

The Internal Revenue Service recognizes Friends of Mwangaza, Inc. as a charitable organization. Contributions are deductible to the full extent of the law.

From the Director of Mwangaza, Seelah Kissioki



For three days in March, ten women from Mbulu and Northern Diocese were invited to Mwangaza Centre to pilot our new program -- the Binti/Mama Community Mediation program. The model for our newest offering comes from a Norwegian background where genderless dolls are used to represent family and community members.

By using the dolls, participants more freely identify problems related to stigma and abuse in the family, community, school, church and work place.

Following this discussion, participants are challenged to identify the most critical situations that cause problems in behavior and communication and then develop a play about the problem. And they enact it by using the genderless dolls.

It's from this point that they begin to analyze what the problem is, who is responsible, and what needs to change in order to restore health to the relationships in all the areas mentioned. New scenarios that show change and the process are also enacted and analyzed.



Mediation is about restoring health to relationships within specific environments, and, as participants noted, "It's not easy!" It requires

responsibility from all involved and a commitment to change. Bible study is also incorporated in the new program, emphasizing the qualities of a healthy environment that are the signs of a Christian community.

The impact made in this new program is significant, for it provides women with stronger analytical tools to better understand not only single and joint responsibility at home, in church, community, school and work, but also where conflict arises and why. The use of the genderless dolls provides a venue to speak as someone else--and not as one's self, thereby easing the release of issues that usually remain silent. From what we have learned in this pilot, there is every reason to believe that this new Community Mediation program will greatly contribute to peaceful resolution to conflict.

Mwangaza Speakers Bureau

Arrangements can be made for former volunteers to speak to your group or organization. Such opportunities are synonymous with Mwangaza's international mission of education, both in Tanzania as well as in the United States. Organizations are responsible for a speaker's expenses. Costs vary depending upon the location of the event and the home base of the Mwangaza volunteer. For more information, inquiries may be made by contacting Dr. Shoonie Hartwig at ShoonieH@AOL.com.

Friends of Mwangaza, Inc. strives to keep its constituents abreast of its programs and outreach. Should you wish to be removed from further communications, please inform Treasurer Linda Milton by mail at the address above, or via e-mail at artmilton2926@sbcglobal.net

Reflections

Mwangaza's commitment to education is limited not only to Tanzanians. Its partnership includes a commitment to education in the U.S., as well, as evidenced by our responding to invitations to make presentations at sites across the nation, by participating in ELCA Global Mission events, by welcoming visitors at Mwangaza Centre, and even by this newsletter, for example. The featured article beginning below is "instructive," indeed!

HIV/AIDS in Tanzania: How, Why Mwangaza Responds with Respected Community Programs

For twenty-four years, the HIV/AIDS virus has infected increasing numbers of men and women in Tanzania, disrupting family life, causing abandonment to countless children, casting unprecedented burdens on health care systems and undermining economic development. The statistics do not bear witness to the scourge of this epidemic.

According to a Tanzania Fact Sheet, the 2005 estimate of people living with the AIDS virus was 8.8%; the percent of women living with AIDS, 56%; the number of AIDS orphans estimated at one million. Since the first diagnosis of the virus in 1983, the Tanzanian government has undertaken many different approaches in an attempt to stem the increasing numbers of those infected. However, recent studies show a worsening epidemiological status whereby the epidemic has now spread to rural areas.



In response to Mwangaza's HIV/AIDS presentation at Ailanga-Kilombero school, a secondary school student leads a discussion with fellow students by pointing out behaviors that contribute to HIV/AIDS.

AIDS is more than a medical problem; it presents an increasing challenge to socio-economic health and community and family stability. There is no sector of the country, no age group, no population distinction that is not impacted by this disease.

Youth and women are the most affected groups because of economic, social-cultural, and biological reasons. Poverty, which reflects the country's economy, is an important determinant. Mobile population groups have also been categorized as vulnerable to infection as their occupation forces them into high-risk sexual behavior. This population has been identified primarily as long-distance truck drivers, migrant workers, commercial sex workers and, more recently identified, teachers in secondary schools.

In an October 2001 article, the Ministry of Education reported key vulnerability factors to HIV/AIDS that are particularly relevant to education.

- Gender – deep-rooted cultural attitudes and practices which contribute to the transmission of HIV.
- Poverty – inhibits economic growth with loss of skilled human resources; families face increasing health care burdens plus loss of labor. Girl children are increasingly withdrawn from school due to cost factors. Youth are forced to assist families in work-related activities when parents are infected. Communities are less able to provide support for schools as in the past. Therefore, education for youth and orphans suffers.
- Although work in education is not classified as migratory, students, teachers and other personnel share increasing risks of infection with full-time boarding students away from home; trainee teachers are posted in schools for practice teaching; teachers are not accompanied by families when schools offer no housing accommodations; and teachers in rural schools travel long distances from their families in order to work.

The World Bank estimates that due to the AIDS epidemic, life expectancy by 2010 will revert to forty-seven years instead of the projected fifty-six years in the absence of AIDS. The overall younger work force will have less education, less training, and less experience. Illiteracy and lack of formal education is on the rise. In the eighties the level of literacy in Tanzania was around 80%. Today it is below 60%, meaning fewer people understand written messages.

Continued inside...

MWANGAZA SEEKS COMPUTER TECHNICIAN VOLUNTEER, JAN. '08

Since 2002, Mwangaza has provided computers and training to many of the fifty-three church-managed schools throughout Tanzania. A recent container arrived just last month, making it possible to update the computer capacity in our own laboratory as well as to distribute 125 computers to ELCT schools. During the June/July 2007 seminars, computer literacy and web-based research will be integrated into the daily program offerings.



A position is now available for a volunteer U.S. computer technician to aid Mwangaza's work.

As Mwangaza expands our technological outreach, there is need for a computer technician. The Mwangaza Board approved this position, which is in the process of being posted on the ELCA website (<http://www.elca.org/globalserve/index.html>)

Skill requested: Computer Technology
Institution: Mwangaza Center, Arusha, Tanzania
Work Responsibilities: Provide maintenance for computers in ELCT church-managed schools; Teach basic computer skills to teachers/students in designated schools; Install hardware and software as required; Provide maintenance on computers at Mwangaza Center; Provide computer training for Mwangaza staff as required; Provide periodic reports to Mwangaza Director regarding computer needs in schools.

Length of Term Desired: Minimum - one year, with two years preferred.

Beginning Date Desired: January 2008

Accommodation furnished, including utilities.
Estimated monthly living costs (food, local transport, personal expenses): \$500

Contact Dr. Shoonie Hartwig: ShoonieH@aol.com

Education Audit Turns New Page

by William Kivuyo, Program Coordinator



"We would like all our diocese schools to be audited because you (Mwangaza) will be in a better position to advise us."

These words formed the heartening response from the bishop of Tanzania's ELCT Northern diocese, Rt. Rev. Martin Shao, in response to our Mwangaza letter requesting permission to do an

educational audit of the diocese's secondary schools.

Our Mwangaza Educational Audit analyzes many aspects of our ELCT schools, determining all that is available and all that is yet needed to create the whole, effective teaching and learning environment necessary for both the students and the teachers. In short, the Audit's goal is to provide information to help our ELCT schools and their students advance academically.

Findings from Mwangaza Educational Audits will help to form an agenda for a first-ever Mwangaza Educational Summit that will be held in July, 2008. Invitations to attend will be sent to ELCT Education Secretaries, Headmasters of all ELCT secondary schools, and representatives from the ELCA, ELCT, Tumaini University, and Mbeya Teachers College.

At its conclusion, educational priorities will be set, and a new page of educational policy in our church may be birthed.

I have already concluded some Educational Audits. I discovered that some schools lack necessary facilities like a library, housing for teachers, student textbooks, and enough and decent classrooms and the furniture to fill them.

Teacher mobility emerged as another problem facing most of the schools I visited so far - Manow Lutheran Seminary, Mbeya Teachers College, Mtera, Pommern and Tumaini schools. The issue of low salaries appears to be the most frequently given reason for teachers departing our ELCT schools for government schools, where pay is better.

I was happy to hear the plans of some dioceses and schools that will sponsor ELCT teachers so they can upgrade their professional development. Some schools are utilizing Mbeya Teachers College and Tumaini University to upgrade their teachers. Others are studying in the Open University of Tanzania.

The student:text ratio and student:teacher ratio remains another big problem. Further, most parents are poor to the extent of being unable to pay school fees, forcing their children to withdraw.

The Mwangaza Educational Audit is expected to open a page of new development for teachers, students, the church, and the nation at large. Likewise, it opens a new page for our U.S. partners in education as they help to fill the educational gaps identified in our schools' audits.

U.S. Teacher Volunteers Leave for Tanzania to Facilitate June, July Mwangaza Professional Development Seminars

Here they are! Talented, excited, professional, generous and adventuresome U.S. volunteers who have committed to co-facilitating Mwangaza's summer seminars alongside their Tanzanian counterparts. Each week-long seminar is centered around a single academic discipline, and select teachers from all twenty ELCT diocese schools in those disciplines attend. For Tanzanians and Americans alike, the experience can be life-changing. U.S. participants often work hard to generate sponsors that help them defray the expenses they incur for this international mission. As very bright minds from two sides of the world gather at the seminars, the energy there is exciting and palpable. More than that, this yearly activity is indeed a testament to the concept of partnership, Mwangaza's founding principle.



Pictured left-to-right: Lynn Dosch (MN); Laurie Tessmer (IL); Mike Wadle (IL); Alexa Schlosser (IL); Ron Henning (IL); David Neale (PA); Julie Jensen (IA); Donna Engel (IL); and Valerie Goodmanson (MN).

HIV/AIDS in Tanzania: Mwangaza's Response

(Continued from Page One)

Religious communities in Tanzania were some of the first organizations to initiate HIV education campaigns in the late 1980s. Within the Lutheran church, information was not limited to the Sunday pulpit; prevention efforts were instituted in hospitals establishing counseling and testing programs, developing HIV curricula for schools, and educating pastors and evangelists. One of the country's first hospice programs began as an extension of a Lutheran hospital's community-based health care program (K.N. Hartwig, 2001; K.A. Hartwig 2007).

Mwangaza initiated its first HIV/AIDS programs in 2000. With the assistance of a grant from Wisconsin AIDS Foundation, we enlisted the expertise of TANESA, a non-governmental organization well established in AIDS education. We adopted their Peer and Guardian Training for students and teachers in secondary schools, using plays, focus groups, problem-posing pictures, and singing to engage participants.

After consulting AIDS counselors in Arusha and several clergy, we integrated AIDS information into all of our programs - secondary school teacher seminars, and the mother/daughter and father/son program. From the onset, our approach provided more than factual knowledge about the disease; we focused on issues of behavior change that are community-based. To assume that individuals, particularly women, are able to make decisions about their choices of intimacy is a false premise if creating safe and healthy environments is truly a commitment.



A student-made poster works to eliminate AIDS' stigma, reflecting Mwangaza's work in Tanzania.

Seven years of integrating HIV/AIDS information into all our programs has challenged our understanding of "life skills." How to break the silence of stigma and abuse, how to promote advocacy for the vulnerable, and how to initiate conflict resolution are questions that require creative and innovative processes.

Mwangaza's role as an educating organization within the ELCT is critical. Our outreach extends to all regions of Tanzania. Our seminar format teaches participants how to teach others when they return to their respective areas. Our participatory process has earned respect; our teaching space is known to be trusted and safe. Evaluations from all programs show an increasing call, a cry for more attention to this life-giving information.

William Kivuyo, Mwangaza's Program Coordinator, is primarily responsible for Mwangaza's HIV/AIDS programs. To see him engaging participants is to witness a passionate, compassionate health evangelist. At Mwangaza's February 2007 Board Meeting, a proposal to employ an additional Coordinator was approved so that William can focus primarily on these critical programs. Learning how to care for one another with hope is our resolve.

Student Hands in Minnesota Put the Finger on Current African Issues, Mwangaza, Too

Some extraordinary Minnesota sophomores are taking the world into their own hands (and wrists!).

As students enrolled in an honors course called American Studies, these John Marshall High School students have selected Mwangaza to be part of their "spirit of service" project.



Last year's students raised ten thousand dollars to build a school in Vietnam; this year, they developed a two-part Africa project: 1) working to generate awareness about African genocide; and 2) raising funds to further the mission of Mwangaza Education for Partnership.

Symbolic of the many John Marshall High School students in Rochester, Minnesota, who selected Mwangaza as part of their "spirit of service" project, this student weaves a fabric bracelet to raise funds for Mwangaza. Mwangaza volunteer Valerie Goodmanson, pictured in the volunteer article to the left, led the project along with a co-teacher in an honors-level American Studies course.

Instructor Valerie Goodmanson, a three-time Mwangaza volunteer teacher, oversaw students working to reach their goal of \$1,000 by creating simple braided bracelets made from scraps of material and sold at one dollar apiece. The purposely primitive-looking bracelets are meant to be a reminder of the genocide occurring in Africa.

Students used the remaining fabric to make bracelets for Tanzanians, and volunteer Goodmanson, now in Tanzania for Mwangaza's annual summer seminars that promote Tanzanian teachers' professional development, will distribute them to teachers in attendance. The bracelets serve as a tangible link between students in America and students in Tanzania.

Goodmanson notes: "How rewarding it has been to watch the students come in over their lunch hours to make these bracelets and to witness their enthusiasm for this project. Some days thirty kids, boys and girls alike, gave up their open hour to create bracelets. Although most may never travel to Tanzania nor feel the sting of educational famine as many in Tanzania do, they have worked to further the cause of education's power. Each year, I am amazed at our students' compassion for others. This year has been no exception!"

Check out our new and evolving website at www.mwangazaeducationforpartnership.org
 Many thanks to Rochester, Minnesota volunteer Lynn Dosch for her tireless efforts!