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Rwandan Genocide Survivor Jacqueline Murekatete Returns to Rwanda with MCW



New York, NEW YORK, August 12, 2011 – Jacqueline Murekatete, a survivor of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and a human rights activist, departs for Rwanda tomorrow on a trip to support MCW’s community center. She will join a group of eleven from the USA, who will participate in MCW’s first Learning Journey to Africa from August 15th to 21st, 2011.

Nate Crossley, Director of MCW’s Community Center Programs and Jackson Vugayabagabo, MC-Rwanda Country Coordinator, will join Murekatete and the group, most of whom are traveling to Africa for the first time.

“I have shared my story with so many people over the years, but this is the first opportunity I have had to actually bring people to Rwanda, which will be very powerful,” said Murekatete. “I am so proud to bring supporters of our genocide prevention work from New York and Los Angeles to Rwanda to see some of the amazing work MCW has done in the country, to meet the people who have made it happen and who are participating in the center’s activities, and to discuss ways we can improve and expand our impact.”

This is Murekatete’s second visit to Rwanda, having left the country right at nine. Jacqueline lost her parents, siblings, and most of her extended family, friends and community in the 1994 genocide. Now 26 and entering her third year of law school, Murekatete has spent her teens and twenties sharing her story and speaking about challenges facing survivors, reaching more than 100,000 people worldwide.

In 2007, she partnered with MCW to create MCW Jacqueline’s Human Rights Corner, a program that raises awareness of the crime of genocide and helps Rwandans rebuild their lives and their country. After establishing a locally-run charity, Miracle Corners-Rwanda (MCR), and raising funds to build a center in the eastern province of Bugesera, a district highly affected by the 1994 genocide, the center began its first programs in October 2010. 46 six students registered for a six-month English course; and, eleven students registered for a tailoring course. In January, MCR partnered with a local seminary to offer English classes to 56 participants. Today, the center also supports a youth group specializing in traditional dance and handicrafts.

On August 18, the group will participate in a ribbon-cutting reception at the community center, where they will meet the members of the community and the individuals participating in the center’s programs. The Bugesera mayor will attend the event. One of the Learning Journey participants will also teach an art class at the center.

The itinerary also includes visits to the Nyamata Church Memorial, the Butare National Museum, and the Kigali Genocide Memorial, and an overnight trip to Gisenyi, known for its

sandy beaches on the shores of Lake Kivu. On August 19, Jacqueline will receive the Celebrating Young Rwandan Achievers (CYRWA) Award from the First Lady of Rwanda. The group will also meet with local survivors' organizations and Rwandan officials while in the country.

Kayenzi Community Reception Event Information:

The reception will take place on August 18, 3:00 to 5:00 pm at the MCR Community Center in Kayenzi. The event includes remarks by the Bugesera Mayor and Jacqueline Murekatete, dance performances, a ribbon cutting and a tour of the center. Media welcome. To cover the event, contact Jackson Vugayabagabo at 0788 464 350.

Follow the Trip:

Follow Jacqueline and the trip on twitter: @MCWJacqueline and read the MCWJacqueline blog at <http://mcwjacqueline.posterous.com/>

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