



Volume 1 | Issue 2
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Tujenge Quarterly

Education

Leadership

Entrepreneurship

Peace-building

Updates from the heart of Africa

School in Session

Six months into the inaugural school year, Tujenge's flagship initiative, the Tujenge Scholars Program, is in full swing. Seventeen students spend their mornings at the Tujenge house, studying subjects in a converted master bedroom. They spend their afternoons and evenings studying, reading and working on their leadership projects. Of the twenty-two students that started with the program in March, four have now left to start university studies in Burundi, Rwanda and France, and one has now joined a local seminary program. (One of these early success stories is the subject of this issue's *Scholar Highlight*).

Students continue their studies in English and math, working toward fluency in each. Weekly student-written and performed sketches are a highlight of English class. Many of the more advanced math students have recently begun a study of calculus. As we approach college-application season, students are putting in extra hours to get the most out of the next few months.



Désiré Hantungimana '17 performs a rousing rendition of One Direction's "Steal My Girl" for his classmates. Performance factors heavily into English classes, where students write and perform weekly skits for each other.

The class has been an incredibly rare opportunity for the students to reflect on the history of the country and its present challenges. We want them to be dynamic and conscientious leaders who will help heal this nation.

*-Etienne Mashuli
TAF Cofounder*

Leadership Projects

One of the most exciting parts of the Scholars Program at the moment has been watching students work on their service/leadership projects. These projects are student-selected and entirely driven by student engagement. Students are working on projects that range from devising an SMS-based communication network to connect remote, rural farmers with agricultural specialists, to a project that employs street children once a week and eventually helps them to get a toe-hold in an entrepreneurship venture of their choice. Each scholar (or group of scholars) has been paired with a staff advisor to help guide them through the process, but these remarkable projects are driven entirely by the students.



College Advising

With application season nigh upon us, students have had an opportunity to talk with advising staff to chart their educational futures. Tujenge is committed to working with each of our scholars to chart an individualized path toward continued education. For some students, this means looking into universities in Burundi; for others it means searching out international institutions that better suit their goals.



SAT/TOEFL Preparation

For the students who have expressed interest in an international university, the Scholars Program has invested significant time in test preparation coaching and content learning. Students have seen marked progress over the course of the four administrations of practice SAT exams. Average scores have improved by over 100 points and our top scorers are now consistently scoring well above the average graduating high school senior. Of course, progress still needs to be made, but we expect to continue to see strong improvement over the next three months, leading up to testing in December.

Students are also starting prep work for the paper-based TOEFL exam; they took their first practice exam earlier this week. In the future, Tujenge hopes to sponsor an internet-based testing center in Burundi. However, given the current unreliability in power and network connections today, all standardized testing is done in paper-based form.



Tujenge Tidbit:
Applications for the class of 2018 are currently open, with final-round interviews expected in December



Vatia Irakiza '17 heads off to Université François Rabelais this month.

Scholar Highlight: College-bound

As the Scholars Program works to prepare students for standardized tests, essay-writing and tracking down letters of recommendation, one of our students is already headed off to school! Vatia Irakiza '17 was accepted to the medical program at Université François Rabelais in Tours. She plans to spend the next nine years studying cutting-edge medicine at this prestigious French institution.

Bon chance, Vatia!

Fundraising Corner: Tech, Kindles, and More

Kindle Donations

Thanks to the generosity of a few key donors, the Scholars Program has recently purchased Kindle Fire devices for the use of enrolled scholars. This hardware is already providing students access to books and publications that would otherwise be next-to-impossible to procure on the continent. Students can charge the devices during the school day and use them to interact with English-language materials late into the evening.

Beyond recreational access to books and magazines, these versatile devices are capable of web-browsing, accessing email, even receiving teacher-assigned readings. It would be naïve to say that there exists a single panacea for bridging the content access gap in Burundi, but these devices sure take us a number of steps in the right direction.

Kickstarter Campaign

Tujenge is launching a new Kickstarter Campaign to raise funds for daily lunches for the scholars. We've discovered during the implementation of the Scholars Program that many of our students don't get to eat more than just one or two meals each day. As an institution of learning, we've adjusted our schedules to make sure that students are able to get home early enough to get a mid-day meal, but in so doing we sacrifice a number of afternoon hours that could be spent studying in a group for the next exam or participating in a Kindle literacy activity.

The campaign will be announced in the next week, but the goal is to raise enough to feed our 16 students 1 meal, 5 days a week. At \$1.05 per student per meal, we need to raise about \$1,250 to finish out the school year. Keep an eye out for an emailed fundraising announcement, as well as for a post on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/TujengeFoundation.

Tujenge Logo

If you've ever wondered (or even if you haven't...), the beautiful Tujenge logo doesn't just look good, it's also rich in symbolism! Here's the short on the logo:

The half/incomplete star represents Burundi's desire for earnest reconstruction and a brighter future. The books (the chevrons) symbolize the educational cornerstone on which our foundation's nation-building is predicated. The rich green tones are symbolic of the country's flag and speak of Burundi's rebirth. And the interconnectedness of each logo is emblematic of the three ethnic groups that must come together to forge national unity and prosperity. For a country that has experienced so much pain and hardship, this logo is emblematic of a new era of hope.

*Look for the new
Kickstarter Campaign via
email and Facebook*
