

For Immediate Release

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LOCAL HUMANITARIAN TO SPEAK TO RIPPOWAM STUDENTS

*Whitney Johnson, Rippowam Alum, Shares her Anti-AIDS Crusade
With Local Students*

BEDFORD, NY, November 20, 2008- Whitney Johnson, of Bedford, will be speaking to fifth through ninth graders at Rippowam Cisqua about her remarkable mission to combat AIDS in Africa. Ms. Johnson is the founder and Executive Director of Ubuntu Africa, NFP. (UBA hereafter), a not-for-profit organization with the mission to address the needs of HIV positive children and teens in South Africa..

UBA's Child Healthcare Center offers access to lifesaving healthcare and support services to children and teens infected with HIV in Khayelitsha, South Africa. UBA's comprehensive care program provides on-site healthcare workers, nutritious meals, transportation to clinics and social work services. Children are also offered counseling, HIV education and empowering activities such as art, yoga and surfing lessons. These are critical offerings in Khayelitsha, which is the largest township outside of Cape Town and has one of the highest incidences of HIV in the country. UBA is currently providing services to 50 children, with over 150 more children on a waitlist, and families have come to depend on its crucial services.

"UBA is committed to fostering an empowered attitude in young people in the U.S towards the HIV/AIDS and encouraging them to participate in battling this epidemic. It is very exciting to get young people from this corner of the world more involved with the needs and concerns of the HIV positive children and teens that I work with in South Africa."

Johnson will answer questions from young students about how to take the first step toward volunteerism and what her personal cause has meant in her life.

“Providing care to children with AIDS in South Africa has taught me that love is stronger than any illness. Everyone needs love, compassion and connection. I know that HIV does not have to be a lonely disease and that these children can achieve the health and happiness they deserve. I know that together we can change the way the world sees children living with HIV.”

UBA is a 501 (c) 3 organization and relies on donations and funding primarily from the U.S. To find out more about UBA or to make a donation visit www.ubafrika.org or send an email to info@ubafrika.org

“UBA must continue to seek additional funding to ensure that we are able to provide our services to all those who desperately need UBA’s help now and in the coming years.”

About Ubuntu Africa (UBA)

UBA was formed in November 2006 with the mission to address the needs of HIV positive children and teens living in Khayelitsha, South Africa. Currently UBA offers healthcare and support services to 50 children and their families. The comprehensive care program includes healthcare, social work, nutritious meals, counseling, education, and fun empowering activities.

UBA is currently addressing South Africa’s need to improve the lives of young HIV infected people. According to UNAIDS, every day around 8,000 people under the age of 24 are newly infected with the HIV virus. The majority of HIV cases is in sub-Saharan Africa and fewer than a quarter of the people living with the virus have access to any support services. In South Africa, 5.7 million people are estimated to be living with HIV and the prevalence of the virus continues to increase. Around 1,000 people in South Africa die of HIV everyday. An estimated 280,000 children under the age of 15 are living with HIV in South Africa. It has been estimated that less around 80% of children in South Africa who need to be on medication to treat their HIV are not accessing these drugs-making them very susceptible to illness and death.

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. 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 also 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.

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