

KitchenTable

Global Girls, Inc. Quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME 16 SPRING 2018 ISSUE

Abuse is abuse is abuse.

"Joy and pain are like sunshine and rain... The ones that you care for give you so much pain. Oh, but it's all right, they're both one in the same." Maze has always been one my favorite music groups. I loved dancing to the soulful rhythms that brought a natural sway to my hips and ushered countless couples to the dance floor.

Now, in light of the public and private accounts of domestic and sexual abuse, I have to reexamine the normalization of "pain" in male/female relationships.

Sure, there will be misunderstandings, disagreements and even arguments in any relationship. But, just as arguments and debates should not escalate to violence in the boardroom, they should not escalate to physical violence in the bedroom or any other location. Point blank – don't do it!

Abuse is defined as "the use of power

for a bad purpose or effect; misuse; the treatment of a person or an animal with cruelty or violence, especially regularly or repeatedly; the improper use of something."

"On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime."

Is pain an acceptable component in a loving relationship?

Yes, there are levels and degrees and types of pain. When one visits a doctor complaining of pain, one of her questions would probably be, "on a scale of 1 to 5, what is your level of pain?" If abuse occurs in a relationship, does the level

of the pain ever come under examination?

A few stats might help focus a discussion on pain and abuse. As cited in the National Statistics Domestic Violence Fact Sheet, "On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by

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Help our girls see
"Hamilton"



This pose is the final movement in a dance to the main song in the phenomenal stage production "Hamilton." Our girls know, sing and LOVE each and every song on the soundtrack.

We will take the girls to see the show with your help. Please visit our GoFundMe (send-global-girls-to-see-Hamilton) page and make a donation. No amount is too small or too large. Thanks in advance for your support.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

Global Girls library shows

In celebration of African American History Month, The Global Theatre Collaborative youth ensemble is acting, singing and dancing at local library branches as they recreate significant moments in our history.

"Legacies that Last" is a 30-minute show that highlights individual achievements as well as societal changes that contributed to American life as we know it today. Working on the show, our girls learned new information which

has only whetted their appetite for more. On page 6, you can read their opinions on what they'd like to learn about American history.

This show is recommended for children and young teens and includes a talkback.

By performing "Legacies That Last," Global Girls is expanding our reach to other neighborhoods, giving our girls more performance opportunities and showcasing overlooked episodes and chapters that resonate locally with re-

gards to public schools and nationally as demonstrated in the last election.

Library Show Lineup:

Feb. 2 Brainard Branch

Feb. 8 Greater Grand Crossing Branch

Feb. 14 Avalon Branch

Feb. 15 Jeffrey Manor Branch

Feb. 21 South Chicago Branch

Feb. 22 Chinatown Branch

Contact us if you or your organization would like to book a show.

Global Girls & After School Matters “Take the Stage” program resumes.

The spring session of our teen program, Take the Stage, runs February 13 through May 3, 2018. 32 males and females ages 14 to 18 will learn to dance, sing and act in stories that they create based on their experiences.

50% of our group will be returning teens from previous seasons. A few have participated in our Take the Stage program for over two years including summer sessions.

Youth pictured on the right performed a show created by Taylah Thomas, one of our teaching artists. Their spring show will again be held at Northeastern Center for Inner City Studies May 2, 2018.



Enjoy the best popcorn ever while raising funds for Global Girls programs.



Seriously, I could not stop eating the popcorn after just one taste! Thankfully, Global Girls now offers dance classes three days a week in the evening so that I can still enjoy those kernels while maintaining at least a semblance of a shape.

Global Girls participants, staff, board members, volunteers, parents and friends will start taking orders for our **Popcornopolis Fundraiser** Monday, February 19th, Presidents' Day. Order a bag or three or five. Share one with your friends and family. Then, give them our number so that they can place an order too.

Reward yourself at the end of a long, exhausting day with a bag. You'll be oh, so very glad you did.

And, best of all, you'll be supporting important, impactful work with girls right here in the community.

Seasoned adult members of “Haven Tower Players” will take the stage.

Ryonn Gloster initiated the partnership as a way to remember her loving relationship with her grandmother. Three years later, the Global Girl staff and youth have established a loving relationship with Haven Towers residents. Our youth company performs holiday shows at least twice a year in the community room. Over the summer, campers visit their “play grandmothers” once a week. Seniors participate in our annual Grandparents Day celebration during in August.

Now, thanks to a grant from the Chicago Foundation for Women Giving Council, Global Girls is working with a group of residents on a show about their lives, their hopes and their dreams. The ensemble is ready take the stage singing, dancing and acting to share their truths.

The working theme is “True Love Never Dies.” In weekly sessions, the storyteller/actors meet with Ryonn and Marvinetta to share stories, create the script, sing and learn dance routines. One of the show

stoppers is a dance number to Ray Charles, “*What I Say*.”

The first show is set for Friday, April 6, 6pm at Haven Towers, 7947 S. South Chicago Ave. Admission is by invitation only. I can almost guarantee there will be at least one additional show.

If past is prelude, the group will want an encore performance. Once people take the stage, they get the acting bug. This might be the start of an on-going theatre experiment. We need to hear their stories.



Global Theatre Collaborative star, Ryonn Gloster

I am so proud to be a part of this production, "My Vagina. My Voice." especially at this time in our history with all the daily news reports of sexual harassment. Women are speaking up after years of silence and finding the strength in numbers to tell their stories giving a safe space so that other women and girls can do the same. Women, it is our time! The central theme of our production is women no longer cowering in silence about their vaginas, or tolerating attempts to "denigrate or manipulate" any part of our bodies, or beings.

It is really an honor to perform with beautiful, talented women dancing, singing and telling stories about being a woman and loving, owning all of who we are especially our bodies. Being able to speak and laugh openly and honestly



about the once taboo topic, the vagina, makes me as a young woman, feel so very empowered. Working with a cast with such a wide age range, let's me know I am not alone and that the best is yet to come. The audience feedback so far has been encouraging, no, overwhelming, and so we have scheduled more shows. We've even been booked to perform for other organizations.

Because of my experience in the show, I've redoubled my commitment to the younger participants in Global Girls programs and our youth performers. Together with my friends and coworkers, we will carry the mantle of equipping girls with skills and experiences that will help them grow into womanhood whole and healthy.

Healthy relationships start with communication.

There is a path to girls and boys, women and men peacefully and productively co-existing. The first step, I believe, is open communication where each person feels confident to say what is in her heart and each person listening to the other devoid of listening liabilities. There are many other signposts along the path, however communication is so important that it deserves a column, chapter, book, year of classwork study. Sticking to the column, a review of four rudimentary Global Girls communication principles will ensue.

Principle #1: "To thine own self be true." Self-talk will either make our break you. It is the constant talking that goes on inside our heads. The average person has "70,000 thoughts per day". That's a lot of thoughts. It's about 3,000 per hour or 50 per minute. For many, those thoughts are negative, what we should have done, didn't or can't do, or what others – friends, family, TV personalities – are doing compared to what we are doing.

We can retrain our brains to think about what makes us happy, what we want to bring into our lives, what we appreciate in the very moment we are living and what we love about ourselves. Try it.

After a bit of practice, you'll see it's just as easy to be happy with you as to be sad about what you are not.

Principle #2: *Don't take anything personally.* This idea is borrowed from Don Miguel Ruiz' book, "The Four Agreements," and if you haven't read it, please do. Each of us sends messages through our words, our body language and, nowadays, our emojis. Our messages say more about us than we think. We select the words, the tone, the pauses, the emphasis, all of the components of the message very deliberate either on a conscious or unconscious level.

So, when someone says something to you, remember, it is all about them, not you. Hear what's said but look into the messenger as well as at the message if the investment is important to you. If not, let the message and the messenger go. It's never about you, but about the messenger. Nothing other people do is because of you. It is because of themselves.

Principle #3: *Say what is in your heart.* When we like ourselves, are honest with ourselves and care about our message, we can be assertive with our words and

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Global Girls Inc.

The Global Studio

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www.globalgirlsinc.org

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Taylah Thomas

Junior Facilitators

Symone Stokes
Victoria Robinson

Interns

Bowen High School Students
Sponsored by
A Knock at Midnight

Mission Statement

Our mission is to equip girls of color with skills that nurture their individual growth and inspire them to use their talents for positive change in their communities and throughout the world.

SAVE THE DATES!

Monday thru Friday
3pm until 6pm
Young Women on the Move
 sessions for girls 6 to 14
 The Global Studio

Dance at the Studio
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays
6:30p - 7:30p
\$6 per class
Prepare to tone!

Saturdays and Sundays in February

Global Theatre Collaborative
 Adult Theatre Shows
 The Global Studio

My Vagina. My Voice

Saturdays 2/17 & 24 @ 7p
Sundays 2/18 & 25 @ 3p
 \$20 in advance
 \$25 at the door

Friday, March 23
7pm until 9pm

Spring Break Open Mic
 The Global Studio
 \$3 admission, \$1, performers

Monday March 26 thru
Friday, March 30
11am until 3pm

Spring Break Sessions
 The Global Studio
 8151 S. South Chicago Ave.
 Open to all girls 5 to 14
 Lunch and snacks daily

Friday, April 6
6pm until 8pm

Senior Show
"I'll Tell My Story"
 Haven Tower
 7947 S. South Chicago Ave.
 Invitation only.

*Like us on Facebook and
 follow us on Twitter!*



Get your own beautiful and warm Global Girls hoodie for cool Chicago nights. Only \$25. Proceeds help Global Girls programs.

Our shopping spree at Mariano's!!



We got the call around 4pm about a week before the day of the event. Greater Chicago Food Depository selected Global Girls as the agency for an outing with Curtis Granderson, baseball star now with the Toronto Blue Jays.

We were thrilled to be chosen, but oblivious to what was in store. Girls excitedly boarded the bus the day of the event. They returned with bags and bags of groceries from all places Mariano's on King Drive. And the items in those bags... YES!!

The happy girls are pictured above with Curtis Granderson. There's a video on his Facebook page that features our girls. Support his cause. He supports real folks in our community.

#GrandGiving raised over 2 Million Meals for families in need this holiday season. Thank you to everyone who donated online, volunteered their time at food bank partner sites across the country and shopped at Mariano's this November. Our campaign might be over, but our mission to #EndHunger is just getting started!

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an intimate partner in the United States. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime."

There are no easy prescriptions one can offer a person who has been hurt, no medicine, no "5 step plan", no one-size-fits-all cure. And so, I am almost at a loss in closing this article. However, a start might be shining a light on abuse of all kinds. Lasers, intense beams of light, are now used in medical procedures to explode and evaporate disease causing agents in our bodies. Let's focus like a laser beam on abuse, shine a light on all forms of abuse, enforce laws and provide a plethora of support and

help for victims and, yes, perpetrators. Let's write new lyrics that normalize kindness, tenderness, understanding, self-love and love, the verb.

—
LOVE DOESN'T HURT
 YOU. A PERSON THAT
 DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO
LOVE HURTS YOU.
 DON'T GET IT TWISTED.

(TONY GASKINS)

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The Girls' Pages

African American History - Can we handle our truth?

My story *by Marvinetta Penn*

Growing up a black girl in the 60's, I hated my blackness and even told my white teacher, "Sometimes I rub really hard when I take a bath so that I can be white. I don't like being black."

Admitting I harbored self hatred so deeply that I gave it life by putting that sentiment into words and communicated it to an adult who understood my truth even more than my innocent, uninformed mind could fathom, is even more painful today.

I began Global Girls to empower black girls with deep-seated self love and courage. Instead of denying their blackness, I wanted them to own it all day everyday and stand firmly in their beautiful skin toe to toe with any other person of any other hue. Today, I realize the work has only just begun.

Telling the truth, imparting the historical details of the truth devoid of bias, is a lofty, time-consuming goal. But it is one that I accept and will forever, in one way or another, pursue.

As we become assertive, forward thinking women and men, owning our power and paving a path for our children and future generations, let's grapple with the difficult questions. Let's learn the uncomfortable facts. Let's stop solely reciting, "I have a dream," until we exam-

ine Dr. King's stances on segregation in Chicago, the Vietnam war and his work with the Memphis sanitation workers.

I admit to my prejudices and overly zealous proclamations, but there is always a context even if I don't adequately explain it or control my passion.

Sure, we'd all like to sit in a school with other races. But the reality is that when too many of us move in, they move out. If Dr. King recited that same speech in 2018 instead of 1963...? Why even ask the question.

We asked our girls to expound on a different question, "Does Global Girls continue Dr. King's dream?"

Soon, the girls will discuss their written responses and afterwards, we'll explore Dr. King's speech as well as his own opinion of that "dream" in hindsight.

For now, my concern is a recurring theme that emerged for many of our girls - Global Girls does not continue the dream because we put too much emphasis on being a "black girl." Our girls said we should invite more Hispanic, Asian and white girls to participate with them in our programs.

Another theme that emerged perplexed me. The gist was Global Girls should not make white people feel so bad by trumpeting "blackness" in our shows. One idea was staging a play that fo-

cused on white people who have helped African Americans over the years

A very perceptive and assertive young lady called me out for making overgeneralizations. Guilty as charged.

So, now what? What does "culturally sensitive" include and exclude? How do we build strong girls of color and at the same time tell the truth about the twisted and tangled African American story that continues to unfold? What truths can give us Barak Obama and in the next moment unleash Donald Trump? Is "comfort" a desirable goal?

I recently heard about a principal of an all black school who said she didn't want to hold an African American History Month assembly or program because she didn't want to offend or embarrass the white teachers.

Who will write the next chapters of our story? I believe it is us women who know who we are. It's women who walk into a room and stand firmly on that knowledge without trying to placate or win friends. We are prepared. We are proud. We know what we know and are ready to work toward greatness together - sitting side by side, judged "by the content of our character rather than the color of our skin" or alone as a people steeped in pride and armed with power to change law as well as hearts "...by any means necessary."

"The sugarcoated version of Black History goes something like this » Honest Abe abolished slavery » Rosa sat on a bus » Martin had dream » Barack became president » The end." *Janelle Kay, Project Wellness School instructor*

Continued from page 3

say what we feel thoughtfully and sincerely. Too often, we "sugar coat" a message to avoid hurting, disappointing or alienating the listener. By doing so, we hurt, disappoint and alienate ourselves from our true selves.

When we say what is in our hearts, everyone wins. No one assumes anything. We are clear and forthright. And, we give the listener agency respond with authenticity.

Principle #4: Listen. How many times

have you heard someone, teachers, mothers, police officers, friends, asking or imploring you to "listen!". And yet, so few of us really listen. Rather, we wait for our chance to talk, think about



something else, prepare our rebuttal, interrupt or create personal opinions of the speaker without any consideration of the message. Listening requires deliberate focus. It is a skill that we can learn and that we must teach our children as well as share with those adults we love.

Global Girls invites you to try these principals on for size, practice them and if they work for you, perfect them until they become habits of mind and action. If they work for you, please share them with others. Then we will be on a collective path to co-existence.

The Girls' Pages

What I've learned about black history in school, and what I'd like to know.

Why isn't African American history taught in tangent with American history? The African American story is the American story. Why do we only teach our children about Dr. King's dream and not the "...dream turned into a nightmare" which is what Dr. King actually said shortly before he was assassinated? Why are our public schools disappearing and being replaced by segregated charter schools? Do we want the true African American history or the sanitized version that makes other people feel comfortable?

#1

At school I learned how Emmett Till was shot, beat up and thrown into the river after he was accused of "sweet-talking" a white girl. I have learned about how slavery lasted 300 years and about the things Dr. King, Rosa Parks and Claudette Coleman did. Other than these facts about black history I have not learned a lot about my history in school.

I want to learn about the person who ended slavery for all of us. I want to also learn about the daily lives of the average slaves. I want to know about how extreme the life of a black person was that lived during the slavery times and about discrimination in America.

I feel that I want to learn about how white people started to not like African Americans. I want to learn so much more about my black past. I want to know things I would never think about in a million years. I wish that my school showed that they appreciate blacks and black history more than just the shortest month of the year.

#2

I have a few questions:

#1 Why did black people have to be slaves? Why not white people?

#2 Why did white people think they were better than black people?

#3 Why didn't black people fight back?

#4 Why did they have to be separated?

In black history, we talk about the people who helped us get freedom like Dr. Martin Luther King.

I want to talk about more people. We talk about the same thing every year. I think they hide the facts about Malcolm X from us. I want to know more details so that I can understand my history better.

#3

In school during Black history month, we learn about segregation, miscegenation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Emmett Till, Marion Anderson, Josephine Baker, Scottsboro Boys, Harriet Tubman and slavery. But, I would like to know about it all in more depth.

Like, what was the full purpose of slavery? Whose idea was it to start slavery? If the slaves did all the work, what did the whites do? In school, they don't tell us everything. They tell us the basics. I want to know the why. Why are the other facts hidden from us children?

#4

In school, we learned black history We learned about Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. We learned how Rosa lived her life. Back in the day when Rosa and Martin were born, there was separation where blacks and whites didn't sit or eat together. I want to know if that is still going on in different states.

#5

I have learned about the Civil Rights movement and how long people went through segregation. I learned that when Congress was created, slaves were only considered 3/5 of a man. I learned that the Civil War was only fought because the south only wanted to keep slaves and the north didn't.

I want to know about the other slave rebellions. There were more than just the Haitians. I want to know more about

Africa and the pyramids instead of just hearing that it's desert land. I want them to tell us more about Emmett Till and Trayvon Martin I want them to tell us about blackface.

We are writing and telling our own stories. Will they be retold accurately and in the detailed colors tomorrow?

#6

Over the course of my 11 years of schooling, I have learned a thing or two about my black history. I have learned about an outstanding woman named Madame CJ Walker. In fact, I did my first Black History Month project on her. She was the lady who started the hair care project for black women. Martin Luther King was and is an outstanding man who did so much to keep liberty alive.

These are very important people that have had a positive impact on our people. However, there is this big period in time that has over ridden our mentality. This is slavery.

This year, we have had plenty of readings where the main focus was slavery and our founding fathers. They created this nation on two principles, "Liberty and Justice." When they created this nation, they also wrote that all men are created equal. We sing the national anthem and honor the stars and stripes. But, when we look back on slavery, nothing about that was equal.

Blacks were seen as less than white people. We were not allowed to learn to read and write. I believe whites only did that because they didn't want blacks to become too powerful.

When I think about it, history is kind of repeating itself. Now, in schools, we are not getting all the resources to really learn about our history.

There are so many parts of my history that I would love to learn about. I do go on the internet, but I still want to gain something from the school that I attend every day.



The Global Theatre Collaborative adult company has a run away hit!



Here's what folks are saying about "My Vagina. My Voice."

I just saw the play, My Vagina, My Voice. It is Excellent. Each performer did an outstanding job, and Marvinetta did a fantastic job in putting it together. It is full of realism and humor; you will laugh a lot, nod your head in agreement or truth, and you may get teary-eyed at times. It's about awareness in a comfortable atmosphere. GO SEE IT next weekend. Make it a date night, a girls outing, go by yourself, but GO.

Just saw it. The performances are EXCELLENT, the stories are REAL. You will laugh, nod your head, you may get teary eyed, and if you are honest, you will see yourself.

It is a MUST SEE. You won't regret it. BRAVO to Marvinetta and each performer. It is Outstanding, Outstanding and Outstanding. If you don't believe me, go see it and if you believe me, go see it. GO SEE IT.

We really enjoyed the talented cast and well written subject matter!! It makes you reflect on your own experiences!

Powerful performance by all!

I was there and so proud of my niece\cuz...it was a powerful message by many strong and beautiful women.

Great show and impressive performances ladies!!! If you don't know, go see it!

Very creative, I especially like that it's multigenerational.

**Upcoming Shows @ The Global Studio, 8151 S. South Chicago Ave
Saturday 2/17 & 24 @ 7:00p .**

Sunday 2/18 & 25 @ 3p

MALE AUDIENCE ONLY SHOW

Sunday 3/4 @ 3p

Women invited to the after party starting at 6p

Tickets \$20 in advance \$25 at the door



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group or organization.
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Global Girls turned 18 January 18, 2018 by Leslye Logan

In January, 2018 Global Girls, Inc. celebrated 18 years of incorporation. The anniversary celebration took place at the Lagunitas Brewing Company, 2607 West 17th street in Chicago and was a fun time for all.

As the evening began, the girls enjoyed watching themselves and Global Girls from past years' performances on the "big screen". They laughed, snacked, and elaborated on some events to others who had not participated in a particular event. They scanned through pages and pages of photos and videos on the drive, seeing themselves "in action" dancing, singing, performing spoken word, doing volunteer and community work, and collaborating with girls in other cities and countries. They enjoyed observing their younger selves in videos at camp, at sleepovers, parties, and celebrations. They were having a grand time with themselves and then guests arrived. The 17 girls there that evening, ages 5-16, immediately snapped into gear with only one directive from a teacher leader, "It's time!"

They quickly tidied their table areas, gathered themselves, took a few deep breaths, and welcomed the guests. They thanked them for coming, told them a bit of Global Girls history, what the organization does and who the participants are. Then, they began sharing, in a sentence or two, why they were each so grateful for being a Global Girl, a GG4L (Global Girl For Life).

The girls noted 15 reasons they were grateful to be a Global Girl and invited three guests (equaling 18 reasons) to share what they liked about the organization. I stopped counting after so many responses.

A couple of girls mentioned that Global Girls help them become more outspoken, no longer "so shy like when I started." "It helps me get out of my comfort zone. It helps me get my confidence up when I'm acting. I love acting," stated another girl. A bubbly little lady expressed, "I love to dance so when I'm home alone in my room, I just play my music and dance, and I do all the dances I learned at Global Girls!"

"I love Global Girls because we welcome EVERYONE!" one girl exclaimed, emphatically! Another ex-

pressed how she likes "...going to the After School Program....It gives me something much better to do after school, and when school is out, then I look forward to the summer program." Yet, another simply enjoys being a "...Global Girl because I love the Studio. It's fun and safe. What you say there stays there." The girls have a voice when they are in the Global Girl setting; they enjoy the rules of discussion, the "Safe Place", "Check-Ins", the "Session Guidelines" and overall, the "Global Girl way."

Performance is a huge and driving component of the Global Girls organi-



One of the very first Global Girls' groups back in 2001.

zation, but there are so many other aspects the girls are grateful for being a part. The strong sense of sisterhood echoes in their words and especially in their actions.

"I love how we connect our spoken word pieces to what we go through in our every day lives." It's important for the girls to "check-in" each day as a means of expression, an outlet to share what's going on, good or not so good, a place where her voice is heard and support offered. "I love Global Girls because it's a sisterhood and there's always someone, like a sister you can talk to," she paused, "about anything!"

Finally, there is the fun component. "I love Global Girls because of the sleepovers that are so much fun and even though we might get on each other's nerves sometimes, we know we will always have each other's backs." "I love Global Girls because we go

places, because we get to travel and meet girls in other places. I hope I will be able to go overseas with Global Girls."

There were well more than three comments from the audience, which included responses from a board member, a couple of parents, and an organization supporter. "I love to see the girls perform! They are awesome and put their hearts and souls into it!" "As a parent I become overwhelmed sometimes at how both my girls have blossomed since being a part of Global Girls. The baby, 5 years old now, has been a part since she was about two and a half. She loves to dance. She watched her sister and could not wait to

be a part. Her sister is an aspiring entrepreneur. Global Girls has helped her to set her goals high." A supporter said, "I've admired Global Girls for a while. I see what they do and what they are about and I love all young people who are about something positive."

After the "Welcome" the girls were excited

to share portions of several dance routines, including two from the Broadway Musical, Hamilton. They were awesome, as usual, and particularly good at being able to quickly substitute parts for girls who were not in attendance. All the girls know ALL the words to several of the Hamilton songs. They are trained as true professionals and can fill in or understudy at a moment's notice. I look forward to seeing how they evolve over the next several years. They are steered for greatness!!!

Happy 18th Anniversary, Global Girls! It's been amazing watching you grow!



Meet Nura Najmah, our newest teaching artist.

I am Nura Najmah one of the new Teaching Artists with Global Girls Inc. I am a graduate of Columbia College Chicago with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Dance (May 2017). I am also a full-time member of *Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago*.

In the classes I teach, one of our main values is energy, the energy from the audience, the energy from every mover in the space, the energy of our accompanist, since in West African Dance music is often played by live drummers.

I intend to help my students value these sources of energy through life as well. Whether the energy is good or bad, it's all a test. I ask all to accept that every



test is based in a lesson. Being a West African dancer, a critical characteristic, in the African context, is community. I make sure my students understand the importance of the community and the energy that we will build throughout the class. Through dance we have the capability to make an audience, or viewers of the community feel a specific way, either pulling new ways of learning, perspective, or building on their perspective through kinesthetic art.

For the past few weeks, I have been observing how the Global Girls studio

runs; and I must say, I am very impressed. Based on observing the activities at the Global Studio, I knew coming there would be plenty of great energy, but I was not expecting this caliber of professionalism. I'm truly enjoying the space, the other Teaching Artist. I'm truly honored to be working with these young artist.

After my first few weeks I got the time to work with these young artist. I am able to place West African movement on them from a rhythm and dance called *Sorsonet* and I am blown away by the enthusiastic energy and drive for learning these girls bring every day. Additionally, they learned a piece in a few days before having to perform it, there are professional dancers that struggle with learning a piece in a short timeframe.

So far so good! I can't wait to build and create more with these thriving young black artists!!!



THE GLOBAL STUDIO
8151 S SOUTH CHICAGO AVE

DANCE CLASSES

MONDAY + WEDNESDAY

AFRO-ZUMBA
6:30PM-7:30PM

THURSDAY
STEPPING
6:30PM-7:30PM

FRIDAY
TWERKPERK+WUURK
6:30PM-7:30PM

SATURDAY
STRETCH+TONING 10AM-11AM
KAYJAY'S HEEL CLASS 11AM-12PM
LINE DANCING 12:30PM-1:15PM
YOUTH CLASSES 1:30PM-3PM

Don't call it a comeback... *by Shannon Woods*

Back in 2007 I attended my first Backyard Jam Fundraiser for Global Girls. This was an organization that was making an extraordinary impact on the young ladies that were participating, and I knew that I would be involved for a long time to come.

As Executive Director, Marvint Penn, was teaching girls theatre and dance, taking them on international trips, and giving them experiences they would not have otherwise had.

Every year after that I would come over early for this event and help with set-up, and stay for the festivities. The girls

would perform, the community would participate, there was a live band Jam Session that attracted hundreds of local musicians and fun was had by all.

I eventually began working for the company from 2010-2014. It was a great experience. I even travelled internationally with the youth in 2013.

I returned to Global Girls in the fall of 2017, and I feel like I never even left. Global Girls still provides a safe space for young women to share their stories and make a positive impact on the world. I'm proud to be a part of it.



Once a participants, now, a teaching artist. *By Kiara Jones*

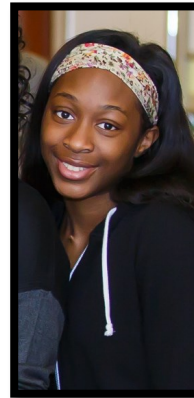
The conversion from being a participant to joining the staff is a whole different ballgame. I joined Global Girls about eight years ago and I have enjoyed studying the performing arts that entire time. My specialty is dance. I love dancing!

So, when Ms. Penn decided to ask me if I wanted to start working as a staff member, I knew that this would be the start of my journey.

Next came the responsibility of actually having and working on a job. I had to learn about the business world and start to see myself as participant in that

world. I started to mature and take things more seriously.

I know it was hard for the younger girls in the program to address me as Ms. Kiara instead of "sister." It was just as difficult to see myself as Ms. Kiara. Teaching the girls was frustrating at first because the experience was so new, but after a few sessions, I found my style and the girls even began to adjust to it. In fact, they quickly adapted to me as their



dance teacher and didn't even judge me when I forgot my own choreography. They came to realize that we were all in the creation together and took responsibility for remembering the steps as I created them. They now accept me being hard on them without any push back during rehearsals and session.

I truly love teaching the girls and the special bond we now have – me as teacher and them as my students. I guess I'm adapting to this world of work pretty good.

Love to dance!!! *By Jada Siler, pictured below, age 10*

As a young girl, I knew I had a skill and passion for dance. I used to go through my mother's closet to try

on her highest heels and put on a show. From

making dance routines with family members to dancing in the backyard and basement with Kiara and Ricki, I knew this was what I wanted to do.

In 3rd grade, Global Girls held an after-school program at my school, Horace Mann and I was a part of that program. During the season, Global Girls announced that they were hosting a fashion show. I wanted to be in the show because



I really thought it would be amazing. We had to rehearse at the Grand Crossing Park field house where Global Girls held all of its programs and Saturday sessions.

I went to one session and never stopped. I returned every Saturday and even brought my friends Kiara and Ricki with me. I always had dance in my blood, but Global Girls gave me technique and exposure to different dance styles. I was always a good dancer, but Global Girls helped me become a wonderful dancer.

I now have the self-discipline, concentration, self-confidence and heart of a real dancer. Global Girls prepared to dance at any time and on any stage, even stages in India and Grenada, West Indies.

African American History Month Note

Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner, May 17, 1912 – January 13, 2006, was an African-American inventor most noted for inventing the sanitary belt. She held six major patents including the bathroom tissue holder, a back washer that mounted on the wall of the shower and the carrier attachment on walkers for disabled people. She worked as a florist and credited her father for encouraging her creativity during her childhood. Mary maintained that she created these items because she enjoyed making life easier for people.



“Who am I?” Our girls answer

I am a goddess learning through reincarnation and experiencing the human aspect of life. I am positive and loving. I believe in second chances for everybody. I also believe that I am a magical being sent to earth by a higher power, and that everything that happens to me happens for a reason.

I come from two long lines of fighters. Every person that I know in my family has a powerful history of some sort. My origins are in a peaceful, loving, spiritual continent where everyone got along and thought about how they could help the community.

I don't know where I am going, but I do know that everything I learn about myself contributes to my constant becoming. Maybe I am meant to teach through my writing or singing because I realize I am good at both. I know that I shouldn't rush into discovering why I was put here, but I know that I will find out. *Mariama*

I am a chosen creature of God I am a force of strong and positive energy. I

come from a line of addicted smokers and drinkers, but I don't let that define me. I am a pebble thrown into the earth to take on many rough paths and difficult challenges. I am outgoing, generous and passionate. I am made up of tight coiled hair and limber legs. Now, who I am is going to forever change but I will do all I can to be true to who I am becoming. I am on my way to being in the image of the higher power. I still don't have a clear vision of where I am going, but I know I am going somewhere far. *Symone*

Well, if I really think about it, I have no idea who I am. But I do know is all of my actions and decisions lead up to who I am. I wouldn't say that I'm lost trying to find who I am. I'm just still searching. I come from a family of hard workers. Where I'm going is toward my goals including being successful in everything I do. I have a confession to make, some-



times I try to fit in. In school, I have two best friends who sometimes act like rebels. I copy them to fit in. But, my other friend, she does her best and sometimes, I try to copy her. After writing this I realize that I am strong. I am different. I make mistakes. I am weird. And, all of that is what I love about myself. No, I think I know who I am. I'm the weird funny, corky, talkative girl trying the world. I'm me. *Wynter*

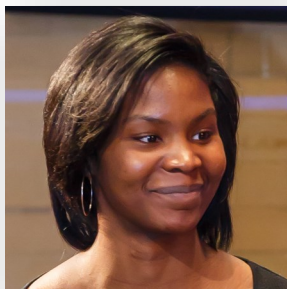
I am a strong, courageous, independent, smart black young woman. I like to do things that add to my purpose in life. I am a coder and someone who builds robots and machines. My origin is a peaceful world with no violence, but everybody in a calm state of mind. I want to go step by step to make that happen. *Michiah*

What I've learned working with teens by Taylah Thomas

In all my time as an educator, I've always had the desire but never the opportunity to mentor high-school aged youth, that is, until I came to Global Girls. It is with profound appreciation that I can say my first experience was a remarkable one at the very least, for reasons that can all be summed up in one word - relationship.

My mother once shared some advice with me, that while working with the teens in the After School Matters program at Global Girls proved to be pertinent to the task at hand. Simply put, she said, “You can't teach 'em until you reach 'em.” Learning that she wasn't the first to coin this phrase was hardly a disappointment due to the awe-inspiring reality of the platitude!

As is typically the case when working with teenagers, one is met with the challenge of navigating the ever-varying temperament common to this delicate developmental period. My case was not the exception. Consequently, my mother had also earnestly admonished me that in order to avoid becoming a casualty of this process, (by virtue of my impulsive



reactions), I'd need to have a respect for the process. That respect would inevitably coerce me to consider a number of other variables that may

influence a teen's development, such as their upbringing, social aptitude, personal beliefs- all of which I found could be unearthed and refined within the confines of a relationship.

So, whereas I had expected to simply whip these kids into shape, teaching them everything I know about dance and theater, they had another agenda in mind, one that frankly, deflected the attention I had hoped to devote exclusively to molding them into prodigies of my expertise, to actively engaging each individual on a personal and amicable level. Although it came at the cost of tolerating a lot of unwarranted nonsense, I'm grateful for the fruit that was produced as a result of both mine and

the teenagers' balanced efforts. Not only did this strategy allow for a conducive climate in which to teach and learn creative works, but also to address and be heeded on more complex matters, such as misbehavior.

Yet and still, the best reward a relationship offers is having that relationship - period. In light of this, I was able to realize something else while working with the teens: the one thing that we as people will ever do more than anything else is spend time with and around people.

So, we may as well insist on being compatible with one another, that's youth to youth, adult to adult, and adult to youth. The dynamic of each of these relationships was always meant to be meaningful in the way that they provide support, guidance and love. One way I now know to be effective to that end is to first try getting to know someone before imposing what I know on them. Bring on the 2018 Spring session!

Global Girls 6th Annual Youth Performance Camp registration starts March 1, 2018. Camp dates are Monday thru Friday, June 25th through August 10th.



Global Girls Young Women on the Move and After School Matters performers in their annual Holiday Show. Check our website regularly for performance updates. Your company and/or organization can also book your own youth or adult show! Contact us.

Kitchen Table is a quarterly publication. Send all comments, questions and inquiries to info@globalgirlsinc.org

Feel free to contact us:
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 _____ Global Girls performance support (*Get free tickets to shows*)
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 you
 SO
 MUCH