



Juilliard Students return to town and Umoja Students take Centre Stage!

The Umoja Centre has the honour of being in partnership with world- renowned Performing Arts school, Juilliard, and for 3 years running has welcomed these students in coming to deliver 2 weeks of intensive performing arts training, culminating in a incredible fund- raising night of acting, singing and dancing mayhem. This year, we were even lucky enough to welcome back some familiar Juilliard faces, with Jenna, Chelsea, Rochelle and Hannah returning for their 2nd year! Coincidentally, more than a few of last year's student's found a reason to pop into the centre for a visit, I wonder why...

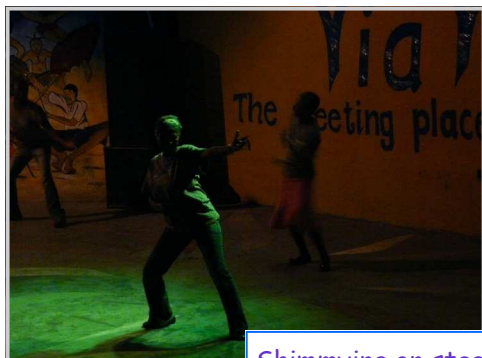


The Juilliard Arts camp was 2 weeks of fantastic, energetic pandemonium, an unforgettable experience for our students and, we hope, for Juilliard also! As usual, everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed the chance to work with such creativity and talent, and to express themselves in novel and unexplored ways. For many of our students, working with Juilliard is a tremendous confidence booster that really works to empower the shyer members of the group. Even now, a month later, daily renditions of 'lean on me' are heard wafting through the classroom windows, and dance routines are rehearsed alongside the morning chai and biscuits!

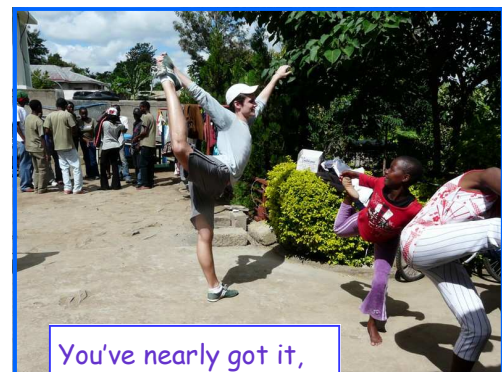
So, as we return to the routine nursing more than a few broken hearts, we have to say a huge, screaming thank- you to David, Jeff, Marcus, Chelsea, Rochelle, Jenna and Hannah for all their hard- work, effort and talent, and say Karibu! For next year!



The student's test out their trust in each other!



Shimmying on stage at Via Via!



You've nearly got it, Magreth!

A Trip to the Museum unearths new knowledge

As our students reached the end of their unit on Tanzanian History, we arranged a school visit to the Arusha Declaration Museum, giving the students an opportunity to get out of the classroom and learn in a different environment.

It was great to see the student's curiosity as they peered into glass boxes of historic relics, and soaked up the information hung around the walls. They all enjoyed themselves, asking inquisitive questions and taking the time to keenly jot information down in their notebooks- something I have never seen happen on western school trips!



Despite this being their own community, only a handful had visited the museum before and it was brilliant to be able to give the students the chance to take advantage of some of the educational activities available in their own home.



What's this then? Lomnyaki poses for a photo.

The Umoja Centre celebrates the success of it's first Parent's Day!

The beginning of our 2nd term saw Umoja's first ever 'Parent's Day'. This was a great learning opportunity for both Umoja staff and Parents, and the Parents valued the invitation to become more involved in their children's education. A parent's support in their child's education can have a tremendous effect on their chance of success, and so we feel it is integral that we uphold our correspondence with the families of our students. Parents were given the chance to discuss individually with our Teachers each student's development and areas for improvement, airing any worries or concerns, and the parent or guardian was encouraged to do the same. The feedback was incredibly positive, and we hope to repeat the event next term!



Umoja Students get Creative

Since January, the students have been taking part in after-school clubs delivered by our long-term volunteers Rose and Claire. Students have had the chance to dabble their creative toes in drama classes, design and creative writing, as well as stretching legs during a frantic weekly school match of Ultimate Frisbee following Rose and Claire's trip to Mombassa to participate in the East African Frisbee Championships back in April! Creativity plays a fundamental role in developing independent thought and empowering young people, and our students jump at the chance to discover new skills. We look forward to utilising the skills of new volunteers later in the year!



Below right: a hot air balloon in process!
Below left: Aeroplane arms always gets a few laughs!



3 Cheers for Computers 4 Africa!

A generous donation by the organisation Computers 4 Africa has seen the installation of 22 brand new, flat screen computers in our computer lab. Our students now learn on modern, fast speed computers, directed through the use of a projector and screen, making ours a lab to rival many a western school! Such technology is a rare luxury in Tanzania, and we are delighted to be able to offer our students the facilities to learn such integral skills for the modern world- and on such modern equipment! So, 3 cheers for Computers 4 Africa! And also to The Dorfred Trust for their excellent donation of a projector and screen, a fabulous visual aid for teaching and learning.



Girl's Taught to Toughen Up!

When first asked, all the Umoja boys scoffed at the idea of a woman holding her own against a man, asking innocently how that could be possible. Then they were introduced to Tara, an American police officer, and they quickly swallowed their smirks, retracting their sparring offers as they did so. Throughout the next couple of weeks Tara taught our girls basic self-defence techniques, valuable skills anywhere, but particularly in Tanzania, as girls are, unfortunately, regularly the victims of abuse here. 'We are often taught about fight or flight' Tara tells us 'but our most instinctive reaction is to freeze like a rabbit caught in headlights. Teaching these basic moves will help to stop this happening. It is not about fighting, it is about awareness, and having the confidence to react sensibly to what is thrown at you'.



'Mwizi!' Tara teaches the student's to shout 'thief' with each distraction.



Great news for our Graduates!

Four of our 2009 graduates celebrated a second graduation last Saturday from our partner organisation Jobortunity, which trains disadvantaged youth in hospitality, in order to enter the booming tourism market in Arusha. Lisbeth, our longest serving volunteer, went along with our I.T Teacher Gerry to show their support to our students. It was a proud day for them, and a great cause for celebration: two of these four, Levina and Glory, have already found themselves permanent positions as chefs in reputable tourist hotels! This is a great achievement, as competition for these spots is fierce. Well done! We wish another four 2011 students the same success as their embark of their year of training with Jobortunity.



Lisbeth with our proud graduates!



Student's celebrate the arrival of the new computers!

Floods of tears as we say good-bye to more fabulous volunteers!

In the past 3 months we have been lucky enough to benefit from the energy and experience of Jillian, a Australian volunteer and a retired teacher whose expertise have left a lasting impression on the centre. Jillian worked closely with Umoja staff and students, developing our curriculum and sharing with us many strategies that have been successfully adapted in the classroom and around the school. Her management skills, knowledge and dedication are already sorely missed at the centre, and there were more than a few tears present during her leaving assembly! We thank-you dearly Jillian for your valued contribution, and welcome you back any-time!



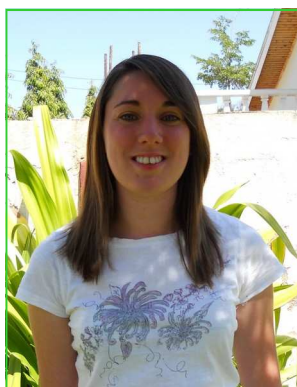
We will also be saying good-bye shortly to Claire and Rose, who have unbelievably been here for over six months now! We wish them luck in their next steps and thank them for all their hard



Summer is always a busy time for volunteers, and this July we have welcomed a fair few new faces to the centre. Kirsty will be taking over grant writing as Claire runs the roost in Caroline's absence, and she will also be conducting research for her MA through the Umoja Centre, assessing the impact we have upon our students lives. We are hoping for some positive results!

We also welcomed 4 Canadian volunteers into the centre, who will be taking the students into their own communities to educate them on health and the environment. This is a brilliant initiative and we are proud that our students will be a part of this empowerment process. Good Luck to them!

New Volunteer
Kirsty smiles for
the camera.



A Step Closer to the Dream!

As we edge ever nearer to our target of \$40,000 in order to achieve our dream of our very own Umoja Centre, we wish to thank all of our supporters throughout the world who have organised events, raffles, sales and many much more unpleasant tasks in order to help us reach our vision.

We are now at a terrific \$23,000! This is fantastic, but don't stop yet! There are still many cakes to be sold and raffles tickets to be bought until we can begin cementing bricks with mortar! Keep up the good work!



Poetry corner!

I saw mad little memories
Gold spirit found paradise
We have a dream to fly on the moon
And after dark creep on the cold
blowing cloud
Wise voice most love
And a white ghost in a jewelled room
She is a secret as glory is like heaven
Love can never end

By Prisca, Sadiki, Salma and Hosiana