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**MCW AWARDS ALUMNI VENTURES FUND GRANTS TO YOUNG LEADERS FROM  
KYRGYZSTAN, TANZANIA, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**NEW YORK, N.Y., February 22, 2017** – MCW, a New York-based non-profit organization dedicated to addressing communities' pressing needs by empowering current leaders and readying leaders of tomorrow, awarded Alumni Ventures Fund (AVF) grants to Cody Jacobs, 23, from Long Island, New York; Fredrick Meena, 26, from Mbeya, Tanzania; and Timurlan Alagushov, 23, of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Along with a year of mentorship, Cody, Fredrick, and Timurlan will receive grants of \$2,200, \$2,800, and \$5,000 respectively. The AVF grant will help them turn their ideas for change in their communities into concrete projects, drawing on their experience of drafting a "vision plan" for social change as participants of MCW's Young Leaders Program.

Cody's will work with *A Cooperative Future*, a project which aims to bridge the gap between the United States and Cuba through knowledge of cooperatives. She plans to visit and spend time with Cuban cooperatives with the end goal of creating a photo essay and book. When she received news of the grant Cody said, "Through the years and especially through my experiences with MCW I learned more and more about injustice and oppression throughout the world but most importantly about our ability to make the world a better place. I became committed to using photography as a tool for change and with the AVF I finally have an opportunity to do just that, to document change as it is happening, and share it with the world."

Fredrick will continue his work on Oral Hygiene Practices in the community, a project focused on offering education and knowledge about oral health and introducing basic care to prevent oral diseases. With the grant, Fredrick will be able to expand his project to additional impoverished communities including disabled and orphan children. "The AVF means a lot to me because it will help to reach to the rural community and implement the project of providing the oral health hygiene education easily and successful."

Timurlan will use the award to create a new mobile platform for his organization, *Let's Dance*. The organization's mission is to provide dance education through people, technologies and events and to create sustainable environment where young people can develop both as artists and valuable professionals. "Receiving such support as the AVF for the current period of my project development is like finding oasis in a desert. Let's Dance will change the dance industry all around the world and will help to bring the most value of the art of dance to people, beginning from my local community to global."

"As founders of MCW's Alumni Ventures Fund, my husband Steven and I are so proud to be part of the sustained effort that has gone into identifying talented YLP alumni and helping them pursue their visions. Over the years, the pool of applicants has become more impressive," says Sharon Kess, founding donor and leader of MCW's AVF Task Force.

Since establishing the Alumni Ventures Fund in 2009, MCW has awarded grants to eight graduates of the MCW Young Leaders Program. Preparations are now underway for MCW's 20<sup>th</sup> Young Leaders

Program to be held this year from July 25<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup> at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont and New York University in New York.

**About MCW**

MCW (Miracle Corners of the World) is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 with the vision that communities throughout the world achieve greater levels of education, improved health and increased economic security and a mission to address communities' pressing needs by empowering current leaders and readying leaders of tomorrow. Based in New York, with partner organizations in Africa (Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia), MCW offers the following three core programs: the Young Leaders Program, Community Development, and Oral Healthcare, as well as Partner Programs, including Human Rights and Pediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa (PATA) projects. For more information on MCW, please visit: [www.mcwglobal.org](http://www.mcwglobal.org).



2017 Recipients of MCW Global's Alumni Ventures Fund: Timurlan Alagushov from Kyrgyzstan; Fredrick Meena from Tanzania; and Cody Jacobs from United States.