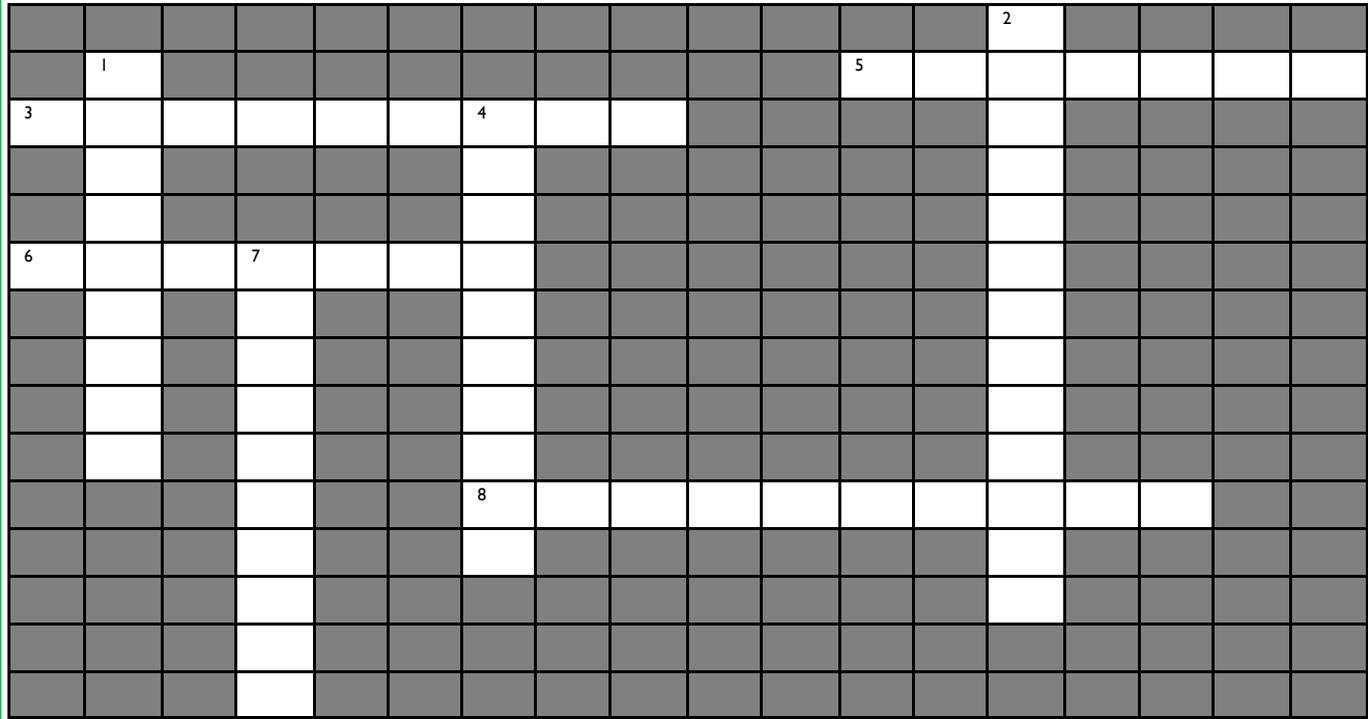
And

on Twitter: [US_AU](#)

DISCLAIMER: The following information has been provided from open media sources.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Read through our articles on our *'Did You know? ... Let's Discuss on Facebook and Twitter'* column in order to answer all the crossword puzzles. Thank you!



ACROSS

3. A person who willingly offers himself or herself to perform a service, render aid, or assume an obligation for little or no pay.
5. The system or range by which a country's production, distribution, consumption of goods and services, and money are organized.
6. The characteristic behaviors or beliefs of a particular social, ethnic, or age group.
8. Feeling or showing deep awareness of the suffering of others with a desire to relieve it.

DOWN

1. A unified group of people who reside in a specific locality, share a government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage.
2. The imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs.
4. Knowledge or practical wisdom gained from what one has observed, encountered, or undergone.
7. A person who willingly works in cooperation with others.

7. Team player
8. Compassion

4. Experience
6. Culture

2. Communication
5. Economy

1. Community
3. Volunteer

ANSWERS: DOWN
ACROSS

SUDOKU PUZZLE

THE NEW PUZZLE - AUGUST

7		1	6			3		
			2	3			9	
		3		4				2
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	7						6	
3				2		4		
	8			6	3			
		9			5	8		3

ANSWERS FOR JULY PUZZLE

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4	8	6	9	2	1	3	5	7
8	1	7	6	9	2	5	4	3
2	9	5	1	3	4	7	8	6
3	6	4	5	7	8	1	2	9
9	5	1	2	6	7	4	3	8
6	4	3	8	5	9	2	7	1
7	2	8	4	1	3	6	9	5

A WORD TO THE WISE - DR. ABDUL-HAKIM ELWAER

He has been the Director of the AU Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology and the brain that conceived the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps initiative. Today, Dr. Abdul-Hakim Alwaer is the Director of the AU Directorate of Administration and Human Resource Management (AHRM), the office that manages procurement and human resources for all directorates and offices of the AU Commission.



DR. ABDUL-HAKIM ELWAER
Director of the African Union AHRM
Directorate

The USAU Youth: Please tell us a little about yourself, including your background and the values that guided you to where you are today?

Dr. Abdul-Hakim: Thank you very much. I'm a Libyan environmental scientist, raised in Libya and graduated from the University of Environmental Science in Libya. I later went to the United Kingdom where I did my Masters and Ph.D. in environmental science. That is my academic life. In my professional life I've worked as a purely technical environmental toxicologist in a laboratory. Then, I moved from the management to become the Director for Laboratory in the National Petroleum Research Institute in Libya. Thereafter, I was appointed as the State Minister for Environment of Libya. On the sidelines of my professional career and academics, I joined the Boy Scouts at the age of 5 and I am still a member now. By the time I went for my Ph.D studies in UK, I was the County Leader for the Tripoli Capital with over 5000 youth of all categories working on voluntary programs for the community. So, I led quite a number of initiatives and volunteers as well. Many volunteers were dispatched mainly for emer-

gencies but we have had a number of initiatives and targets. In 2007, I joined the African Union (AU) as the Director for the Human Resources, Science and Technology department, with the three main portfolios of science and technology, education, and youth development.

At that time, the Commission was interested in the activities in education, and in science, and technology. However, the youth development sector was not given much attention. Working with the Head of the Division **Dr. Raymonde Agossou**, I tried to develop an action plan. In 2007- 2008 we had clear plans for science and technology, like the Consolidation Plan of Action (CPA) and for Education, which was the Second Decade for Education Action Plan for Africa. However, we had nothing for youth that could guide our programs so it was very important for us to develop a framework. It was during the African Union Conference of Ministers in Charge of Youth (COMY II) in 2008 that the Commission was mandated to develop a full action plan for youth development and also create a youth fund. It was from there, and my background as a Boy Scout, that the idea of AU volunteers started.

The USAU Youth: Tell us a little more about how the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC) became a reality. Were there any hurdles along the way?

Dr. Abdul-Hakim: The first time the AU-YVC became more than a dream was when we worked with the UNFPA, who are now one of the leading sponsors of the AU-YVC. At that time, they had the UN Volunteers Executive Secretary coming from Germany to visit Addis Ababa. We had a working session with them where we developed an understanding and tried to replicate the UN Volunteers program for the African Union. A number of ideas were shared and the Head of the Division was mandated to put this together in the form of a concept note. During that process, I took up the task of revitalizing and restructuring the AU Youth Division by supporting their activities and providing a base for the volunteers to begin their work at the African Union.

The result of all the hard work was the development of the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC). The last stage of this process materialized when I was appointed by the Commission to head the Directorate of Administration and Human Resource Management. Unfortunately, I had to leave the AU-YVC behind, trusting others to continue to follow up on the development of the program. However, my appointment to AHRM Department facilitated the continuation of the process. My knowledge of the program allowed my office to provide the AU youth volunteers and bureau members with the necessary travel documents and AU Laissez-passers, which are all processes I managed myself.

“Youth carry the hope for the future. They also carry the power that is needed to make things happen and change things for the better.”

A WORD TO THE WISE - DR. ABDUL-HAKIM ELWAER

There were some challenges when the volunteers' files came to administration for the first time. Everyone was complaining that these young people were not AU staff and not recruited by the AU, so they did not fall directly under our structure - there was no support. So I called around and had to make people understand that youth issues are high priority issues, and that we have to give full support to the volunteer program. We even assigned focal points within the program who will work with HRST and do everything necessary to facilitate the program throughout the AU.

In my opinion, **youth carry hope for the future. They also carry the power that is needed to make things happen and change things for the better.** Throughout history, there has been no revolution that ever succeeded without the youth. So, it is that power that can make miracles occur when one is well developed and well-educated. **If Africa is to meet its Millennium Development Goals, at all, it's only the youth that can help Africa to achieve those goals. What youth need are resources, guidance, expertise, opportunities, and a plan.** I believe this AU initiative is just a small part of other programs that should be implemented across the continent to increasingly emphasize the role of youth in Africa's development.

The USAU Youth: Providing AU Youth Volunteers across Africa with the diplomatic documents necessary to facilitate their deployment marks the first time that the African Union has made such documents available to ordinary citizens, especially the youth. What implication, in your view, could this mean in terms of fostering free movement of citizens across the continent and promoting pan-Africanism amongst the emerging generation?

Dr. Abdul-Hakim: The African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC) is a great program, not because I was among the very first to come up with this initiative or designed the content, but because I honestly believe in it. I had an idea to try and develop explorers, call them scouts or whatever, but they come from all parts of Africa and form groups of mixed individuals who tour the various African regions, carrying out social activities or programs to empower communities. The AU-YVC promotes pan-Africanism, calling for more integration of the African continent, bringing African citizens from different parts of the continent together, and volunteering is a great way for the youth to mix and promote African integration. **One of the targets of African integration is the issue and use of one political passport, allowing for the ease of movement from one country to another for African citizens. Another is to try and develop one, single system of education.** For example, if you studied your first two years of a bachelor's degree in Senegal, you should be able to continue a third year at a university in Kenya; and if you are from Kenya, you should be able to get a job in Togo; there should be recognition of certificates. The purpose to ease and facilitate the mobility of Africans under the integration principle. I still strongly believe that the youth are the key to that free movement of Africans within Africa; not for the purpose of tourism but for the purpose of providing services where needs exist.

"The road to success is not measured by what you've achieved; it's measured by how much effort you put into getting those achievements."

The USAU Youth: Please tell us what serves as your life's conviction and how it can be beneficial to Africa's youth?

Dr. Abdul-Hakim: I like to believe I'm still a youth at 44 years, so I feel it's too early for me to give a wise piece of advice to the young ones; but, I think what the youth need to be reminded is this one thing - **'believe in achievement, and never give up.'** Life is full of challenges, hardships, and difficulties, and anyone may choose to surrender because of their situation, but in your youthfulness you should never give up. You will not find roads full of flowers in life. The journey through life contains very tough roads, full of broken glass and thorns. You must find a way to get through life's numerous challenges and it's only by going through these challenges that you will be able to make a change. **The road to success is not measured by what you've achieved; it's measured by how much effort you put into getting to those achievements.** Many people will give you the impression that you succeed by achieving say for instance your Ph.D; no, success is about the hard work you put forth for six years, the degree you get is only an outcome of putting in all of that effort and commitment to the cause. It is the moments of hardship and the effort you put in that eventually reshapes you; this is what builds you and makes you who you are; not the reward you get at the end. You must always keep in mind that **you can't get success by luck, and if you get it by luck, you'll lose it easily.**

The USAU Youth: Thank you for the honor of talking to you.

Dr. Abdul-Hakim: Thank you for coming.

THE VOICE OF VOLUNTEERS - UDUAK BASSEY-DUKE

When I heard I was being deployed to work as a volunteer in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, I was super excited. Living in “Dar” (Dar es Salaam) as the town is fondly called, would mean numerous week-end trips to the beach, visits to the beautiful island of Zanzibar, new friends, and experiencing a community and culture different from my own. I would also be gaining international experience and an opportunity to contribute to the development of young people in Tanzania.



Uduak during her training as an AU-YV in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

My name is Uduak Bassey-Duke and I am an African Union Youth Volunteer. So far my experience has been great. **Tanzanians are friendly, polite, caring, and positive about life in general.** Dar es Salaam is just what I expected it to be, a lively city which plays host to youth from different countries of the world. I am especially attracted to the open air markets where you can find anything from fresh food, fruits and vegetables to trendy second hand clothing and shoes. In the short period I have been here, I have met several people whom I think I would like to remain friends with beyond my volunteering period.

I volunteer with the United Nation’s Population Fund where I am responsible for advocating for the harmonization of national policies and frameworks within the Africa Youth Charter as well as the reversal of the country’s current stance on Article 13.4h of the charter, which violates the human rights of girls and impedes upon their ability to achieve their life’s full potential. To give you a better understanding of my work, here are some fast facts about Tanzania:

- Almost a quarter of all girls within the ages of 15 – 19 are pregnant or are already mothers (TDHS 2010);
- 23% of maternal deaths recorded in 2008 were among young pregnant girls (THMIS 2008);
- Every year more than 8000 girls drop out of secondary school due to pregnancy (MoEVT 2008); and
- In February 2012 the Tanzanian Government ratified the African Youth Charter but expressed reservation over Article 13.4h, which states that the government must “*ensure, where applicable, that girls and young women who become pregnant or married before completing their education shall have the opportunity to continue their education.*”

There exists a cultural practice of denying girls the opportunity to return to school because of early pregnancy. This is not supported by any legal documentation or process but is based on the views of teachers, school principals, and in some cases, parents. **It is believed that these girls are immoral and by allowing them back into the school system, their presence will give other girls the idea that “it is ok to get pregnant.”**

I find my work very rewarding, **I work with well-educated and experienced individuals who create a comfortable environment where I can improve my current skill sets as well as develop new ones.** This is an opportunity to create a change in the lives of thousands of young girls in Tanzania and I intend to approach this opportunity with dedication and tenacity.

“I work with well-educated and experienced individuals who create a comfortable environment where I can improve my current skill sets as well as develop new ones.”

*Uduak Bassey - Duke
African Union Youth Volunteer
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania*

U.S. MISSION TO THE AFRICAN UNION

The USAU Youth is a platform for African youth around the world and the views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the United States Government nor those of the African Union.

We're on the web:
www.usau.usmission.gov

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The USAU Youth thanks all the readers who sent in articles for this month's edition. Please keep sending in the articles, announcements, and information on any subject matter you would like to see in subsequent editions of the newsletter to USAUyouth@state.gov. Kindly share with us activities and pictures of what you or your country is doing in relation to youth empowerment in Africa. Thank you.

NOTIFICATION:

KINDLY TAKE THE TIME TO FILL OUT ALL THE REQUIREMENTS UPON SUBSCRIPTION. WE WILL BE UNABLE TO SEND YOU A COPY OF THE NEWSLETTER IF YOUR DATA IS INCOMPLETE.

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