



Ubuntu Africa, NFP. Facts

Founded: Ubuntu Africa, NFP. was founded in November 2006

The meaning of Ubuntu: *Ubuntu* is an African concept based upon the connection of all human beings and sharing what you have to help another. “I am because we are” is a phrase that is often associated with the meaning of Ubuntu.

Mission Statement: Ubuntu Africa (UBA hereafter) is dedicated to providing support services and facilitating access to lifesaving healthcare to HIV positive children and teens in Khayelitsha, South Africa. UBA offers comprehensive community-based programs that address the needs of young people who are HIV positive. UBA is also committed to fostering an empowered attitude towards HIV/AIDS among young people in South Africa and the United States.

The Need: According to UNAIDS, roughly 33 million people worldwide were living with HIV at the end of 2007, with over 2 million of these people being children. Every day around 8,000 people under the age of 24 are newly infected with the HIV virus. Over 60% of new HIV infections occur in young people aged 15-25. In South Africa, around 5.7 million people are believed to be living with HIV and the number of people affected by the virus continues to increase. An estimated 280,000 children under the age of 15 are living with HIV in South Africa. It is estimated that only around 20% of children in South Africa who need to be on antiretroviral drugs (medication to treat HIV) are receiving treatment.

Where we run our project: Khayelitsha, the community in South Africa where Ubuntu Africa provides services, is the largest township outside of Cape Town and is home to around 1 million people. In addition to having high rates of HIV, the Khayelitsha community also faces high levels of crime, unemployment and poverty. Many HIV positive people in the community lack easy access to clinics, nutritious food, antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) and even indoor plumbing, making their illness particularly difficult to manage. Currently, there are few support services offered to children and teens in Khayelitsha who are living with HIV.

After being diagnosed with HIV young people in Khayelitsha are often left to bear much of the burden of this disease alone. There is a great need for a comprehensive HIV care program, which will provide services designed to assist and empower these young people living with HIV in Khayelitsha.

Health Care Center: Ubuntu’s center currently serves approximately 50 children ages 5-18 in an after school setting. Children are provided with one nutritious meal each day, nursing services, psychosocial counseling, education about their illness and health in general, transport to doctor visits and assistance with hospital admittance when necessary. Another key to the program is offering the children numerous enriching activities such as art,



singing, exercise, yoga, surfing and visits to area soccer and rugby games. The center is a place that the kids want to come to and where they feel safe and loved.

About The Founder: Whitney Johnson graduated from Colorado College in 2006, after having spent a year studying abroad in Cape Town, South Africa and volunteering in an orphanage in Khayelitsha, South Africa. Ms. Johnson, who is 24 years old, was so moved by the desperate state of HIV-infected children and teens in Khayelitsha that she founded UBA to make a difference. Ms. Johnson is committed to fostering an empowered attitude towards HIV/AIDS among young people in the United States and engaging them to help battle this epidemic in South Africa. In addition to having a degree in psychology, Ms. Johnson is also a yoga teacher and an Emergency Medical Technician.

Our Board: We currently have eleven board members with plans to grow to fifteen. Among our board members we have six New York and Connecticut based members, one in Chicago, three in South Africa plus Whitney Johnson who is our Executive Director based in Cape Town.

Funding: We receive funding from individuals and private foundations primarily from the United States. We have recently secured our not for profit status in South Africa which will allow us to do more fundraising there in the near future. We have plans over the next year to build a permanent center in Khayelitsha and expand our program so that we will be able to accept some of the 150 children currently on the waitlist.