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## MCW AWARDS ALUMNI VENTURES FUND GRANTS TO YOUNG LEADERS FROM BRAZIL AND KENYA



**NEW YORK, N.Y., February 1, 2018** – MCW, a New York-based non-profit organization dedicated to addressing communities' pressing needs by empowering current leaders and readying leaders of tomorrow, has awarded Alumni Ventures Fund (AVF) grants to Italo Alves of Brazil and Kelvin Kiko Muoo of Kenya. Along with a year of professional mentorship, Italo and Kiko will receive grants of \$5,000 each to help them turn their ideas for change in their communities into concrete projects, drawing on their experience of developing a “vision plan” for social change as participants of MCW's Young Leaders Program.

Italo is an alum of the Young Leaders Access Program class of 2015. He is one of the leaders of TODXS, a non-profit with the aim of tackling the exclusion of LGBTI community in various communities in Brazil, resulting in limited access to resources to empower their lives. Italo will use the AVF grant to continue his work with TODXS Ambassadors, where he will identify, connect, and empower young LGBTI leaders to work towards more inclusive communities in Brazil. In his own words, "I am super excited about representing the MCW Young Leaders Program through the TODXS Ambassadors project. We are the first LGBTI project sponsored by the grant and also the very first in Latin America. As a member of this historically marginalized community, it feels amazing to be able to have access to such an incredible opportunity."

Kiko is an alum of the Young Leaders Access Program class of 2016. He's since formed Angaza Elimu, a social enterprise that addresses inefficiencies in learning due to the inadequacy of educational materials available in Kenyan schools. Kiko will apply his grant towards elevating the classroom experience by transforming teaching and learning in primary schools in Kenya through innovative use of digital technology. “The AVF grant is a gift to the Kenyan students.” says Kiko. “We will be able to reach more schools on our mission of elevating the classroom experience.”

“It has been rewarding to be part of AVF, which is helping to enable MCW Young Leaders to fulfill their visions to give back to their communities.” says Sharon Kess, founding donor and member of

MCW's AVF Task Force. "AVF funds create the needed launching pad for MCW's Young Leaders to turn their business plans into action to make a difference in their corners of the world" added Charmaine Peart-HoSang, another member of the MCW AVF Task Force.

Since establishing the Alumni Ventures Fund in 2009, MCW has awarded grants to 11 graduates of the Young Leaders Program. Preparations are now underway for MCW's 21<sup>st</sup> Young Leaders Access Program to be held this year from July 24<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup> at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont and New York University in New York. Applications for this year's program are closed.