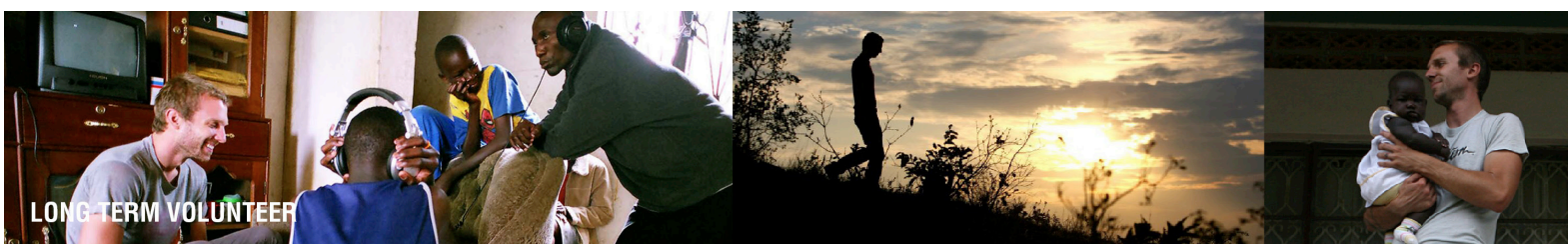


EDUCATE. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.

PROJECT FOCUS

2008 was filled with exciting new developments which has given us momentum as we move into the new year.

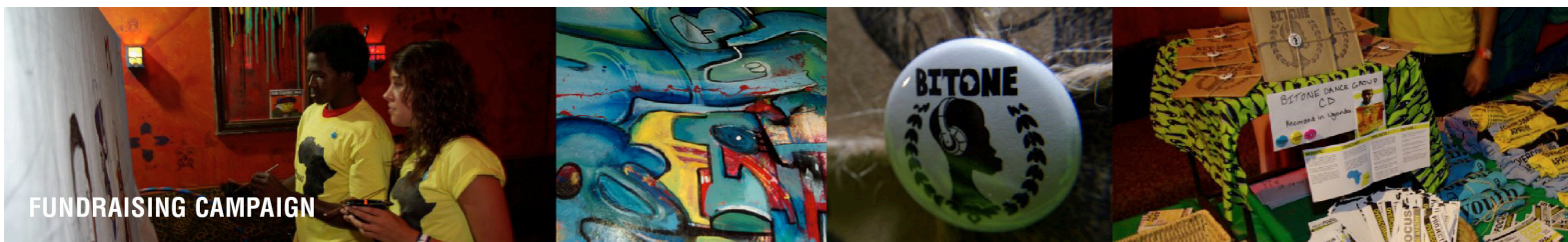
We'd like to take this opportunity to update you on our progress, upcoming work, and most importantly, thank you for your continued support.



In order to bring sustainable development to the Lyantonde community of Uganda, East Africa, we decided that it was imperative to have a volunteer based there for one year.

Grant Buhr, an artist and sound engineer who has been with Project FOCUS since January 2007, volunteered to be the Lyantonde Project Coordinator. Grant arrived in Uganda this past October and has been making great progress on our first development project at Prince Primary School.

Keep up with more detailed updates on our blog: <http://www.projectfocusprogress.blogspot.com/>



In order to send and support Grant as our long-term volunteer throughout his stay in Uganda, we launched a fundraising campaign that raised over \$10,000 in a few months. The fundraising events included:

An event at the **Funky Buddha Lounge** in Chicago in which a small photo display and community art painting accompanied dance and music performances that inspired many of us to stay up and have fun into the early hours of the morning.

Projections and Reflections, an exhibit that we hosted at Artistic Jeanius in Chicago in which art created by Project FOCUS members in response to their experiences in Uganda was exhibited. Many attendees also participated by contributing multi-cultural food and desserts helping to make it a wonderful and delicious evening.

A half-marathon run by Project FOCUS members, Grant, Rhea, and Harishi as well as two of Grant's friends from Minneapolis, Kari and Abe Hanson. Two fundraising events were hosted by Grant's friends in Los Angeles, CA and in Minneapolis, MN to support Grant's work in Uganda. Special thanks to Winter Byington, Jessica Byington, Adam Edenborgh, Brad Howe, Jacob Page, Trevor Richley, Jesse and Allsion Johnson, as well as many others who made these events possible!

We have also received many checks in the mail and donations through **Global Giving** (<http://www.globalgiving.com/pr/1700/proj1669a.html>), which have contributed greatly to our efforts. If you joined us at any of our events we hope that you enjoyed yourself and were able to learn more about our work. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed their time, talent, and money to the work of Project FOCUS!

Thank you so much for your support!



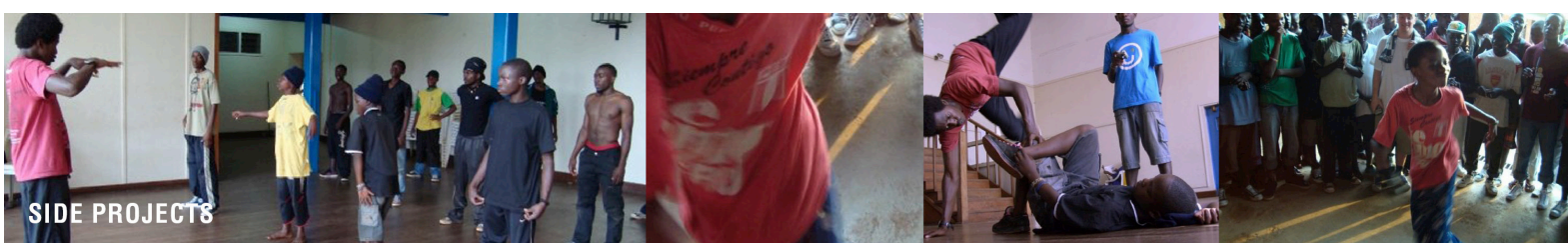
Project FOCUS members, Meg Wolf and Madelene Griffin, presented at the **American Art Therapy Association's (AATA)** annual conference. Leading a workshop gave them the opportunity to share their experience of facilitating creative projects in Uganda with other art therapists and opened up conversations regarding international art therapy.

The Bronfman Center at NYU hosted "Project FOCUS: Creative Dialogues," an exhibit that featured photographs taken in Lyantonde, Uganda by Project FOCUS member Gloria Bernard.

On December 1st Project FOCUS participated in a **World AIDS Day** event in Boston organized by the AIDS Multicultural Committee and AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts. They displayed quilts made by participants of the Common Threads: HIV/AIDS Quilt Project in Lyantonde and spoke about AIDS in Uganda as a way to educate and inspire audiences from the African American community.

During Spring of 2008, Project FOCUS displayed the HIV/AIDS quilts and photos from Lyantonde at two exhibitions organized by **Salon Nouveau in Roxbury, MA** in an effort to engage the Boston artist community.

Special thanks to Daris Jasper at **Artistic Jeanius** (myspace.com/artisticjeanuis) for hosting The Awareness Ribbon Exhibit, which was geared toward raising social consciousness. Mr. Jasper kindly chose Project FOCUS as the organization to receive a percentage of the proceeds from the evening.



During his first trip to Uganda in 2007, Project FOCUS member Grant Buhr helped to record and produce a full length album for **Bitone Troupe** (<http://www.myspace.com/bitonetroupe>), a very talented group of performers who are a part of the Bitone Children's Home, an orphanage in Kampala, Uganda. Since then, Bitone Troupe has received an encouraging amount of attention from the music world and CD orders have come in from all around the world. Proceeds from the CD sales assisted several members of Bitone Troupe in traveling to Ethiopia in November to participate in the Eastern Africa Theatre Institute's annual festival. Proceeds are also being used to purchase performance costumes and sound equipment so that Bitone can sustain themselves through regular performances nationally and internationally. CDs are currently sold-out, but more will be available through the Project FOCUS website soon!

Project FOCUS: **India**, an offshoot of our work in Uganda, was started by three UIC students Adam Kuranishi, Nina Gupta, and Dan Schneider. This past summer the group established an educational program for the children of Dehradun, India, incorporating a photography project as a catalyst for critical reflection and creative thought. To read more about their project, visit their blog at <http://projectfocusindia.wordpress.com/>

Jonathan St. Clair, founder of **Stick in Move Dance Crew in Chicago**, is currently volunteering his time in **Kampala, Uganda** where he is partnering with the organization Breakdance Uganda with the hopes of building a cultural exchange between youth in Chicago and Kampala through HIP-HOP. You can stay updated on his project through his blog at <http://www.inlightschronicle.blogspot.com/>

Project FOCUS member Roy Marin and volunteer film editor Dylan Kimbrell have been working diligently to complete a documentary of Project FOCUS's work in Uganda. The film highlights the work of a small grass-roots organization and its tangible impact on a targeted community. We anticipate screening the documentary at our exhibit in the spring.

In addition to the documentary, Ian Bogere, a filmmaker born in Uganda and living in Chicago, is working on a short promotional video for Project FOCUS that will help us generate interest and financial resources for our upcoming exhibit. The promotional video will be featured in a film premiere event called "Awareness Beyond Borders: Identifying With the Needs of Others Beyond My Comfort Zone." Two additional films directed by Ian will also be screened - first, Sudan Underlined, a documentary about genocide in Sudan, and second, the film When Grass Withers a fictional story about post-colonial Uganda. We'll send out more information about the event when it becomes available.

As a social entrepreneurship venture, Project FOCUS member Meg Wolf facilitated a project in which adolescents participating in an art therapy program at Seattle Children's Home used printmaking stencils made by students at Prince Primary School in Uganda to create greeting cards that were purchased by IntraVex, a Chicago based cooperation. All proceeds from the cards will support the development project at Prince Primary School.



We have recently completed the paper work to apply for our **501-(c)3** tax exemption status through the IRS. With this status, we can directly accept tax-deductible donations. The arduous application process would not have been completed without the time and expertise of lawyers Richard Blackmon Jr. and Erica Minchella. Thank you!

Project FOCUS is fortunate to have gathered a diverse and experienced **Board of Advisors** that provide guidance and critical thought on our work as we continue to grow. Members of our Board include: Christine Bozlak - PhD candidate at UIC in the Community Health Science Division, Maternal and Child Health Programs; Warswa Damulira - President of the Chicago/Uganda Community; Lon Kaufman - Vice Provost for Planning and Programs at UIC; David Marques - Technology and Media Coordinator at the Southwest Youth Collaborative; and Erica Crohn Minchella - Attorney and current President of the Far North Rotary Club of Chicago. For more extensive biographies visit the contact us page of our website: <http://projectfocus.org/contact.php>

With our responsibilities growing and the number of volunteers in Chicago shrinking, we sent out an open request for a volunteer to serve as the Exhibit Coordinator for the upcoming exhibit in Spring 2009. Within a week, we were contacted by and met with Mary Tims who quickly committed to taking on this responsibility. Since joining Project FOCUS, she's contributed a lot of new energy and ideas to our group. She also brings extensive experience in the fields of architecture, graphic design, and exhibition production all of which makes her a wonderful addition to Project FOCUS. We hope to gather an energetic team of volunteers in the new year to assist us in exhibition development and attaining resources. If you are interested in contributing your time and talents please e-mail us at info@projectfocus.org.

In the Spring, we will be unveiling a comprehensive exhibit featuring all of the artwork generated by the people of Lyantonde during our last group trip to Uganda. This exhibit will provide an experiential reference for audiences in the U.S. to gain an understanding of the complex social issues that the community of Lyantonde faces. We hope to gather enough financial resources to travel with this exhibit across the country in addition to hosting a series of lectures, panel discussions, and **documentary film screenings** as tools to educate a wide audience and raise enough money to support the sustainable development project at Prince Primary School. We will keep you posted on dates and locations of this exhibit as well as progress on the development projects.



Project **FOCUS** is a grassroots, volunteer-based organization which can be interpreted as "we have high hopes, but very few resources!" In order to sustain our efforts we continue to depend on the generosity of our network of supporters. Time, energy, talents, ideas, and of course money are always welcomed and appreciated. More specifically, gallery space, office space, art and office supplies, and graphic/web-designing skills would be extremely helpful! Let us know if you can help!



With Sincere Love and Gratitude,

Project **FOCUS**

www.projectfocus.org