



AFRICAN SERVICES

COMMITTEE

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Letter from Co-Executive Director, Kim Nichols



Dear Friends,

It's a new day and a new year! In 2011, African Services completed 30 years of leadership and service to the African community. Through the years, we have evolved from our role at

inception as a community-

based organization in resettling African refugees, to addressing pandemics with calamitous impact in Africa. The programs and staff who have grown up with us over three decades are a source of pride and professionalism. Continually, conversations with clients reveal that the role for ASC is not diminishing, and we are increasingly attracting the most in need: those who have been trafficked and held under lock and key for years; women in domestic violence situations; parents separated from their children by immigration laws; immigrants working underground in daunting conditions; immigrants struggling with HIV, hepatitis, and TB; immigrants who are homeless; and immigrants who are locked out of the adult education system. Everyday we meet and take under our roof more people who are living these challenges, and our caseload grows exponentially each year. The knowledge that all around us non-profits and services are collapsing only reinforces the necessity to keep accepting new cases, recruiting pro bono assistance, and adapting to meet the needs of the community.

Government budget cuts have hit ASC hard in 2011. Whether 2012 will see any restoration of funding or further cuts remains uncertain. However, one thing is clear, contributions from public and corporate sources, however large or small, are depended upon to help make up the deficit in funding for critical services. We have pared down our costs, maximized savings in procurement of goods and services, economized on staff benefits, and laid off staff where we had to. ASC is as lean as it's ever been. It is with your help and support, at any level, that we will be able to

sustain our muscle.

As you read through this newsletter (and past ones), you'll get a snapshot of the vitality of ASC and the African community, despite the current depression. I hope that you come away from reading this with an understanding of what's been built, and how little it takes at an individual level to sustain our services when we have as many friends and supporters as you.

Many thanks for your attention and your generosity in the previous years, and in the years to come.

Best wishes to you all for the New Year 2012.

Kim

News and Activities

African Services Committee Celebrates World AIDS Day at the United Nations



Tembeni Fazo poses in front of her name plate at the UNAIDS World AIDS Day 2011 Conference Meeting

On December 1st, 2011 African Services Committee was invited to commemorate World AIDS Day with UNAIDS and other partnering organizations, participating in a panel discussion unveiling the new *Getting to Zero* policy adopted by the United Nations.

Getting to Zero details the UN's newly adopted policy on:

- ZERO New HIV infections
- ZERO Discrimination
- ZERO AIDS-related Deaths

Tembeni Fazo, an ASC Peer Counselor, spoke on the panel, and provided her insights into the debilitating effects that HIV Stigma has on those living with HIV, and its effects on the broader community, and on testing,

treatment and prevention.

What most resonated about her message was the idea that although we have made progress on the treatment and prevention fronts, without progress against HIV stigma, advancements are meaningless in the long run.

As Tembeni said, "Curing HIV is in the hands of science, but curing stigma lies in the hands of each and every one of us." Our hope, on World AIDS day, and for every day thereafter is that EVERYONE is conscious of their own power to eradicate HIV stigma.

You can watch the entirety of Tembeni's statement below (click on the video link).



Tembeni Fazo Speaks at WAD 2011 Conference

African Services' Holiday Party Success

On Friday, December 16th, African Services Committee invited supporters and friends to celebrate the holidays in our space. As always, the party didn't disappoint, with amazing performances (including one by a South African Choir -- see video below), tasty food and treats (including a beautiful 30th Anniversary cake made by ASC supporter, Lauren Jones), and plenty of drinks.



ASC Holiday Party - South African Choir

Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate with us, and to support African Services and the work that we continue to do only because of your generous donations and love.

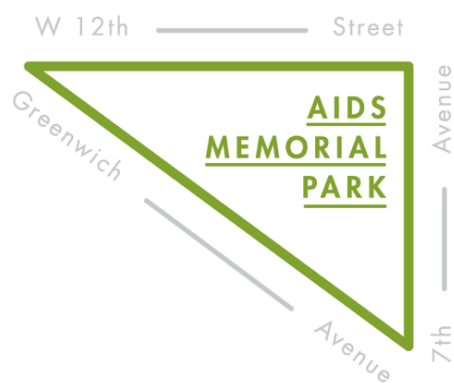


A montage of photos from the 2011 ASC Holiday Party.

All of us at African Services want to wish you and your family a happy holidays and a HAPPY NEW YEAR! Here's to hoping that 2012 will be even better than 2011!

For more pictures of the event, visit Afrikanspot [here!](#) Scroll down until you see our header and photos!

Activists Fighting for AIDS Memorial Park



Over 30 years ago the war against AIDS began in America. As the disease was discovered and began to run rampant in the New York City community, one hospital stepped in to care for those who were infected, St. Vincent's Hospital.

In 1981, St. Vincent's reported one of the very first cases of AIDS in 1981. It became "Ground Zero" for the epidemic, and never wavered in its commitment to fight HIV/AIDS.

Hundreds upon thousands of men and women died or were treated there for HIV/AIDS; many more passed through to visit sick partners, friends and family members. No other hospital took on the symbolic importance of St. Vincent's, the place most closely associated with the AIDS epidemic.

Since its closing in 2010, progress has been made in the development and construction of new residential buildings. However, various organizations around the city are banding together to

promote the construction of a memorial park dedicated to the memory of the lives lost to AIDS.

African Services wholly supports this proposal and would like to throw our support behind the project. To find out more, and see how you can get involved, visit www.queerhistoryalliance.org.

Kate Stinson Awarded Prestigious Skadden Legal Fellowship



Recent African Services Committee legal fellow, Kate Stinson, has been awarded the prestigious Skadden Fellowship allowing her to return to African Services and continue her work for 2 more years.

Kate worked with African Services for one year, in 2010, on a Kirkland & Ellis Fellowship, then moved on to a clerking position with Judge Deborah A. Batts in the Southern District of New York. She was a prized member of the legal team, and we are delighted to have her back representing French-speaking clients who are victims of human trafficking. Prior to joining African Services, Kate interned with the American Civil Liberties Union, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the AIRE Center. She earned a master's degree in international relations from Oxford University.

"The Skadden Fellowship will enable African Services to meet the increasing need amongst our clients in the area of human trafficking," said supervising attorney Andrea Panjwani, "Kate was a beloved member of the team and African Services and our clients are fortunate to have her join us once again to continue her work."

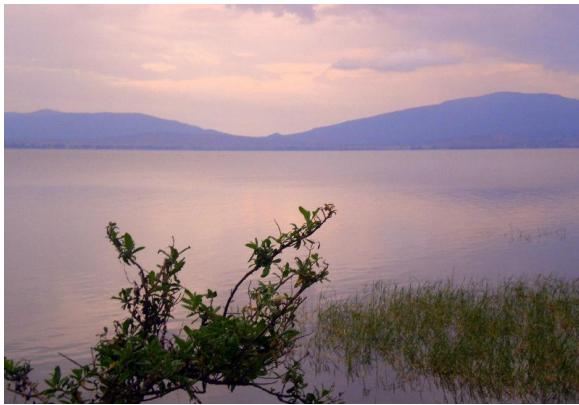
Kate is among only 28 graduating law students and judicial clerks awarded the highly sought-after two-year fellowship. The Skadden Fellowship provides recipients a salary and pays full fringe benefits. In addition, Skadden Fellows also benefit from a supportive community of past recipients, a group that includes some of the most accomplished social justice lawyers in the country.

The Skadden Fellowship Foundation was established in 1988 by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, in honor of the law firm's 40th anniversary. The fellowship program, described by The Los Angeles Times as "a legal Peace Corps," supports recent law school graduates who wish to provide legal services to the poor (including the working poor), the elderly, the homeless, and the disabled, as well as those deprived of their civil or human rights.

On the Ground in Ethiopia: A Volunteer's Story, Pt. 3

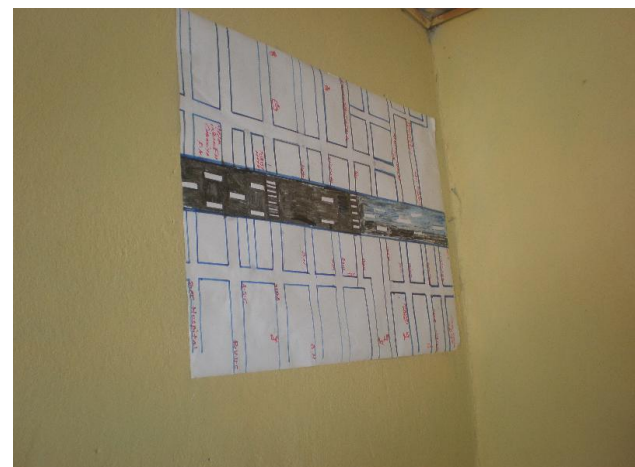
Hello all, here is my 3rd and final installment detailing my adventures as an ASC Ethiopia volunteer. Thank you so much for following along, and I hope that you, too, get an opportunity to visit and see the things that I have seen.

The fourth African Services clinic is located in the burgeoning region of Oromia - characterized by vast expanses of rich, beautiful soil. Bright greens contrast with dark, passionate browns on the road from Addis to Ziway. Oromia is also the region of the country known for its lakes, craters, and tranquil beauty.



Ziway is the newest addition to the African Services family of clinics. The site opened its doors in late 2010 and moved to a more permanent location in early 2011, right before my visit. Given its short tenure in the area, I was particularly impressed by the number of patients waiting to be tested and counseled when I arrived on-site. The team giving my tour of the clinic emphasized that outreach and grassroots communications have been key in spreading the word about ASC in the area. In particular, the team points to two elements posted on the wall - a program of outreach activities updated weekly and a detailed map of the city. These help to keep the ASC outreach team focused on increasing reach in the community and on reaching people in central locations of the city - in order to bring services directly to the people who need them most.

WEEK	MORNING SESSION	AFTERNOON SESSION
MONDAY		
TUESDAY	Awareness Creation on HIV & Prevention Education on STIs & HIV/AIDS at Market	
WEDNESDAY	Awareness Creation on HIV & Prevention Education on STIs & HIV/AIDS at School	Awareness Creation on HIV & Prevention Education on STIs & HIV/AIDS at School
THURSDAY		
FRIDAY	Awareness Creation on HIV & Prevention Education on STIs & HIV/AIDS at Baha Prison	VISITING COMMERCIAL SEX WORKERS AND DISCUSSING CONCEPTS OF NEEDS-BASED APPROACH
SATURDAY		WORK DAY
N.B. PREPARE TO PARTICIPATE IN CREATING AWARENESS TO OUR SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE THE PROGRAM WE HAVE ZIWAY BRANCH - AFRICAN SERVICES COMMITTEE		



I spent several hours at the clinic, witnessing nurses and staff carefully attending to all patients - all while maintaining the highest level of professionalism. The ASC team in Ziway, as in all other

clinics I visited, has an unwavering commitment to helping those who walk through its doors, and continuously spreading the word about the availability of HIV/AIDS-related care.



African Services has proven to be a catalyst for change in Ziway and in Ethiopia, more generally. This strong point of view is echoed by key stakeholders, government officials and the business leaders to whom I spoke.

I truly admire the innovative and crucial role African Services is playing in Ethiopia and admit to having fallen in love with the Habesha (Ethiopian) people and culture.

I hope you, too, will one day consider traveling to Ethiopia to experience the beauty of the country and witness the amazing progress being made by African Services.



--Natasha Pirogovsky

Fun in the City

Chitra Aiyar, Staff Attorney Recommends...



African Services Committee & Visionaries present
HARLEM NIGHTS
 a monthly gathering of art & activism with an afropolitan twist

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18TH | 6:30 - 9:30 PM
 with DJ El Pete, light refreshments & a cash wine bar

In 2008, photographer Barron Claiborne and filmmaker Joshua Bee Alafia traveled to Kenya to document Fashion for Peace (www.fafakenya.org), an initiative set up in the wake of Kenya's 2007 post-election violence. Join us for a sneak preview of the film Fashioning Peace in Kenya and hear the artists talk about their work.

7 PM

Filmmaker Joshua Bee Alafia (www.joshuaabeealafia.com) with a sneak preview of Fashioning Peace in Kenya.

8 PM

Photographer Barron Claiborne (www.barronclaiborne.com) presents images from his work.



For more information, contact Jen at pritheeva@gmail.com.
 African Services Committee | 429 West 127th Street
 between Amsterdam & Convent Aves. I.A. B. C. D. 1 trains to 127th St.

African Services Committee, in collaboration with Visionaries, presents an evening of art, film & discussion. This new event series invites friends of ASC, media lovers, Africa enthusiasts and beyond to enjoy our space, become acquainted with our organization, and make connections within the community.

The inaugural event will showcase photographer, Barron Claiborne, and filmmaker, Joshua Bee Alafia, who collaborated on **Fashioning Peace in Kenya**, a film about using fashion as a tool to advocate for peace in Kenya.

What: Harlem Nights

When: Wednesday, January 18th - 6 - 9 pm

Where: African Services Committee
 429 West 127th Street, 3rd Floor
 between Convent & Amsterdam Avenue

Come out and enjoy a livening screening and discussion of the film and photographic exhibit, followed by cocktails and mingling.

Complimentary beer/wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

For more information or to RSVP, click [here](#).

Bakary Tandia, Case Manager recommends...



Financial Literacy Workshop



Presented by African Services Committee and the NY Department of Consumer Affairs

Learn about becoming financially secure: Personal/business budgeting, credit management, loan opportunities, opening bank accounts, obtaining a taxpayer ID and more!

Saturday, January 21st - 1 - 4 pm

African Services Committee
 429 West 127th Street, 3rd Floor

For more information, call Stephanie Kaplan or Bakary Tandia:
 (212) 222-3882

In partnership with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, OneNYC Nation, and the Manhattan Borough President Immigration Advisory Council, African Services Committee will be hosting a **FREE** Financial Literacy Workshop.

Participants can attend and learn about becoming financially secure: Personal/business budgeting, credit management, loan opportunities, opening bank accounts, obtaining a taxpayer ID and more!

When: Saturday, January 21st, 1 - 4 pm

Where: African Services Committee,
 429 West 127th Street, 3rd Floor
 Between Convent & Amsterdam Ave.

For more information, call Stephanie Kaplan or Bakary Tandia at (212) 222-3882.

Stephanie Kaplan, Communications Director Recommends...



Community "swaps" provide the perfect opportunity to find new homes for things you no longer need. By taking home items that you can use, you are also helping to prevent waste from production, packaging and transportation required to get new things.

The Office of Recycling Outreach and Education coordinates the Stop 'N' Swap in the communities where we are working to improve recycling in order to facilitate waste prevention and material reuse. We have held 28 swaps so far, serving more than 7,000 people.

What: Stop 'N' Swap

When: Saturday, January 28th, 12 pm - 3 pm

Where: PS 126 - Manhattan Academy of Technology
80 Catherine Street (@ Cherry Street)

Bring clean, reusable, portable items to share, or just come and see what's free for the taking!

For more information click [here](#) or call 212-788-7964

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