

Cornerstone

Newsletter & Magazine JUNE 2011

A Family of Friends - Developing the Cornerstones of Africa's Next Generation

THUS FAR:

Profiles, thoughts and stories from our community

The focus of this Newsletter/Magazine is on the alumni from our Cornerstone Leadership Academies and our Ekitangalla High School. Or, as they are formally called: Members of the Cornerstone Old Students Association (COSA) and Ekitangalla Old Students Association (EKOSA). It contains articles on some current issues in COSA & EKOSA, profiles of a cross-section of our alumni and other relevant information.

The vision for this central part of our work is to create a life-long brotherhood and sisterhood of friends in the spirit of Jesus; men of integrity and women of virtue, who will support one another while advancing a movement of servant leaders within and beyond this region.

It often feels that we are still in the early stages of our movement. We are still innovating and figuring out how it will work best. One of our challenges has been that, historically, there are very few groups that have successfully attempted to do what we are doing. So, it has not been easy to find examples to learn from and emulate. As we go along we are having to invent and discover ourselves what works and what does not.

But, our friends who visit us from abroad keep encouraging us by saying: "You are on to something, you are on the right track." So we press on - seeking to be a model of a "Kingdom of God community" in East Africa and advance our movement of transformational leaders.

One group that began with a similar vision, 450 years ago, still focuses on influencing young people and operates the world's biggest private High School education system. Today they are called the Jesuits and their founder was Ignatius of Loyola. He was Spanish and lived a pretty wild life until around the age of 49 when he had an encounter with God that turned him around. Following that, he started a group called "The Company of Jesus" - that later on became known as "The Society of Jesus." Ignatius' motto was: *"I came from God, I belong to God, I am going back to God."*

Any organization that has been around that long may no longer exactly adhere to the original vision but in a recent book called "Heroic Leadership" - author Chris Lowney seeks to analyze their initial values and methods. And interestingly, there are many parallels to our work. For instance he lists 3 aspects of their approach called "Love Driven Leadership Development" that closely matches our efforts :

1. They invited recruits to enlarge themselves by becoming part of an enterprise greater than his/her own interests.
2. They created a culture that stressed heroic effort - with the leaders modeling this virtue themselves.
3. They helped their members to align their personal missions with their broader collective mission.

I'm sure as you read through this Newsletter/Magazine you will be inspired by the heroic examples and noble thoughts of our alumni who embody the above concepts.



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This newsletter/magazine is published quarterly for family and friends around the world by Cornerstone Development

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Program Overview

Leadership Schools:

Uganda

- CLA Boys, Nakasongola
- CLA Girls, Matuga
- Primary, Nakasongola
- Secondary, Nakasongola

Rwanda

- CLA, Rwamagana

Tanzania

- CLA, Arusha

Youth Corps Homes:

Uganda

- Ntinda girls, Kampala
- Makerere boys, Kampala
- Bukesa boys, Kampala
- Mengo girls, Kampala
- Lunguja girls, Kampala
- Kibuli boys, Kampala
- Sorority house, Kampala
- Gulu Girls
- Gulu Boys

Sudan - Juba

Kenya - Mombasa

Rwanda - Kigali

Burundi - Bujumbura

Projects:

Ekitangala Ranch

Nakasongola, Uganda

Community Development

Nakasongola, Uganda

Wolves Soccer Program

Kampala, Uganda

Widows Program

Kampala, Uganda

Mombasa Youth Outreach

Mombasa, Kenya

Core Focus

Our core focus is 'youth leadership development' - so all the various programs we run serve this focus by providing a practical "training ground" where the graduates of the Academies can learn to serve and pass on to others what they have received.

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some explanations for the unacquainted:

The Cornerstone Schools: The Cornerstone Leadership Academies (CLA) are "Advanced Level" boarding high schools that aim to mold young people coming from poor backgrounds, but with high potential, into future leaders. A major aim of this program is to teach young future leaders from various religious backgrounds and different tribes, to learn to live together as brothers and sisters, as part of a movement of men of integrity and women of virtue. In addition to the academic studies, the program involves a comprehensive discipleship program following the principles, precepts and person of Jesus.

We also teach this material in our Elementary and High schools that are open to the public. These schools have boarding facilities and accept students from all over the country, as well as cater to the local community.

COSA - The Brotherhood and Sisterhood : Our schools are just the beginning of a long-term relationship with these young people that continues on into University and beyond. Our vision/ mission statement is: *To create a life-long brotherhood & sisterhood of friends that will support each other in a movement of "men of integrity" and "women of virtue."*

This dream is steadily becoming a reality. Most of these young people come from broken homes or grew up as orphans so the 'Cornerstone family' often becomes their extended family. Many are in positions of leadership at their respective colleges and the university. Others in more quiet ways are making a positive impact on those around them. The long term potential to influence this nation is increasingly becoming evident as we see the maturity and commitment exhibited in the lives of these future leaders who have come up through our programs. To maintain our relationships and commitment to the values we hold in common, we meet weekly through-out the time they are in University, hold an annual retreat on the ranch for all alumni and organize support groups for those that have begun working and starting families.

Youth Corps Family: This is a program that provides loving homes for homeless kids and also serves as a training ground for the young people who have graduated from our Leadership Academies and are involved in running the homes. The homeless children get a place to sleep, a 'family' to belong to and are taught a better way to live - in line with the principles, precepts and person of Jesus. We also have homes for older guys/ girls in university to live together, and to learn to love each other and grow spiritually.

See more online: www.CornerstoneDevelopment.org

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

from the new C.O.S.A. Chairman



Class of 2001 - CLA Uganda

Moses Senkosi

Recently I was elected the Chairman of the Cornerstone Old Students Associate (COSA). But oddly enough, I have never really aspired to leadership. And I think those who desire such titles too much, often end up in failure.

For the past 6 or so years I have been very involved in COSA. I always found ways of making myself useful. At first I would just volunteer services to be of help in any way whether it was in planning events, mobilizing people, moving things around at functions or being an M.C. My heart to serve soon led me to be a committee member, and then eventually a financial secretary. But these were positions that I stepped into simply to serve without looking for a big title or public recognition. I did it because I really believed in the COSA vision and was willing to take voluntary responsibility to really see it grow and impact the lives of those involved.

In my new role as Chairman, I have inherited a long list of ideas, and issues generated from our interaction that need to be moved forward. COSA is currently growing – and this means that many people who have been around for long are getting older! One of the real issues I want to address in my term as Chairman is finding new and innovative ways to reconnect with the older generations and keep this movement relevant to their maturing lives and roles in society.

Additionally, I want to see that we instigate more regional meetings in different areas of the country, so that those who live far away can still find points of connecting and being a part of the vision. Furthermore, I want to improve the issue of information flow and communication. Many people do not know what is going on, they may want to be involved, but they don't feel involved if they are not com-

municated to. Sometimes these people have ideas, but they do not even know who to address these with or who to get involved with, I want to clear up some of these things. We need to communicate in a bit more of a formal and intentional way, instead of just casually assuming that information gets to all people. These are just some of the big areas I want to focus on but I am sure that there are many more changes that we can see come about in the journey towards our vision.

Two of the biggest obstacles to change in our circumstances may be: (1) The belief that money can solve social problems, (2) The belief that only politicians (or those with big titles) are leaders. The truth is that the best solution to local problems are those that require a shift in cultural paradigms, reorienting our view of our own responsibilities and believing that we can address our own problems - not that they are the responsibility of others.

Also, we need to realize that anyone can be a leader if he/she sees a problem, has a vision to change it, mobilizes people, and leads them to overcome their problem – leaders are not just politicians (who are often all talk and no action), leaders are real people who desire to serve others by causing real movement in society regardless of recognition or title. Most people look for money first, or titles first, but these always bring short-term solutions. Long term solutions come from people who have changed their paradigm and operate based on values of service not in thinking that quick-fixes can really solve things.

Some people in the early years of C.O.S.A. thought of leadership as politics, but, I believe that leaders are in all areas of our society. Leaders are people who voluntarily go and work in the kitchen so that people can be fed. Leaders are people who voluntarily organize events in the background and make the thing happen. We have leaders doing great work in positively influencing society through business, or education, or entertainment. I want to really emphasize the point that real leaders are people who give their time and energy to invest in something they believe in often on a voluntary basis. I believe that leadership is not about what someone can personally gain through being in a position of power - it is about the way he or she can transform people or communities through their actions, leaving everyone better off having been a part of the movement.

These ideas are not 'natural' ideas when you look at our culture and human nature around us – it really requires someone to have a higher vision for their life in order to understand them and live them out. But, when we have internalized and are living out the unique principles we learned at CLA, I feel that it is this very area that makes COSA members unique from others. We are increasingly seeing this 'internalization' emerging in the Cornerstone community and I am sure you will agree with me when you read through the articles in this magazine. We have very inspirational people coming through us that are making an impact in our societies.

HOW I WON

Developing a passion for women in leadership



Class of 2006 - CLA UGANDA

Kansime Honest

Growing up we didn't have much. I didn't come from one of those families who were able to provide many things for me. When I was very young, my dad passed away, and I was raised by my mom. To raise money to go to school I took care of some goats, and farmed some crops we had in the fields. By the time I got to High School this income could no longer pay my way so I had to drop out of school in Senior 3. I spent some time selling tomatoes and other odd jobs until I had saved enough money to go back and finish 'O' Level High school. And then I had the good fortune of being accepted, out of hundreds of applicants, into the Cornerstone Leadership Academy. This when things really started to turn around for me.

In CLA, I began to develop a vision of getting involved in politics in order to take an active role in determining the future of this country. I always thought I was unworthy of such big dreams because of my humble background - not many people in my family were educated, or held any positions of authority in our village, and we were very poor. But the principles I learned at CLA about having a vision and sense of purpose impacted and inspired me the most. Furthermore, being mentored by my dedicated teachers gave me the courage to believe that I could really achieve my dreams.

After graduating from CLA, I soon joined Kyambogo University. While I was there I got my first real taste of politics when I took up leadership in the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) political party, first as Secretary of Woman's Affairs, then later as Chairperson. Since FDC is the opposition party to the dominant NRM party, many people think I dislike NRM, but in reality it is not so...

4 I just feel that it is easier to bring about new and fresh ideas through FDC since it is not so concerned with

preserving the status-quo.

During my final year of studies, it came time for the national Parliamentary elections. Many people thought I was still too young to stand a chance, but I was more interested in gaining the experience, and getting my name out there so that when I run again in 4 years I would be more familiar with people. So despite still being in university with my final research paper and internship pending, I decided to run for the Parliamentary seat representing my home region's constituency after winning the endorsement of the FDC party to be their candidate. I must admit, it was HARD. It was the hardest thing I have ever had to do - balancing school with visiting voters and making public appearances, while at the same time trying to maintain the spiritual and physical aspects of my life.

In the end, I faced stiff competition, and I did not win the election. But, through my experience in the Cornerstone community I learned that success is not just about winning elections - it's about getting out there and being a contender. It calls forth a higher wisdom, ability to build connections, your character is tried by fire and you are generally being pushed to grow in all areas.

The process of campaigning really forced maturity upon me. Everyone wanted to see what this daughter of a widow who sells second hand clothes can do. I was forced to act out the principles I learned at CLA with all eyes on me. People were watching how much integrity I had; how Jesus centered I was; how hard working I was; how much vision I had; how virtuous I was. I had to humble myself in order to fundraise and ask people to help me in other areas of my campaign team. It wasn't easy!

People ask if I am disappointed that I lost. But... I say I didn't lose! After all, what did I lose? If anything, I came out far ahead. I was given a platform to talk to many people and change their perception of politics. I visited my old schools and inspired many other girls to move forward with their lives. In fact I was able to go as far as I managed to go - simply on the shoulders of those I inspired. I mobilized people and enlisted volunteers who helped me. People really appreciated how I challenged and influenced people. I brought new energy, hope and excitement to the community I grew up in... TELL ME - how is that losing?!

Through this experience I am moving on to the next phase of my life: GIVING. Not giving money - for that will run out and never be enough; but giving that which has been given to me freely by God, for that will always be abundant. Growing up I knew many other girls who had similar leadership potential, yet they ended up getting pregnant, and dropping out of school because they didn't have mentorship and reasonable opportunity to grow.

To this end, I am starting up an organization that works with reaching out to such girls and nurturing their leadership potential - even if they don't go into politics they will at least be leaders in their family and influential in their communities. I have also started to mentor and befriend other women leaders and help them learn some of the principles that I was taught so that they can be challenged to reach out to young girls, and mobilize them to communicate real solid messages to female youth instead of them just talking the usual talk. Out of my experience, I won a real passion for mentoring other women in leadership.

WITH THE END IN MIND

Building a career, nurturing a family, and leaving a legacy



Class of 1996 - CLA UGANDA

Vincent Mbalangu

“Begin with the end in mind” - I can still vividly recall the day we were introduced to this great principle. It was a hazy Wednesday afternoon, and Mr. Stone Kyambadde (“Coach” as we fondly referred to him) was acting dead in the dinning hall. As part of a skit to illustrate his point, Stone’s wife came in crying, mourning the loss of her husband. I had been to several funerals before and I knew this was only a stage act, but still it moved me to the point that I can still recall all the details surrounding the event. During our lesson that afternoon, the question was asked: “What kind of LEGACY would you like to leave behind?” After you’re dead and gone, what would you like to be remembered for? Or, in more graphic terms, what would you like written on your tombstone? Of all the principles I learned at CLA (over 15 years ago), this is the one that seems to have stuck the most.

That memorable afternoon sitting in class, we learned (and I can still see the graphic illustrations in the book) that it’s no good climbing the ladder of success only to reach the top and discover that the whole time it was leaning against the wrong wall. We learned that relationships with friends, family, and God are more important than anything else in life, and that is so true! No one lays on their death bed saying: “Let me see my bank statements, to see how much I made last month...” Or, “Pass me my medals and accolades! Let me look at them one last time.” Rather, I would assume that most people in the last few hours of their lives normally ask to see their loved ones, their friends,

children, grand children. They want to be with people they have shared their lives, who will inherit their legacy.

Bringing this into the context of my life now, I’m reminded of an old song that not many of us might be familiar with. It’s a song by a fine soloist whose voice still echoes beyond the grave - Jim Reeves. He sings: “This world is not my home I’m just a passing through. My treasures are laid out somewhere beyond the blue...” Whereas I totally agree that this world is not my permanent home, I don’t agree with the just passing through bit. I believe that whereas my treasures are laid out somewhere ‘beyond the blue’ there are things that I need to do here and now that will greatly affect the kind of legacy I leave behind. Even though this world may be my temporary home, I still have the responsibility to do the best with what I have been given. I still have a part to play in building the kingdom of heaven here on earth, if not for me, for the sake of future generations. After all, if not us, then

who will do it? Doing this requires development of vision, focus, and discipline, and to this end, I have learned to ask God to help me begin everyday, and everything I do, with the end in mind.

As a result of this great lesson in life, I have made a commitment to my wife and family (children) that if a job, project, course, or activity requires me to leave them behind for a lengthy period of time, if it impinges on my spending valuable time with them, even if it would bring in more money... I will not take it. Why? Simply because I don’t want to be remembered as someone who made so much money but lost the most important things in life. In the words of our Lord and King: “What would it profit a man to gain the whole world yet lose his soul? (Mark 8:36) Maybe family does not equal to soul, but the two are somewhere in same neighborhood. So in whatever I do I’ve learned to ask: What is the end I have in mind for my marriage... my family... my testimony as a follower of Jesus? And then, how will my actions now contribute to that end? Whether it be sacred or secular, all aspects of our lives can be applied to this principle. Even though I though I learned it once a long time ago, I am still learning this principle anew everyday that I try to live it out. They say that if you don’t know where you are going, then you have already arrived... so, let us know what we want, so that we get to the right place. Let us know which wall we are placing our ladders on, so that when we get to the top we reach a place we want to be in. Let us begin with the end in mind.

FINDING MY VOICE

A follower of Jesus from a Muslim background



Class of 2005 - CLA Uganda

Abdallah Babu

For some time, I have been on the path of discovering my voice, and finding my contribution to society with the gifts I have been given. I have endured a battle inside, with my inner voice saying one thing, and my personal interest dictating another, leaving me in the middle – at times not sure which direction I should take. Yet, I have begun to realize that every time I have ignored my inner (or higher) voice it seems that efforts get shut down and frustrated... it is like I am being drawn to something bigger that I still do know exactly.

At times this has left me feeling like a crawling child who is trying to stand and walk by itself yet it keeps falling down. When the mother comes to support it, it feels confident enough to try make some steps forward though with fear but after some time, the child finds strength in its own. This strength partly comes from a sense of hope, encouragement and confidence being given to the child by the mother time and again. But it also comes from practice, patience, discipline, and most of all – courage.

This simple illustration is a metaphor for the journey I have been on, the journey that I feel is what God, through Jesus (Nabbi Isa – as he is known in the Qu’ran) is taking me on. I come from a Muslim background, and without any grain of doubt in my mind, God planted His seed of love, peace and desire for reconciliation deep in me. I believe I am here to be an agent of these values in Muslim communities to end the violence, hatred, and ignorance that currently plagues Islamic communities and has hindered us from really achieving Allah’s (God’s) will. And I know, that for me to see these values realized in the world around me I must start with myself, my family, and then my community.

done, and at times it seems it is too much for me and I am too insignificant to be used for this great cause. But, I am comforted and encouraged in the knowledge that it doesn’t matter where I go, God will always be there to give me the strength and wisdom required whenever I call upon His name. Also, when I really share with people God’s love for all human beings, and these ideas of peace, unity and reconciliation, particularly among people who are divided on religious and cultural backgrounds, I am encouraged by the sense of fulfillment that I am given. At times when I think I have too little strength, when I do the right thing, I always feel stronger in the end.

So many wars are fought on lines of religious and cultural differences. This saddens me, because we do not choose where we are born, and most people who are born into a family of a certain religion or culture stay there – it is their heritage. Many people are proud of where they come from, and do not understand the ways of others so they do not respect them. Because they do not understand, they justify hatred, blind to the fact that we are all humans with the same capacity to love and know God. We need to learn to appreciate our differences and focus on what really matters – that is the eternal perennial values that Jesus (Nabbi Issa) shared with us. These are things that are beyond the artificial walls that our human nature creates between people in an effort to feel like ‘we are better than them’.

Personally, I have come to the realization that using the teachings of Jesus (Nabbi Issa) is the only effective way of reaching out to the people of the world as he cuts across all that we human beings have created to divide ourselves. In specific regard to my work, he is the savior to the Christians, and a prophet to the Muslims. Because he is revered in both traditions, there is a large amount of common ground to start a dialogue on.

Historically, people always find what makes them different and draw their identity from that. I say, let us find what we have in common, the universal values that call forth our highest and best, and draw our identity from that: for we are all brothers and sisters under the fatherhood of God. We all want the best for our families and our friends; we all want to live in peace and prosperity. So let us come together, just as Jesus (Nabbi Issa) cried, “I pray that they may be one.”

I currently live and work in Tanzania talking to young and old Muslims (and Christians) about these ideas I learned mainly from my community in Cornerstone. I am taking what was once “their thing” (Cornerstone’s) and learned that to draw real power from it, and to see its vision fully realized, I need to make it “my thing”. It has become my thing by applying it to the unique circumstances of my Muslim background. And allowing what I once believe to be a burden, to be redeemed and become a blessing. I am a Muslim follower of Nabbi Issa, and in him, I have found my voice.

6 This is no simple task, for there is much work to be



Class of 2003 - CLA Uganda

Sam Birondwa

"To whom much is given much is expected," my mentor Mzee Paul Lukwiya often reminds me. These original words of Jesus have stood the test of time, and continue to be just as inspiring now as they were 2000 years ago. It is such perennial wisdom (true across time and culture) that has been one of the largest motivating factors for me and my work in recent years.

I developed my passion to become a leader, just as Jesus was, really when I was at CLA almost ten years ago. Studying the character development and discipleship material convicted me that I wanted to become a man who made a difference. Later, as I pursued Development Studies in University, it really became more and more clear to me that, "For a nation to develop, the people must be developed first!" I realized that it is no good focusing a lot

of energies on development projects, if you don't consider developing people at the same time. Because at the end of the day it is these people who will eventually own and run the projects themselves - shouldn't then - their capability be given more attention?

At that point, I made a resolution to do my part and contribute to the development of a new breed of Rwandan leaders, "People who will love, reconcile, unite, lead and rebuild the Rwandan Society giving it a healthy and prosperous national identity based on the person of Jesus of Nazareth." Shortly after sharing these ideas with my community and mentors, the Vision Conference in Rwanda was born.

The Vision Conference is an annual gathering that I have been organizing which aims at reaching out to Rwandan young people in High Schools and Universities with leadership principles and the message of reconciliation with God and fellow man. It has become my way of taking the principles and concepts we learned at the Cornerstone Leadership Academy (CLA), to influence a much broader segment of society. During the gatherings we discuss topics such as Servant Leadership, Having Vision and Purpose in Life, Integrity, Synergy, Hard Work, Reconciliation, First Things First, etc. So far, we have regular activities in three provinces of Rwanda - Central, Eastern and Southern but with plans to reach all the five provinces in the next two years.

I am particularly challenged by another one of my mentors, Uncle Tim Kreutter. His life has been a living testimony to the power of the principles and concepts we learned at CLA. Despite all the troubles and inconveniences of living in Africa, he has given his time year after year and invested in the young people of Africa. What a big heart he has! If he can do it, who am I to not take similar responsibility for my own people?!

The Vision Conference is my proactive decision to take responsibility for my own fate, and the fate of my nation. Lukwiya also has told me time and again that, "Freely we've been given, and so freely we should give."

I know without a doubt that a lot was invested in me while at CLA - a lot was given to me freely. But it was not given by accident - it was an intentional investment in my life, that I would be able to then go on and impact many others. This is my life, and I have the choice to seek great returns on the investment that was made in me, or let it go to waste. Those who mentored me at CLA, and continue to mentor me thereafter, have opened my eyes to see that if we do not take voluntary responsibility for changing ourselves, then it will never happen. That is what keeps me going and committed to this great vision. It is real. It works and I believe Africa will be transformed by it, but only if we take it upon ourselves to do so!



LEARNING TO GIVE

Engaging communities through service



Class of 2000 - CLA Uganda

Councillor Muwau

I am currently serving as the Kampala coordinator of the Youth Corps program that gives love, a family and life principles to kids who are homeless or without direction. I have learned so much during my service with the Youth Corps mentoring program over the last couple of years. Some of the more powerful of these lessons have come to me through the community service outreach that we engage ourselves on the weekends. Through this, I have gained a deeper understanding of servant leadership and it has made me more proactive, more confident in taking initiative and accepting responsibility for the challenges that our local communities face.

The major purpose of our community service (usually held on Saturday mornings) is to help our kids appreciate

the environment where they live and to help them realize that they have something of value to give to society. Since most of them have grown up begging, they have low self-esteem because they have always thought they have no real contribution to their communities – they can feel more like parasites than decent citizens. But in truth, every one of us has something to give, everyone of us has a way that we can add value to our communities in some way.

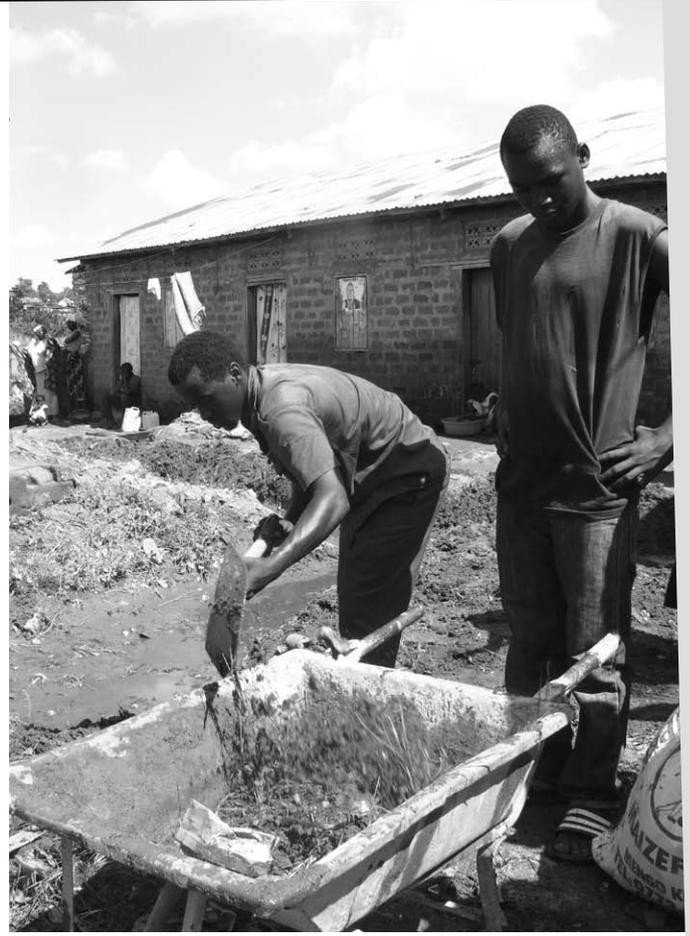
Our usual activities are picking up rubbish, digging trenches, serving porridge, and interacting with local residents... followed by an address by a local leader. People are usually very suspicious of us at first, because no one just does anything good like that for free anymore. They are surprised by our “abnormal” behavior and we have been called all sorts of funny things, but that never disturbs us - as the work goes on, usually people start to join us and really appreciate what we are doing.

Through involving our kids in this basic act of serving others - we are teaching them that they are relevant to their communities and this has the effect of changing their sense of who they are in life. They may not have money or great education – but they DO have love, energy and time. And sometimes these can be the greatest gifts of all! It only takes a good attitude and a willing spirit to bless others with such gifts.

It has become very clear to me that - much as people can be given things like shelter, food, and school fees – they will not really find joy in their lives if they do not feel like they are giving anything in return. We all want to receive but we have been designed by God to give freely to others in some way. Failure to learn this will ensure that you lead a miserable life.

Interestingly, although the concept of community service is something that most people agree is a good idea, very few people will ever do it on their own initiative. I have discovered first hand that community service only happens through someone displaying real leadership. It is a unique person to stand up, leading by example in doing work without pay - simply for the good of the neigh-





borhood. Only then will others begin to feel “ok” about joining.

This is something that has really tested me. I came to see that if this aspect of our program was going to happen, it would only work when I was willing to be the first to go out there and do it myself. As leaders, I do not think we should ever ask others to do things that we ourselves are not willing to do; if we want to see a change, we must begin with ourselves and take the lead from there.

Many times when we go into slums to serve, there are usually some people who are not familiar with us and they ask us questions like: “Who has employed you to do this,?” or: “Why don’t you give me some money and I’ll do the work!”, or: “Can you go over and work near my house?” These questions make it evident that most people have abandoned their own basic human responsibilities – they don’t want to care for their own place unless someone pays them to do it! They put off the responsibility for their community onto their political leaders, or they wait around for hand-outs from foreign charities - when they could easily solve most of their problems themselves. This over emphasis on waiting for money has made people lazy, unproductive, and trapped in poverty.

Whenever we enter a community to serve, we usually first talk to the local leaders. We do this so that we support their role in the community and encourage them get involved in what we are doing. These people are usually hesitant to deal with us because they cannot believe that we want to do this for free – they are so used to hidden motives or

trickery! Once we have identified a need that we can help with, we mobilize some of the young people, and then we go to work.

Surprisingly, the concept of community service is not new to most African communities as it has actually been around for a long time. In the central part of Uganda we called it ‘Bulungi Bwa Nsi’ (translated: ‘For the good of the nation.’). But the practice has completely died off in recent generations as people have become more individualistic and alienated from a real sense of responsibility in community. We have found that giving just the little amount of love that we have to offer on Saturday mornings really brings people together, it inspires them to take more responsibility, and it restores peoples broken sense of community.

I am inspired by the humble lives of great modern day leaders like Gandhi and Mother Theresa, whose simple work may have looked foolish to many. They worked among the poor, doing the small things but with great love, and left a mark in the history books. Like these people, we seek to be servant leaders – we are mobilizing and inspiring communities through our service to them, not because we are elected or hold political position, but because we are taking voluntary responsibility for our lives, and those around us. And at the same time we are restoring a sense of self-worth and dignity in our kids who come to realize they can make a difference in their world.

GIVING BACK

A call to all old students



Class of 2004 - CLA UGANDA

Simon Esunget

I joined CLA in 2002, and became a part of a community that has shaped my life ever since. We called our class the 'Daniel generation', and aspired to live up to this biblical figure's reputation. Daniel was known for his spiritual focus, and incorruptible resolve against idol worship. In the context of our modern day and age, we interpreted false idols as corruption, laziness, immorality, and others societal ills – and thus committed ourselves to living lives that were free of these sins. During our time together we rigorously challenged each other, and inspired one another to stay faithful to this commitment for the rest of our lives.

Upon graduation from CLA, in 2004 we had a strong consensus that we would champion a few things both individually and as a group that would start with the following:

1. Contribute towards continuous improvement of CLA.
2. Support each other to succeed in various aspects.
3. Engage in joint investment ventures.
4. Be productive and strive to be role models for others.

These are the pillars that define our small group of guys. After 9 years, our commitment to one another, and to the aforementioned promises has yielded must success in each of our lives. Of our thirty members (CLA boys class 2002-2003), twenty-eight are qualified in different disciplines, twenty-three of whom are gainfully employed. Our members include: one Member of Parliament, three lawyers, one Revenue Officer, one member in NSSF, one district physical planner, four bankers, one manager, two in private business, two army officers (cadet & air force), one head teacher, three lecturers, one secondary school teacher, one medical billing officer, two in church ministry, one administrator, one librarian in a national college of commerce, two working with Cornerstone Tanzania. Seven already married (four have children). This is an incredible roster from just one class of high-school students!

One of the most exciting initiatives that we took up in recent years has been a group saving and investment scheme that we call the "Daniel Group Fund". The aim is to foster solidarity, and encourage a culture of saving and investment in one another's lives. During our class retreat on 14 December 2008, the class members nominated 7 members to come up with written guidelines to put the saving scheme in to operation. As expected, we started on a low pace with many members having little faith on the safety of their monthly contributions to the fund.

In our 1st year, only 5 members from our class registered and contributions worth 600,000Ugx received. We never lost hope, in our 2nd year, we were 7 members, with savings totaling to 1,500,000 Ugx and today we are 15 registered members with savings of over 4,000,000 Ugx. To anyone who has experience of starting something from nothing, this is impressive progress. We have been able to borrow from this fund for many reasons and pay back with interest which is shared at the end of every financial year. At least 2 guys have bought pieces of land from this fund, while another sustained a private business. The positive progress so far registered has been a product of transparency, prompt and adequate accountability, good record keeping, a clear picture of what we want to achieve and constant communications.

The spirit of "giving back" remains one of our major focuses. Over the years, we have identified simple needs at CLA, and rallied together to mobilize resources to meet this need. Our first "giving back" program was with providing better plates for the school. Most recently, we addressed the issue of the dwindling library.

Shortly before the 2011 COSA retreat, the Daniel Generation members in partnership with the Joshua generation, spearheaded a campaign dubbed "Books 4 CLA". It was a call out to other COSA members to contribute towards buying text books in direct response to the request by CLA boys' students and the school administration who had detailed a list of text books that were urgently needed. Being directly involved in the fundraising efforts, I am delighted to note that COSA members both men and ladies were able to respond to this call. In the end, we were able to mobilize about 700,000 Ugx towards this noble initiative! We are now in the process of buying the text books that will benefit the current senior six students and when complete, we will avail a comprehensive accountability to all COSA members.

Allow me also to add that in Africa, not so many people write their wills, but it's common knowledge that the elder son will take on the responsibilities of his father including the management of his estate. One could make the analogy that COSA is a movement made up of the first born of Africa – those who are on the path to lead the continent into a new era. Let us rise to this majestic occasion, and volunteer ourselves to shoulder the responsibilities we have at hand. Although our schools are good, they could be so much better with our commitment to them – if not us then who?! It's my open prayer to the COSA fraternity that we begin to see the tasks ahead of us and take voluntary action for this great cause: "To create a lifelong brotherhood and sisterhood of friends, that will love and support each other, while advancing a movement of men of integrity within Uganda and beyond."

AFRICA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

Calling all COSA Members to get involved!



AYLF friends at a recent gathering in Nairobi

AYLF is a collaborative initiative by a group of friends in Africa

At the heart of AYLF is the dream that the next generation of African leaders would know how to reconcile relationships, speak the truth without being religious or divisive, see people without labels or stereotypes, and ultimately love each other and those whom they lead.

This effort is based on the recognition that the values, principles, precepts and leadership character qualities of Jesus of Nazareth provide a model that aspiring leaders from all nations and creeds can emulate. Central to his message is reconciliation and personal integrity through transformed minds and hearts – issues of critical importance in Africa today.



Fulukas Enyaga, Alfred Edakasi, Allan Byarugaba

This initiative was launched in 2007 by Cornerstone (some of the key people behind it have been Fulukas Enyaga, Alfred Edakasi, and Allan Byarugaba) in order to extend our vision and values to young leaders on the University Campuses who did not pass through the Cornerstone Leadership Academies. It is now being advanced by student leaders on the various University campuses around Uganda and other East African Countries who are establishing chapters of AYLF on their campuses. This includes those who are currently active in student leadership as well as those who have just graduated from University but had been involved in student leadership. The vision continues to grow deeper and more widely year after year and has permeated into other countries; Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, South Sudan.

As a way of passing on this vision, our volunteer coordination teams in the region have been organizing weekly dialogue meetings on University campuses, and hosting workshops, seminars, annual regional gathering to coinciding with the National Prayer Breakfasts in Uganda and Kenya. We also seek to provide internship opportunities for youth to take part in service projects or gain experience with Members of Parliament and other leaders with the aim of connecting them with mentors.

This is not an exclusive vision, it is inclusive of everyone who wants to get involved. In particular we are seeking greater involvement of Cornerstone alumni at all the various institutions of higher learning where we have members. If you are interested in being involved, we want you to join and partner with us in some ways; either by starting a small group campus dialogue at your university campus, or starting a small group in your city for young professionals in leadership roles, or by organizing workshops and seminars for trainings in youth leadership skills, or participating in our regional gatherings, or by creating volunteer opportunities for student leaders. Friends from the abroad can intern as a resource person in our different country chapters, or act as points of raising awareness for this cause. We also need people in current leaders in our countries who are willing to act as mentors for our younger people if you can help facilitate that arrangement. So, please feel welcome to participate in our initiatives in the region, and be a part of something great that has enormous potential to influence the future direction of our nations!

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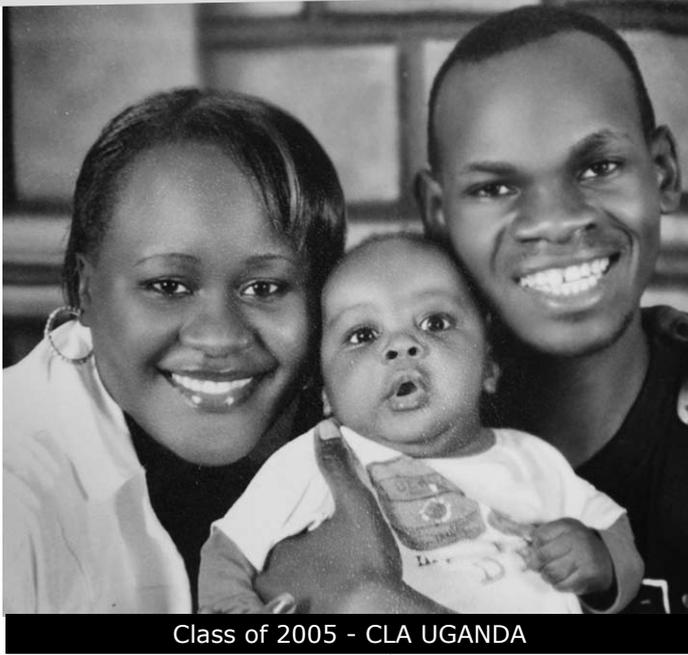
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FINDING BALANCE



Susan Anyeko

There is a traditional saying in Uganda that says, “Omukyala takyala” (meaning, ‘A woman should be a woman at home’). This implies that in an African family or community, women are expected to take on certain roles that are primarily restricted to household duties and nurturing activities. On the other hand, men are expected to take on roles that protect and provide resources for the family such as working for money, or other forms of income. As our society has evolved and developed some of these traditional roles are becoming less and less applicable to modern life – despite many conservative people arguing otherwise. In any case, my husband and I have had to learn many lessons recently in regards to redefining some traditional values and learning to live a balanced life.

Although I had always dreamed of becoming a mother - my husband and I had a baby sooner than what we expected. Still in school and having a full time job as well - the news was quite shocking. How were we going to handle having a baby on top of all our responsibilities? Many young women who have found themselves in similar circumstances have chosen to drop out of school and/or quit their job but being very ambitious - I didn’t want to do either of those things.

Fortunately, because my husband and I loved each other, and were committed to one another, we decided that together we were strong enough to handle the challenge that life had given us. We decided that we could find ways of sharing family responsibilities, and scheduling our time wisely, so that we could each keep pursuing our higher education, as well as both working full time. This has required some compromises to the traditional roles that our culture tells us are appropriate, but we knew this was the only realistic way we could make things work.

Many people would be surprised to know that my husband is a great cook! He takes care of our baby during times that I am away. It is not that he is any less of a man because he does these things, but I believe that he is MORE of a man for being able to take responsibility for taking a pro-active role in our family. He has his own career and is pursuing further studies but we have learned to work out a schedule where we know that at least one of us is always taking care of our young son.

I am firm believer in one of the principles we learned in CLA - “Living a Balanced Life.” In this, we were taught that there are 4 basic areas of our lives that we should always pay attention to keep in harmony: ‘Physical, Mental, Social, and Spiritual’. I feel that learning this principle has helped me to really focus on the 4 areas and ensuring that I make time for all of them. I care for my physical needs through my job and working for our money. I care for my mental needs by being dedicated to my studies, striving for academic excellence, and constantly being in the spirit of learning. I care for my social needs by taking responsibility for my family, and nurturing my relationship with my husband. And last but not least, I realize the importance of caring for my spiritual needs by being pro-active in relationship with Jesus and also through fellowship groups where my husband and I can council other young couples who are dating and thinking about getting married. It has definitely been hard keeping it all together, but I am very aware of the growth and maturity that has occurred in my life as a result of being pro-active in striving to balance all my commitments.

I love reaching out to other young women who find themselves in the situation I was in not too long ago. You see, many people these days may be with someone they love but are not taking the proper steps toward formalizing their relationship. Some of this has to do with someone not feeling they are ready for marriage because they still have many things they want to do first in life, or it may have to do with our traditional cultures and the pressures that they put on us for “Big Weddings” which has become an obstacle to young couples getting married. I want to speak out against both of these excuses. In the today’s world, if you love some one and they love you too - it is likely you might soon end up staying with each other (cohabitating). But this of course is not the ideal way to begin a relationship that is supposed to last for life. So, the first and best advice I have to my fellow Cornerstone friends is to just go ahead and get married! Just share your desire with us and we can all support each other to take this step. If anything, the way I have balanced my life is proof that you can be married, have a baby and still do many things in life.

All in all, I feel very fulfilled in the direction my life is going. I am growing physically (career), mentally (school), socially (family), and spiritually (Jesus), and have found ways of prioritizing and balancing my life. Things may not have gone the way I expected, but I saw it as a growth opportunity instead of an obstacle. I feel I have succeeded where others fail because I took responsibility for my life circumstances and did the best with what happened.



Class of 2000 - CLA UGANDA / Rwanda Headmaster

Johnson Karamuzi

Many people have heard about the excellent academic performance that has come out of CLA Rwanda in the last two years since we began. Last year, our school was ranked among the best in the country, and the majority of our students scored so well on their final exams that they received full government scholarships for further education in University. I suppose that people have thought that all we do is force our kids to study, study, study all day and night! The truth is that we don't, there is another secret to our success...

We all know that the character development curriculum has been a key aspect of the CLA approach. However, sometimes people only think of it only as a spiritual thing, with little implications on academics. In many top schools, they have abandoned such extra curricular programs for the sake of finding more time to study for exams. At CLA Rwanda, we have found that character development affects more than just our students' spiritual lives - it affects all areas of their growth, and it is the reason for their academic excellence.

Young people will not just strive for academic excellence if you command them to - they have to really believe in it themselves and take responsibility for their performance. It is in the character development curriculum that we cultivate this attitude, for as they are exposed to the mentoring lessons through out the year, students begin to develop visions for their lives. They start getting a better idea of what they want in life, and they realize that academics are

an essential foundation for their brighter future. Students have understood that they have what it takes to succeed; they now believe that their ambitions are not just dreams - all it takes is a paradigm shift on their part and a renewed dedication and responsibility to make something of their lives. It is a fallacy to believe that success is luck. We teach the students that they can't just sit and expect good scores to come out of nowhere.

This new sense of purpose in their lives unleashes their real potential and molds them into the kind of students that every teacher wants - hard working, ambitious, open minded, and respectful. For instance, where as students in other schools have to be monitored during preps and supervised everywhere, at CLA students know what they want and how they can achieve it. They have a culture built on an inner compass that motivates them, not just the watchful eye of administration.

We teach the students about respect and responsibility; we teach them about commitment to excellence; we teach them that success is a product of hard work; we teach them about being Jesus centered; we teach them about having a vision and sense of purpose in life; we teach them about personal integrity; we teach them about being resourceful; we teach them about covenant relationship, servant leadership and at the end of it all... maintaining balance. All of these things cultivate a paradigm shift in young people that gives them a new sense of purpose in life.

We also foster an environment of teamwork and community among our students. They are not out to compete with one another - they are there to lift one another up. In this way students put their knowledge together while studying and discussing. The brighter students have helped the struggling students to excel. In discussion groups, the strong assist the weak. Students know it is harder to achieve great things alone. Many students that come from Francophone backgrounds find it hard to start working in English, but with the help of the strong ones they catch up gradually. One year later, it is hard to tell who came into the program weak or strong as they have all pulled each other up.

CLA may not recruit the best students in Rwanda, but we try and recruit the most teachable - those willing to be mentored. Likewise, we may not hire the best teachers in the country, but those willing to mentor and inspire students in a holistic way. Our success is not just about an academic curriculum that can be duplicated and taught in other schools - it is about a culture of people sharing their lives with one another and calling forth eachothers highest and best potentials.

Cornerstone

Newsletter Pictorial





A Family of Friends!

“OUR THING”

Finding success in taking initiative



Class of 2007 - CLA Uganda

Michael Kirya

They say that “a river with no inflow and no outflow soon becomes a swamp”. When there is no movement, things stagnate, and eventually turn sour. There must be a flow of movement in all forms of life. In the process of receiving, we should also be giving – you can not have one without the other, they are part of the same process of growth. This analogy could be a metaphor for how I see my life and how I have grown in the last few years.

I joined CLA in 2006. Although I had various ideas and ambitions growing up, I was very challenged by the need to ‘change my paradigm’ - in order to live my life from a higher level. In other words, if I wanted to realize my full potential I had to change the way I viewed the world, the way I approached situations. I learned that the real problem is the way you see the problem. Because if you can shift your paradigm, something that once looked like an obstacle can become an opportunity instead.

For, me that meant I had to become more proactive in my life. I could not keep making excuses for failure because of my background, but instead began looking for chances to take on more responsibility where I saw it (responsibility, is simply accepting that you have the ability to respond). This revelation affected me so deeply that I wanted to share it with the whole world!

If people can't see how something directly affects them, it is hard for them to take responsibility. They say things like, ‘How will I benefit from this?’ And if they do not see how they benefit directly they refuse to engage themselves in anything.

But I say, try to engage in any good thing that God brings your way! Take responsibility for everything in front of you, even if you will not be immediately rewarded.

After graduating from CLA, I began attending university. Most students do not think they have the resources or training to accomplish much on campus other than their studies, but I knew I had more responsibility than that. I was in a community of many other young people, full of ideas and energy, looking for direction and inspiration. I noticed that most of these students were idle on the weekends and that meant they tended to look for entertainment or distractions that often involved negative influences and activities. On my campus it seemed no one else was responsible for this problem, I saw an ability to respond to this need – so I took responsibility.

“The Transformers” is an association that I helped found with some other COSA members at Uganda Christian University – Mukono (UCU). It began when we saw the need to provide our fellow students with a fun, healthy and entertaining way to spend their Saturday evenings instead of the usual troubled behaviors that idle youth get themselves into. Our desire was to really cause a grassroots transformative environment, while embodying the values of love, unity, relationships and integrity. The Transformers mission is to: “Mentor a generation that will influence other generations towards humanitarian values of reconciliation and unity; breaking drug and alcohol addictions; abstaining from harmful sexual behaviors – all while promoting a character based leadership model as exhibited in Jesus’ teachings and example.”

To me it was simply a great avenue that we have to pass on our COSA values and vision with a wider audience and to introduce these precepts of better living to others who were not able to attend one of the Cornerstone schools. Some of our gatherings have drawn over 500 people and have been attended by the Vice-Chancellor of the university. After seeing our enthusiasm for character development and teaching transformative leadership principles, we were recently asked to do the orientation for all of the University’s leaders on their various campuses around Uganda.

Recently, I have been realizing the power of ‘values’. Some people think they cannot take responsibility for problems they see in their communities because they do not have money. But I believe that values are a resource that is more important than money. I have learned that simply by transmitting good values we provide many solutions to the problems that plague our communities.

Other people say they can not take responsibility for problems because they are not trained or skilled enough. But, a PhD is meaningless and useless to society if the person holding it does not have values that guide their actions. Some one can have all the money in the world, or all the highest degrees of education, but if their values are poor, they will be of no influence on society, they will solve no problems for their community and will only be a burden to others in the end.

Everything in this world is interconnected – nothing is completely independent. Everything affects everything and that affects every one - even if your eyes can not see it now. Take responsibility whenever you are able to respond...ultimately you are investing in your own life. Through taking voluntary responsibility and ownership of what was once a “Cornerstone thing,” we have made it “our thing” and we have really been able to affect so many more!

THE POWER OF A SIMPLE ACT

A testimony of servantude



Class of 2001 - CLA UGANDA

Richard Kirabira

Last year, in May 2010, an opportunity came our way to serve a group of American volunteers who came to Uganda to work in Northern Uganda. Their primary focus was to assist Sister Rosemary's St. Monica Institute in Gulu and on the way they were visiting CLA Girls. I and some friends offered our services to help and coordinate their travels. However, on arrival in Entebbe, one of the group member's luggage was lost and did not arrive along with the others. He was very distressed because he could not wait for the several days that it might take to arrive and instead had to continue on with his group that was immediately traveling far up-country. Charles Mugabi and I offered to stick around, and track down the luggage - not knowing how long it would take or even if it would ever come in at all. Eventually 2 days later, the luggage finally turned up and so we drove it immediately - 6 hours up to Gulu.

Our new friend was so excited when he saw his luggage again and surprised at our dedication to see it delivered. He immediately offered us \$100 tip for our extra effort... and was quite surprised when we declined the offer! We told him, "We did not do this because we were looking for your money, but because we wanted to help you."

It's true, we did not refuse his money because we were stubborn, but because we were living out what we had learned at CLA about servant leadership, etc. We simply wanted to help our community - not ourselves. We felt it would be a betrayal to our motives if we accepted his money. Our behavior was a big shock to him and his friends, and he wanted to know more about what we were involved in. So, over the next day or two we spent time talking about Cornerstone and its projects, our collective and personal visions for Uganda.

Maybe it was luck, or maybe just God's way of working things out, but it turned out that the man we were helping was the President of a University in the United States. We had no idea, we thought he was just another Muzungu with a heart to help people in Uganda. But amazingly he seemed so inspired by our actions, character and vision - that he told us he wanted us to come and study at his university in the U.S. - where each of us could pursue a Master's Degree with a full scholarship!

Wow! Things moved from one step to another and despite a few times when we thought it would not happen - eventually we were able to travel in August 2010 to begin our program in the U.S. During the time we have been there so far - we have had many opportunities to meet people from all different walks of life. And due to our strong foundation and commitment to live out the principles of servant leadership, integrity, hard work, honesty, and others - we have learned to not only to survive but to thrive in this new country.

It all began from our time in CLA, almost ten years ago - where we had begun learning to live together as brothers and sisters in the spirit of Jesus despite our differences in culture, tribe, religion and political backgrounds. All of this was with the hope that a new generation of young leaders could learn to work across long-standing divisions in order to play our part toward building a more peaceful and prosperous society in Africa. Little did we know that this new paradigm would even take us to a new land, help us integrate into that community, adapt to a new culture with strange foods - and even become a blessing to people there.

More than ever before, I feel that I have a deeper sense of responsibility to serve and employ my talents in Uganda. Many people go to the U.S. and get mesmerized by the dream of chasing money - they forget that life is about more than that. They soon get stuck there, lose their focus and many fail to ever return home to their families and communities.

Money can only get you so far in life, beyond that, you need inspiration, pro-activity, and love in order to make a real difference in life. Many of my African friends here in Uganda think Charles and I are crazy for wanting to return but we want to take what we learn from this opportunity in the U.S. and bring it back home where it is needed the most and where we can really make a difference in our people's lives.

God placed us in East Africa for a reason, otherwise we could have been born in America, Europe or China. We should not run from our responsibility, but we should seek to discover our mission in this region - and in doing so, I believe that our work will continue to be blessed. Our view of the world and all that it is possible to achieve in life has been greatly broadened. And, our compassion for Uganda has only deepened. A small act of voluntary service has changed my life - and it has only inspired me to press on and do more.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

The journey from Nebbi to parliament



Class of 2003 - CLA Uganda

Joshua Anywarach

I like challenges. It is a good thing that I have this attitude, because my life has been defined by overcoming difficult situations. If I wasn't convinced of the growth that occurs when one is challenged, I would have given up long ago. My mother died when I was young, and my older brother had to work so that he could pay for my school fees. When I was in Senior 3 of High School my brother died, and I had to drop out of school. I made a living out of odd jobs, and faced a lot of discouraging comments by peers.

I had been out of school awhile when I heard about the Cornerstone Leadership Academy (CLA) and decided to apply. The first time I applied I was not accepted so I went back to work and waited a year - it was really my only option. The next year again and this time I was admitted. But after graduating from CLA I didn't have enough money to continue to University so I had to discontinue my education again.

However, every time I have come to a road-block in my life I just look for the best thing I could do - I never let go or give up. I soon found a job as a DJ (radio presenter) on a local radio station in my home district and I ended up working there for several years.

On my show, I had access to a large audience - to which I could communicate my vision. Most people thought I was a humorous and sensible guy with a good taste in music, so my popularity grew and I was consistently voted as the best DJ in the region. In addition, I was elected as a District Youth Councilor in 2006.

Through these avenues I was able to really connect with people, and respond to them in a way that inspired them to make change in their societies. A good leader is one who can connect with people, and influence those

around him in a positive way. I believe in the political arena that if you are really influential in a servant-minded way, you will not need tactics of manipulation, or to resort to spreading rumors about other candidates in order to win people's favor. With time they will see the truth in you and support you.

Looking for the next step in life, I decided to contest to become a Member of Parliament. I knew this was not going to be an easy feat, but as I mentioned earlier, I enjoy the growth that such challenges force upon you.

I was young, had not yet been through university and still single - all points that my opponents tried to use against me. During my public address, I consistently relied on much of the simple wisdom that I had learned in CLA and impressed many people with my unique approach. People knew me as a down-to-earth guy with integrity, who never made promises he could not keep. They trusted me because I had built up a reputation with them through my previous work.

It's a long story but against all odds, I eventually won. Not because I said the usual political things or made extravagant promises but rather because I related to the common man, and inspired people to believe that a better way was possible - a way in which a leader serves his people, instead of exploiting them.

C.O.S.A. members have always been interested in politics. Perhaps this is because many view it as the most effective way of causing change in society. We live in a 'developing country' and our communities have a long list of needs, especially the youth who are struggling to find their place in society. Many of the older generation of politicians are seen as old-fashion or even corrupt, and the youth have this idea that if they were able to get in those positions they could do a better job and change things. The truth is, getting problems solved in our country cannot be done by just winning a political title - it can only be done by a leader with upright character who leads with a sense of servitude.

This year we had two C.O.S.A. members win Parliamentary elections and they are now Members of Parliament (myself and Simon Aleper). We had one member win L.C, 5 Counselor (Michi Paul), and had four members won L.C.3 Chairman (Okot Peter, Emvy James, Semanda Geoffrey, Isingoma Peter and others who were elected to other local political offices. We also had some who ran for Parliament but didn't go through this time (Ochan Thomas, Edakasi Alfred, Linos Opio, Okoropot Raphael, Kansiime Honest). Now that we have a substantial group of people in political positions, we hope that we will follow through with our ideals and really live out the servant leadership values that we talked about in all our campaigns. We are on the verge of seeing just how much these values are going to their affect various constituencies all around Uganda. It is an exciting time for all of us, and I hope we can do a job above and beyond what we promised our voters.

On a final note - please pray for me, I am still very single! I am searching for a virtuous woman with which to share my life. It's about that time that I should start a family... but I know it is a very important decision so I want to do it in the right way with God's blessing.

A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

When problems come up, stay focused



Class of 2009 - CLA Rwanda

Brendah Kalungi

As one of the first graduates of CLA Rwanda, I have really taken up the vision of maintaining our relationships and staying connected as we move forward with our lives. I am currently studying law at Butare University and making myself as useful as I can be with C.O.S.A. and A.Y.L.F. in Rwanda voluntarily.



Brendah attending the A.Y.L.F. Nairobi 2011 gathering



One thing I have learned in life is that however much we don't want them, problems and challenges will inevitably come our way. They could be at work, at school, in your family, or in your life generally. Challenges are a fundamental part of life, and our growth is defined by how we handle them. Do not think that money will solve your problems for you, do not think that even your family or friends can solve your problems - only you (with God's help) can overcome your challenges. Your life, and the choices you make, are your responsibility.

At times we tend to make selfish deals with God and say, "God, if you don't solve this problem for me, I will know that you are not a loving God." But God is just and fair, He is the same yesterday, today and forever - his presence rules the entire world, and we cannot make such trivial deals with him. He put us here to grow up, and so the most important thing is to have courage and never give up hope that we have been given the strength to succeed. Always do what is right, don't take shortcuts. Keep pushing on and be calm. Remember whatever happens at that time is the right thing and God alone knows why for all things work together for good of those who love Him.

Brothers and sisters, do not look back in regret, or revel in misery. We should always look to the future with hope. Some people avoid responsibility and ask, "why should I do this?" But I encourage you to always ask, "why not?" Success in life is about taking every opportunity we can - even if may seem like a problem at first. I have come to realize that by working through challenges one can learn valuable life lessons. A problem may seem like a road block, but actually it may just be a turning point, or a new chapter in our lives that we are afraid to open to.

At times, the way you see the problem IS the problem. Shift your views, accept what has happened, and discover the good in it all. When you discover the cause of the problem, wake up and make a change. Problems often make us more focused, and you may look back and be surprised at how much you have grown because of this challenge. Keep optimistic, patriotic, and forward looking - don't blame others.

You know, people might always look at me as someone who seems happy all the time, but I also have problems that bother me. What gets me through my hard times is that I know that when I have a problem it is only for a moment, and once it passes I will find happiness again. Tough times do not last, but tough people do, with prayer your challenges will pass.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The internship program started in June 2007 in attempt to improve the competitiveness of our CLA graduates. To this day the program has facilitated over 50 people who have done internships in government agencies, private companies and non-governmental organizations. We have also been involved in organizing several workshops and seminars mainly in the areas of training in basic computing, CV writing, application writing, interview etiquette and tips on general job search process. So far the program has been very successful in aiding our people to find jobs.

How the program works:

A lot of initiative is required from candidates. In order to be considered for internship support they must be focused, and should have a clear idea of what they want to do so that the internship coordinator can help them. Our main criteria is been that the company chosen to intern at must be credible and in the area of the graduate's interest or qualification. The graduates should to seek to intern at a company which will provide relevant experience to them, which would hopefully lead to the company recruiting them if

they perform well. It is not merely a place to pass time, but it should be viewed as an investment.

The application requirements for the program includes: (1) application letter, (2) acceptance letter from the company, (3) detailed CV and a template showing why the intern has chosen that company, (4) his roles while at the company, (5) his long term vision, and (6) his objectives for taking that internship. If you qualify, the internship department will give the intern a monthly stipend to help them with their basic needs such as food, housing and transport to and from work.

During the internship period, we ask the intern to give us a monthly report, and another report at the end of his placement showing how he/she is moving towards achieving the prior stated objectives. At the same time we also ask their supervisor to send us two reports, one in the middle and another at the end of the internship period. To support the intern, the coordinator visits the intern at their place of work once every two months and he talks with the intern and their supervisor to get feedback on how they are fairing.



Owor Micheal Okoya did an internship with the UN Agency for Population in Gulu between June and December 2007. He has since worked with the Nowegean Refugee council and USAID as a coordinator for Northern Uganda

An agreement should be made between the internship department and the company which states that we will financially support our graduate and in return we ask them to commit to give him/her all the necessary/relevant training. At the end of their internship, if they have a place and the intern performed well, we expect the company to recruited on staff, recommend them, or give us an explanation if none of the above two happens.

Conclusion:

We currently have capacity to support about ten interns between now and December and therefore anybody interested should put in their application or seek any assistance from the internship coordinator's office. Also, between August and December 2011, we are going to be resuming trainings(in the areas of job search) at the office and the various universities. Dates will be communicated through the coordinators of the various universities.

All people finishing university now and those who have been out of college for some time and not yet found a job, you are encouraged to utilize this internship program.

COSA CALENDER

17 th June 2011	COSA Coordinators Dinner w/ Timmis Jr.
18 th June 2011	Business Forum Fellowship
23 rd June 2011	Ladies in Transition S2-3
26 th June 2011	Mega -Married Fellowship
16 th July 2011	Arua Mini Retreat
21 st July 2011	Ladies in Transition S2-3
23 rd July 2011	Marrieds' Retreat
30 th July 2011	COSA Professionals Fellowship
13 th Aug 2011	Ladies Gathering
20 th Aug 2011	COSA Coordinators' National retreat
15 th Sept 2011	Ladies in Transition S2-3
2 nd Oct 2011	Fellowship w/ Timmis Sr + Marrieds Dinner
3 – 9 th Oct 2011	AYLF/NPB Gatherings
28 th -29 th Oct	Proposed mini retreat in Soroti
17 th Nov 2011	Ladies in Transition S2-3
20 th Dec 2011	Couples Annual Dinner
4 th Dec 2011	COSA Annual Dinner
10 th Dec 2011	Ladies Special Night

COSA COORDINATORS

CLA Uganda

1996 Boys	Ojok Philip	0711877777
1997 Boys	Ongopa Ronald	0772409455
1998a Boys	Ogwal Richard	0772697584
1998b Boys	Odware Steven	0773291823
1999 Boys	Makumbi Semei	0772353289
2000 Boys	Mutaawe Richard	0773001936
2001 Boys	Assimwe Venacio	0782384459
2002 Boys	Mbaziira Josephats	0772084745
2003 Boys	Esungeti Simon	0712585281
2004 Boys	Orwamo Justine	0782594487
2005 Boys	Michi Paul	0772030701
2005 Girls	Babirye Prossy	0782248041
2006 Boys	Ruyonza Enock	0772987057
2006 Girls	Nabuuma Mary	0773357069
2007 Boys	Lukyamuzi Charles	0776107732
2007 Girls	Nanfuka Margret	0788288073
2008 Boys	Nyeko Denish	0778377503
2008 Girls	Nangoma Hellen	0783008704
2009 Boys	Otto Bosco	0777040494
2009 Girls	Kyesige Harriet	0785190159
2010 Boys	Munanura Ivan	0785134050
2010 Girls	Owase Rosemary	0773967675

Ekitangaala S.S.

Chairman	Eseru Sam	0782001468
2007	Lubwama Javis	0771487614
2008 Girls	Nanziri Janet	0774486804
2008 Boys	Nkambo James	0776661714
2009 Girls	Kakwezi Agnes	0784517571
2009 Boys	Oyati Anthony	0783215689
2010 Girls	Kemigisha Janice	0773960870
2010 Boys	Maximillian Mukwatsibwe	0779879825
2010 Girls	Akampulira Janes	0788277585

University Groups (Ug)

MAK	Labalpiny Charles	0774755791
	Adongpiny Harriet	0782485846
	Bwanga Emma (ekosa)	0773384085
KYU	Othienno Henry	0774943330
	Nambozo Annet	0775029484
Nsamizi	Lukwamuzi charles	0776107732
	Enyaru Mary	0771820298
UCU	Kiryia Michael	0773133100
	Wandera Rose	0772547542
MUBS	Kabugo Fredrick	0777135455
	Mutesi Marion	0773357069
Sorority	Akello Susan	0777363536
	Ahurira Mercy	0783674825

CLA Rwanda

2009 Girls	Jeninah	0785794795
2009 Boys	Modeste	0783218289
2010 Girls	Chantal	0785246766
2010 Boys	Gerald	0785767397

Regional Groups

Northern	Lapwode Francis	0774485888
	Onapa James	0782652657
West Nile	Dema Peter	0752842114
Eastern	Amolo Nelson	078202558
Lira	Eluku Michael	0777075710
Ranch	Hone Richard	0782010979

University Groups (Rw)

Butare	Brendah	0788641365
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COSA COMMUNITY LAND

The COSA community land project was started 3 years ago, however the idea had been around since the first class of boys graduated from CLA. After years of brainstorming, in 2008 we were finally able to acquire a small amount of funding to buy an initial plot of land in Matuga, 40 minutes north of Kampala. This project is a revolving loan, so once the first group re-paid most of the money for purchasing their plots, a second group was formed and a second plot of land was bought not far from the first group. The idea is to live in community as part of the strategy to support our long term commitment of maintaining a lifelong brotherhood and sisterhood of friends united in Jesus.

The most important aspect of this project is communal housing – buying a large piece of land, and subdividing among members who intend to live on the property. To this end, the basic current criteria are as follows;

- People interested in living in a community together should form a group with a minimum of five people.
- They look for land which is big enough to be shared by all the members in the group.
- The authenticity of the land title and potential sale must be rigorously researched.
- At this point, they can come to approach the committee and get a loan of up to 30 million shillings (max). This is contingent on the previous group having paid back their loan in full.
- Before accessing the money the group must promise to pay back the loan to Cornerstone within a period of not more than 2 years from the day they receive the money.
- They then purchase the land and divide it in equal plots and develop it according to how they agree.
- The earlier this money is repaid, the sooner the next group can begin their community!

The above criteria is currently being reviewed by the new COSA executive and is subject to change in the near future. Any changes will be communicated promptly to all members.

THE MYTH OF BIG WEDDINGS

Does a wedding have to leave you broke?

Should you compromise your values because you fear the costs?!

Here are some thoughts on how to have a simple and joyous wedding...



Wilter
Ololia



Josephats
Mbaziira



Sarah
22 Ojok

In our African context, a big wedding is considered a kind of 'rite of passage' which signifies growth and independence from parents and marks the beginning of a lifelong relationship with another person. For many, it is a symbol that two people are ready and capable of starting a family - and ready for all the extra costs that are entailed: building a home, raising children, and prospering together. So, there is a lot of pressure to put on a big show that displays the power you have as a new couple. A wedding these days can cost up to 2 years worth of someone's salary! This is absurd and makes no practical economic sense. All of this pressure to put on great big weddings has built up over the years into something that today is unrealistic for young people, and is actually having an adverse affect on our moral society by discouraging other couples from formalizing their commitments to one another. If we are going to move forward in a responsible way, we need to refocus and remind ourselves what the point of all this is.

Marriage is an age-old tradition that is found in most cultures around the world. In its basic form, it is a practice that sanctifies a relationship between two people before God, their family and closest friends. It holds people accountable to their highest and best intentions to one another, and creates a community of council for when times get rough. Marriage is an institution that forms the backbone of civil society - it is a formal way of creating stable and nurturing families; and in agreement to stay faithful to one another, it keeps peoples sexual desires from rampaging around and distracting them from their real purpose on earth.

Humans were not meant to be alone - by nature we are relational beings, and the act of union with someone else is often a big aspect of having a fulfilling life during our time on earth. Unless people have taken a vow of celibacy for religious or other reasons, no one really wants to be alone all their lives. It is often said that 'success is meaningless if we don't have someone to share it with'. To this end, people by nature get together and share their lives with others.

However, in fear of commitment, the pressure, or the high cost of having weddings people are getting more and more reluctant to formalize their relationships. They end up cohabitating with people, however, without the support and accountability of their community, this increases the risk that they will fall apart easily.

Relationships are not easy - they take commitment and people need a community around them who will help them through the hard times. Sometimes people genuinely do love those they are living with, and want to be with them for the long-haul... please, take responsibility for your life! We need to let go of all the things about marriage that are just cultural 'baggage', and focus on the real point that we highlighted earlier: sanctifying a relationship before God, your family and closest friends who will hold you accountable to your highest and best intentions for one another.

Here are some of thoughts we think can be very helpful in making a very nice but affordable wedding:

- The first step is to get a job or something that generates income before you plan to wed because wedding is just a beginning to marriage, you must be able to sustain yourself afterwards - you can't spend everything you won and start things off broke!

- Once you begin working - then live within your means, and start SAVING for the wedding. If you start off by trying to buy a car, land etc. - the list will keep growing and you may never have anything for a wedding. Your marriage is more important than amassing things.

- Getting married is like communal digging (to use an African analogy), if you want people to dig in your garden, you must participate in digging other peoples' gardens. In other words, if you are not currently volunteering your services in other people's wedding preparations - it's highly unlikely that you will get anyone to volunteer their services for yours one day.

- Take time to prepare (proper planning prevents poor performance). Talk to your fam-

ily and close friends, even before you make a marriage commitment. This helps get the ball rolling and lets you know what your options are for pulling things together.

- On this same note, identify people within your family of friends (such as COSA), who have been credited to provide services at much cheaper cost compared to others. Get information well in advance about where to get items at an affordable price. Sharing knowledge and information is one of the best ways to keep costs down – there are many people who have done it before, whose experience you should learn from.

- Ladies, you have a huge role to play when it comes to your introduction (the traditional / cultural part of the wedding). Give guidance to your family about the financial status of you fiancé. BE REALISTIC. Discuss in length the importance of not milking every single coin from the man you are going to spend the rest of your life with – he should be someone you love, not someone you are trying to exploit!

- Dressing: For men you can go to a tailor in 'Kiyembe' and make a suit for 120,000 - 200,000 Uganda Shillings. Then you can buy shoes, shirts and a tie (all combined) for less than 100,000. This is much cheaper than buying an imported suit which are no less than 600,000/=, and ultimately serves the same purpose. For the lady, there are many options for gowns and they include buying and hiring - hiring is always cheaper.

- There are many churches and religious buildings these days - some charge a fee, and others don't. Be smart about the choosing your venue – remember, it is just building, it doesn't need to be fancy! Sometimes you can get a discount for having the wedding and reception in the same place, so ask the people in charge what your options are. The Fellowship Hall at the Head Office is always an economical option.

- Bridal Cars: the cheapest option is to borrow cars from family and friends – as long as they are similar in color or make- instead of hiring cars. Remember – its just one day! People will never remember if you drove a Corrola or a Corsa and God could care less. Also keep your bridal team small to reduce on the number of cars you need.

- Food: It is customary to provide a big meal during the reception. The problem is, as these functions get bigger and bigger, the food alone can be one of the biggest costs you have! The cheapest way out is to have food cooked so that you just buy the items but this can back fire if you don't have insiders to do it for you. Market price for an average wedding cake can cost above 1 million Uganda Shillings, but by networking your relationships, you can get the same for half the price if you know someone who bakes cakes. But remember, the fewer people you invite to the wedding – the less you have to feed. Some modern weddings do not even provide food – just snacks such as a somosa, a soda, a chapatti, and some biscuits. This is fine, although some more traditional people might disagree, food is not the point, nor is it the most important part!

- Music: Just as with food, there are many options, and some of the most realistic involve finding talent among your community relationships to find someone who could perform quality songs for a cheaper cost. We also have a Public Address system in Cornerstone that members can access.

- Consider having the wedding in your village. It is cheaper to have a 'posh' wedding in the village than a 'simple' wedding in the city. You could host more people, and have more food... the only extra challenge would be transport out of town. Also, another radical idea is just to combine the traditional wedding with the church wedding! Bring a priest to the traditional wedding and have him sanctify your marriage there.

- Consider having joint weddings. You may not feel comfortable doing a joint church ceremony, but identifying a common ground to share your reception with another couple could turn into a joyous occasion and greater celebration.

- You may also explore the idea of having a traditional wedding, then skipping the church wedding and having a civil wedding instead. Again, REMEMBER - the main point is in sanctifying a relationship before God, your family and closest friends who will hold you accountable to your highest and best intentions for one another.

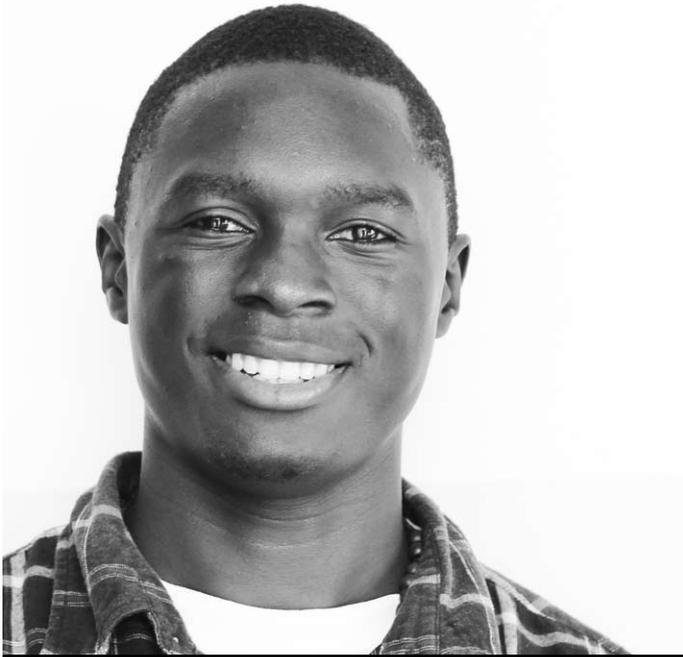
A successful wedding is not defined by the amount of money spent. It is not defined by the number of people who attend, nor is it defined by the type of food served or cars driven. But, it is defined by the JOY it brings to you, your family, and close friends. A real father or mother should be happiest to see their children marry a good partner who loves and respects them... not someone willing to pay the highest price! Do you want an expensive wedding and have nothing to start with as a family?

In a nutshell, 'there are many ways of killing a rat' but you should choose one that requires less effort. Young people these days should not get scared of doing things the right way because of cost - you can pull off a wedding that you can afford if you take into consideration the suggestions mentioned here. But most importantly, being part of other people's functions, is the best way to convince them that they should be involved in yours. Also do not try and compare yourself with others, do not try and be bigger or better than everyone else... keep in mind the point of the whole thing.

Above all, it is important to take responsibility for your relationships. If you are in love with someone, and maybe even cohabitating, please, just go ahead and get married... do not fear involving your community, your family, and God – it will only make your relationship stronger. Desire, romance, and passion will only get a relationship so far, to be really fruitful, it needs the support of others. "The main thing is to Keep the main thing the main thing." In regard to weddings – the main things is to sanctify your relationship before God, your family and closest friends who will hold you accountable to your highest and best intentions for one another.

TRANSPLANTING THE APPROACH

Extending the vision into Uganda's Catholic Community



Class of 2007 - EKITANGAALA S.S.

Jarvis Lubwama

It is amazing how something can be transformed from a burden into a blessing in such a short amount of time. A few years ago, I was a high school student at Ekitangaala High School (Cornerstone's high school that is open to the public and teaches the same discipleship that is being taught in the Cornerstone Leadership Academy). At the time, attending the Character Development and Discipleship classes appeared to me as an extra burden on top of all the other work we had to do for school. At first I could not see the full transforming power of the principles being taught to us. However, despite not being so interested in the lectures, I could really see a difference in the lives of many of the people who worked in the Cornerstone community. To me they really led extraordinary lives. So, after graduating, I wanted to work at the Head Office to get closer to, and be mentored by, these people.

We often say that, our vision is more 'caught' than it is 'taught', and this was very true in my life. It wasn't really the teachings in High School that attracted me - it was more that there was something that caught my attention in the lives of others who I respected and admired.

The environment at the Cornerstone Head Office really gave me courage and opened me up to thinking outside of my traditional and cultural box. During the last 2 years working here I feel I have found a real sense of personal direction, and been shown the hope and love that Jesus has for me. I believe that each one of us has a specific

role to play in this world, and much of it has to do with our backgrounds - where God placed us in society to be his 'salt' and 'light'.

Filled with this passion, I really longed to share it with other young people who, like me, were from a Catholic background. It was at this point that I decided to revise those old lectures and figure out what they had really been about. As I did this, it was like I had suddenly discovered a gold mine. I really began to get the concepts and was also able to contextualize the principles within my Catholic background. Once I realized that this thing is not just a 'Cornerstone thing', or even 'Jarvis' thing', but it is really 'God's thing' - I got inspired to dream really big. I came up with the idea to introduce these concepts to students in Catholic schools all around the country.

I started by reviewing all the Cornerstone material and editing it slightly with more practical examples from the Catholic tradition. This took a long time, but I just did it slowly as I also talked to many other people I knew from my faith background who might be interested in helping in the work. As I talked to more and more people I eventually got connected to a young lady named Noelle Gornik from the US who was very excited to work with me on this great idea.

Noelle and I are currently making steady progress in our vision. We have been having meetings with several prominent officials in the Catholic Church outlining what we wanted to do and so far all have been very supportive. This support from them has really encouraged us to move forward in our work and at this point in time we are just finishing up the first year's worth of our curriculum for S.5 students. In August we shall have a Teachers Training Seminar where representatives from participating schools will learn about the vision and how to implement it in their schools. Of course, we will have to constantly maintain the relationships with schools and ensure that they are staying on track with the material so there will be many visits and check-ups as the program unfolds. We are starting with just one Diocese as a pilot project and once we fine tune the program we want to get it going in all the other Dioceses in Uganda.

Really understanding the vision of Cornerstone and applying it to the unique circumstances of your life is not something quick and easy - it takes time. Once it begins to resonate in your life, then you begin taking ownership over it and seeing how it applies to your unique background. It turns out to be something bigger than you could ever imagine, because it is so much bigger than just yourself. This is a vision for a better Uganda, and better world, and we all have to play our part in finding our place and taking responsibility for what we have been given to work with.

Cornerstone's Long Term Strategic Plan

In our strategic planning process we are seeking to integrate all of our various initiatives including: COSA Alumni Program, Youth Corps, African Youth Leadership Forum, Prayer Breakfast Fellowships, the Cornerstone Leadership Academies, the Ekitangaala Schools and all other initiatives that we support -under a common focus.

The underlying foundation of all we are doing is simply to promote in the people and societies of this region - the values embodied in Jesus' conception of the "Kingdom of God coming on earth." These are values such as harmony, reconciliation, unity, order, justice, wholeness and personal transformation - that leads to social transformation.

• **Our Core Focus Is:** Youth leadership development. We are empowering a movement of young servant leaders - men of integrity and women of virtue. They are taking positions of influence within all sectors of society while maintaining life-long brotherhood and sisterhood with each other, in the spirit of Jesus - across all ethnic and religious divisions.

• **The Character Qualities we Champion:** A genuine commitment to the central teachings and character qualities exemplified by Jesus including:

1. Being ambassadors of reconciliation across all that is dividing humanity
2. Maintaining high moral integrity
3. Portraying Servant & Transformational Leadership
4. Being resourceful and hard working
5. Commitment to excellence
6. Balance in all spheres of life
7. Covenant relationship with a few others
8. Practicing the spiritual disciplines of prayer, study, fellowship and service/witness.

• **Our Core Values:** Our core values flow out of what Jesus called - the sum of all the Law and the Prophets:

First, To love God with all your heart, mind and soul. This is a personal dedication to grow in the knowledge, love and likeness of God. It implies, a love of life as a gift from God and a desire to make one's life count for something in the eternal scheme of things.

Secondly, To love your neighbor as your self. This implies an understanding of the Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. The distinguishing sign of the followers of Jesus is love for one another. It leads to working for unity across the dividing lines of faith and culture. It also leads to compassion for the least, the last and the lost.

• **Our Organizational Culture:** The broadest aspect of our vision involves a world-wide family of friends - who find common ground in the message and ideas of Jesus. We look beyond race, tribe, religious or political affiliation and recognizing each other first as brothers and sisters. We do not view relationships as a temporary convenience but seek to maintain a life long commitment to love and support each other.

• Three Stages of our Work:

1. Stage One - Maintaining the life-transforming learning environments of our programs that serve as the entry points into the movement. We bring young people into loving, family-like environments combined with teachings that lead toward individual - spiritual transformation. This takes place in conjunction with equipping them with formal education, leadership principles and life skills. The majority of these young people are in our schools which combine a top-quality academic curriculum with an in-depth discipleship curriculum based on the principles, precepts and person of Jesus.

2. Stage Two - Supporting our young people as they go on to higher education after high school to stay together and also assisting them with career development initiatives to get them into positions of service and influence within society.

3. Stage Three - Maintaining fellowship/support groups for career people to walk through life committed to the relationships and principles we hold in common.

Yes, it is a rather ambitious and audacious plan. But apparently that is one of the key elements that leads to the kind of initiatives that create an impact in this world. There was a study done at the Stanford Graduate School of Business on the most 'visionary companies' in the US and it was published in a book titled: *Built to Last: Successful Habits of a Visionary Company*. Prominent among the habits was committing one's organization to extraordinarily ambitious, barely attainable missions. The principle seems to be: If you shoot for the moon - even if you miss you are more likely to land among the stars.

Of course many people have dreamt big dreams and failed for various reasons. But the research says that those undertakings or groups that have made a significant impact - had audacious visions. Now on the other hand - many big, audacious visions are the products of somebody's big, audacious ego and they are not built steadily and faithfully on small steps. Many people try to run before they learn to walk and they fall flat on their face.

Invariably the kind of work that stands the test of time and brings glory to God - requires faithful with the small things. Our ancient scriptures tell us not to despise small beginnings. I think that is what Mother Teresa meant when she said. "We are not trying to do big things - we just do the small things in a big way." Yet, with time her ministry grew to where it ended up helping thousands of people in many countries.

Anyway - our vision is really an extension of someone else's vision. That is why it is audacious, it is really an extension of Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God - coming on earth as it is in Heaven. And, that is **definitely** audacious. It implies the total transformation of the current world order into the Divine Order. And the vision

is that one day "The Kingdom of this world will become the Kingdom of our God - and He will reign for ever and ever."

So, really the vision of Cstone - is simply our small expression of that 'Kingdom vision.' A manifestation of it - here and now in our generation and in our immediate context - Uganda, the neighboring countries of East Africa and Beyond. With God there always has to be a Beyond.

Our Long Term Strategic Plan is all about *Equipping and Advancing a Movement of Servant Leaders - as the Cornerstone Mission Statement puts it. It is not our job to define what our member do- but to inspire in them God's vision for a new kind of soceity and to help equip them with the skills, education and principles they can use to find their unique point of engagement in God's kingdom.

All true leadership begins with Self Leadership. We are all leaders - and every day is filled with leadership opportunities. Let's say you walk into a meeting room and found the chairs disorganized - you could have become a leader in that situation and straightened things out. We can be leaders in everything we do - in our work - in our daily lives. The US President Harry Truman used to say that leadership was "The art of persuading people to do what they should have done in the first place."

From the book "Heroic Leadership" mentioned on the front page the author lists 4 points of the Jesuit contribution to leadership wisdom - here they are:

1. We're all leaders and we're leading all the time - well or poorly - because we influence those around us.
2. Leadership springs from within. It's about - "who I am" as much as what I do"
3. Leadership is not an act. It is my life, a way of living.
4. I never complete the task of becoming a leader. It's an ongoing process

And so it appears that with this movement of Servant Leaders our greatest impact or maximum influence - will not be made by something like an army or political party marching with loud music and banners. It's more like a **silent revolution**. It will be the combined influence of each one of us acting faithfully, with integrity, with virtue, with kingdom values: Being the salt, the light, the yeast and the good seed wherever you end up in life.

Those are the 4 metaphors that Jesus uses to describe the advancement of his movement. **Salt, light, yeast and the good seed** that was sown among the bad. All of these 4 things do their work quietly - don't they? They penetrate their environments almost in an invisible way. But, salt that stays in it's container, light which is covered, yeast in its container, seed in storage - is useless until it is taken out and applied where it is needed most.

Yes there will be some big events we do under the banner of Cornerstone - but our greatest influence over time will be in the salt, yeast, light and seed that our members - each in their capacity going out there and making a difference in the places where God puts us.

What are some of the Unique Qualities that Cornerstone People have to offer?

1. Good Character - Integrity, virtue, honesty, reliability, dependability -
2. Unity - we are inclusive, we bring people together across all that divides people
3. Penetration - we know how to fit into circles that are resistant to conventional religious approaches
4. Kingdom of God mentality - we operate holistically in every sector of society for positive change
5. Jesus centered focus - we lift up the principles, precepts, and person of Jesus as our ideal, as the common ground despite whatever religious backgrounds we come from.

That is the Brand of Salt we are producing. But, lets not forget Jesus also said that Salt which loses its saltiness is no longer good for anything. And that is another challenge: Not only is the salt to be applied in the place where it can give its flavor - but it also has to retain its saltiness to be of any value.

"our vision is really an extension of someone else's vision. That is why it is audacious - it is really an extension of Jesus' vision"

And this brings us to one of the challenges we are facing with COSA: **How to keep people salty**. In other words: How to make sure the Men of Integrity - retain their integrity and the Women of Virtue retain their virtue. This is really a question for the Spiritual Department of life. And for insight into that we can revisit one of the foundational teachings from our Discipleship Lessons. The lessons on "The Wheel". The wheel has 4 spokes - First, there is Prayer; second the Word or Study; thirdly Fellowship and the fourth is: Serving/Being a Witness. These 4 spiritual disciplines are mandatory for anyone to "stay salty" or to keep moving spiritually. They must be active in our life. But if you look at them you will notice that for 3 of them you do not need others to do them. But for Fellowship - it can't be done by yourself alone. We all need to be meeting together with a few others for support and accountability. Such small group fellowships are vital for the individual spiritual life and also vital for the strength and integrity of the larger, collective structure. If you look at the building you are in right now and if you could see inside those walls - what would you find? Small bricks bound together. Anything big and strong in this world is made up of smaller units. Just as the human body is made of individual cells linked together to make organs, and the health of those organs determines the health of the larger human being - so will it be true for our movement.

So it's like we have 3 Major challenges - in Cstone:

1. How to develop servant leaders.
2. How to get them into places of influence.
3. How to keep the salt - 'salty' or how to make sure that when people get into the system they are a positive influence on the system rather than being influenced by the system.

1. So, how do we develop servant leaders? Our method of leadership development is to get our young people to internalize the Principles, the Habits, the character qualities and values of Jesus that we teach.

2. And if that really happens then the second one: How to get them into places of influence – will largely happen on its own accord: “The cream rises to the top”

3. And lastly: How to keep the salt - salty? This requires keeping ourselves and each other practicing the 4 spiritual disciplines of “The Wheel” – praying, studying, serving – but also meeting for fellowship – in small support groups wherever we are.

In closing, I want to finish with some practical thoughts related to organizing and holding together the Small Groups or the Fellowship Groups we create in COSA. Because I clearly see now that this is one of the key aspects for the success of our movement.

One of the Groups that have really developed this CELL GROUP concept to the max is one of the big churches in America – called Willow Creek Community Church. This group has 18,000 members meeting in 2,700 small groups. They began in 1975 – so they have been at it a lot longer than us. So here are some lessons we can draw from their experience.

2 Major Factors – for Sustaining Successful Small Groups

1. Successful fellowship groups are based on Authentic Relationships – there has to be a culture of love, support and trust in order to keep people coming.

2. Successful fellowship groups are reliant on constant mobilization by Trained & Committed Coordinators.

*How much time is being given to initially develop the capacity of your coordinators?

*How are these coordinators being coached and supported?

*What events/activities did you use to inspire and encourage them along the way?

*What resources were available to them? (for communication, transport, outlines for discussion, etc.)

3 Characteristics of effective Group Coordinators.

1. The Right Heart – Some one who loves God, loves People and loves our Vision

2. The Right Character – Some one who is respected by others, is a role model, has a good reputation.

3. The Right Expectations – Some one who has clear and realistic expectations of what it takes to mobilize, support and sustain a group over time.

4 Broad Categories of the kinds of groups that people are attracted to:

1. Age or Life stage Groups – For people facing similar sets of issues/challenges and seeking peer support.

2. Interest Based – For people who share a common passion, profession or field of knowledge they want to discuss with others.

3. Task Based Groups – For people who want to serve, have a project or activity

4. Care-Based Groups – For people who relational support, or need help overcoming an addiction or trauma. Or simply people who want a caring community environment.

Another way to look at it is to note that there are 3 different personality types or categories of people and that is reflected in the kind of group they want to be part of:

1. Relational types – they just like to be with people, socialize

2. Knowledge types – they are like talking about issues and ideas - Intellectual discussion.

3. Activists – they want to do something

In COSA we have several categories of Coordinators such as:

1. Class Coordinators – for each graduating class year that comes out of the Academies

2. University Campus Coordinators

3. Regional Coordinators -for different parts of the country

4. Support Group Coordinators – business, politics, justice/law, ministry, performing arts

In summary, the success of what we are attempting to do will in large-part be dependant on how effective our coordinators are in holding people together. This will ensure that they benefit from the accountability, encouragement and synergies that come when people stay committed to each other and to a shared vision over time. United we stand, divided we fall.

“It’s more like a silent revolution. It will be the combined influence of each one of us acting faithfully, with integrity, with virtue, with Kingdom Values.”

Conclusion:

We are still in the early stages of this COSA vision. We are learning what works and what does not. We need to put a lot more emphasis on our Class and Small Group Coordinators – this seems to be the key to a strong movement. I am inspired by so many of our young people – the way they have chosen to influence their communities – and the way they are trying to their ‘saltiness.’

We still at the early stages of our movement but the way forward is getting clearer. And in any case we should never stop learning and growing, I am one of those who believe that even heaven will be a place of growth. As E. Stanley Jones wrote in his biography “The Song of Ascents:” “I have been ascending, and ascending and shall forever be ascending. I believe that even heaven is a place of growth, the finite forever approaching the infinite.”

THE WAY FORWARD

Thoughts from Tim

Our small movement of servant leaders in East Africa is, partly, an outgrowth of another movement that began in the US over 50 years ago – sometimes called the Prayer Breakfast movement. There are eight cores aspects of our vision and methods which we share with them:

• Eight Core Aspects of our Work:

1. Long Term Relationships: We are a circle of friends that goes back several decades in some cases. We often call it ‘a family of friends.’ The word family refers to the long term committed ‘nature’ of our relationships and friends - speaks to the ‘quality’ of our relationships.

2. It's A Wide Vision but grounded in Small Groups:

We have members coming from very many different nations – it's a very wide vision – but at the same time the foundation of the whole thing is based on friends gathering regularly in small groups for fellowship, for accountability, for partnership and to pray for their nations, their local leaders and the leaders of the world.

3. We focus on Jesus as the Common Ground:

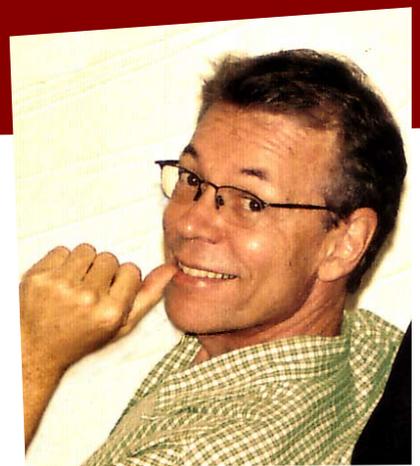
Any movement needs to have a strong ideal or shared values to hold its members together. Many initiatives that try to promote unity across religious divides – can often end up with the ‘lowest common denominator’ when trying to create common ground. We are seeking the highest common denominator and so we reference our core values and methods to the principles, precepts and person of Jesus. His life and his teachings are respected universally – irrespective of religious affiliation.

4. We work across all that is dividing humanity:

Nearly all of the conflicts and wars in the world today are being fought because of religious or ideological differences and ethnic differences. A big part of our vision – is to the kind of people who can cross these divides – who can ‘stand in the gap’ – who can love ‘the enemy’ and love our neighbors – the way Jesus taught.

5. It's a call for Personal Transformation: We can't give to others what we do not first possess. All of us are “works in progress” ... but we are experiencing changes in ourselves as we follow this Way of Jesus.

This increases the more we reflect his thinking, his way of speaking, his actions – his way of love. The hope for the transformation of society – lies with transformed individuals.



6. It's about faith for a Better World: The world in its present state is not aligned with our highest and best values – those that have been passed down to us through the wisdom in our sacred texts. This is why we see wars, injustice, poverty, crime and so forth. We have faith that as human beings making up the family of nations in the world – we can do much

better than this. We need a vision that is big and inspiring enough for people to buy into with whole-hearted commitment. A vision for a new way of living. This is what Jesus' concept of the ‘kingdom of God’ coming on earth was all about. It's about a new kind of society based on values such as harmony, unity, order, justice, wholeness – leading toward: “peace on earth - goodwill toward man.”

7. We Focus on the Essentials: At the time of Jesus – the religion of his people had expanded the original 10 Commandments given to them by God through Moses – to over 600 commandments. Jesus boiled them down to two. He said “Love God with all your heart, mind and soul and Love your neighbor as your self.” This he said was the Sum of

all.....the other commandments. It's the sum of all “the law and the prophets.” These are the two greatest commandments. They are the main thing. And we feel that the main thing - is to try and keep the main thing - the main thing.

8. We work with existing Leaders and developing young Leaders - but only have one Leader that we give our lives to and that is Jesus:

One of the earlier followers of Jesus – Paul was given a special mission: “This man is my chosen instrument to take my name....before the Gentiles and their kings...” Acts 9:15. Our group of friends has sought to carry on this mission in regards the “kings” - or the leaders of our world. Leaders hold enormous influence – for better or worse - over vast numbers of people including billions of the poor – “the least of these” - for whom Jesus has a special concern.

