

Summer Internship Opportunity in Uganda

JULY 25 – AUGUST 13, 2010



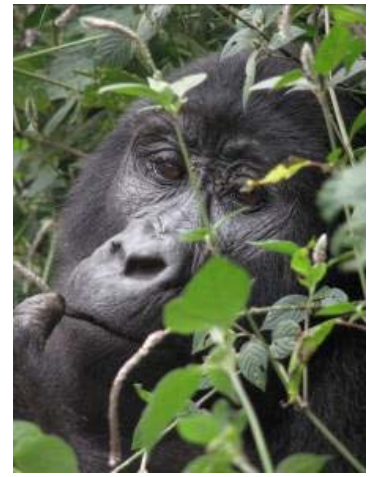
In July of 2010, History Department Chair, Mr. Mathis, and two Walt Whitman High School alumni, Laura Van Oudenaren and Montana Stevenson, will lead a 20 day trip to Uganda for students to volunteer with the Women's Microfinance Initiative. WMI is a Bethesda-based non-profit that fights global poverty by offering impoverished women in rural Uganda a chance to start their own businesses. Since providing its first 20 microloans in January 2008, over 680 loans have been issued to women in 50 villages in the Sironko District of eastern Uganda. Whitman parents and students have been extensively involved in founding and expanding the WMI microfinance project.

The main goal of the trip will be to set up an Internet Café in Buyobo, where the loan program is headquartered. The students will be hosted by the Bulambuli Widows Association, which administers the Loan Program funded by WMI grants. In June of 2009, WMI completed construction of a headquarters and village meeting hall in Buyobo, made possible by a grant from the Towards Sustainability Foundation. The meeting hall will house the Internet Café.

Discovery Communications in Silver Spring has generously donated 15 lap top computers to WMI, which the students will take with them to Uganda. The Widow's Association will set up a training schedule for women in the loan program, children and villagers. Students will conduct computer training sessions with all of these different community members, teaching them basic skills.

There is enormous excitement in the village about the planned Internet Café. Travel to the closest internet access in the town of Mbale is time-consuming and expensive. Local access will open up a world of possibilities for the thousands of men, women and children living in the villages surrounding Buyobo. Other program highlights will include visiting the Foundation for the Development of Needy Communities (FDNC), where students will meet the recipients of the band instruments donated by Walt Whitman students. Students will also volunteer in a local elementary school.

In Kampala, Uganda's capital, students they will meet with a government official and a local educator who works in Uganda's slums. Finally, they will have the opportunity to see some of Uganda's incredible wildlife and natural beauty. Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is home to approximately half of the world's 700 Mountain Gorillas still living in the wild. Students who choose to will trek the Bwindi Mountains to observe a gorilla family at close range, browsing in their natural habitat. Students will visit a chimp sanctuary and take a wild-life safari in Queen Elizabeth Park.



PRELIMINARY ITINERARY: Summer Internship, July-August 2010

Day 1 – Depart Washington, D.C.

Day 2 – Evening: Arrival, stay the night in Kampala

Day 3 – Travel to Buyobo (5 hours); Welcoming ceremony, orientation and introductions to borrowers and their families

Days 4 – 8 - Workshop for students on how to teach computer skills;

- Students will then teach 2.15 hours of computer skills in 2 sessions each day.
- In the late afternoon they will have recreation (soccer, Frisbee) with village children and teens, as well as hands-on cultural activities like bead-making, dancing and drumming.
- Dinner will be prepared as a group and will include reflection/discussion sessions.
- Students will stay in Buyobo. There is no running water or electricity. Students will take bucket showers and use latrines.
- Students will participate in a one day “internship” with a local borrower. They will work in the borrower’s garden, learn about farming/produce sales/family life and they will visit the local market.

Day 9 – 10 - Visit FDNC, the non-profit that received musical instruments from Whitman students in January 2008. Volunteer with local school.

Day 11 – All day RAFT trip on the Nile

Day 12 – 13 Early morning drive to Kabale, meet the community and all -day volunteer project in Kabale (in collaboration with Derwood, MD Elementary School) – plant fruit trees, help with local sports clinic, read with kids.

Day 14 – 15 - Drive to Bwindi; Guided Village Walk; Visit Friends of Bwindi orphanage, evening performance by local children (be prepared to buy inexpensive handicrafts - \$10); Drumming/Dance class (these kids are really good!); Gorilla Trek or Waterfall Hike (\$500 difference)

Day 16 – Safari in Queen Elizabeth National Park

Day 17 – Kampala; visit markets

Day 18 – All day visit to Ngamba Island, Chimpanzee Sanctuary and Wildlife Conservation Trust, (one of 19 great ape sanctuaries in Africa devoted to caring for orphaned apes)

Day 19 – Kampala; Meet with Government Officials; Visit to local NGO that works with street children; Evening - depart Entebbe Airport

Day 20– Arrive in US in afternoon

PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Robert Mathis – History Teacher, Resource, Walt Whitman High School. Mr. Mathis is a veteran history teacher who spent his early professional career as an attorney. He has led numerous student service trips, including visits with the Running Strong Club to the Three Affiliated Tribes Reservation, White Shield, ND as well as a student exchange between with a school in London, England.

Montana Stevenson --- 2006 Walt Whitman High School graduate. Montana is a senior in the Echols Scholars Program at the University of Virginia. In January of 2008, she traveled to rural Uganda with her mom, Robyn Nietert, to launch the first round of loans for WMI. She has spent the past two summers interning with WMI, designing surveys to study the impact of the loan program and analyzing the data collected. She has traveled to El Salvador with CRIZPAZ, a non-profit that works with marginalized communities in El Salvador. She has spent three summers as Assistant Head Coach of the Carderock Swim Team and has spent two years interning with the Women's Resource Center at UVA, working with a young teen mentoring program. In 2009, she studied abroad in Granada, Spain. During high school, she volunteered at the Three Affiliated Tribes Reservation in ND with a program organized by Mr. Mathis. This trip was one of her first experiences working with a marginalized community and was valuable both as an eye-opener to the hardships experienced by communities in other parts of the United States and as a chance to interact with her peers in a different environment.



Laura Van Oudenaren --- 2006 Walt Whitman High School graduate. Laura Van Oudenaren is a senior at Davidson College in North Carolina. She is an English major with a creative writing focus and a French concentration. She spent this past summer interning for the WMI, researching and writing grant proposals and analyzing data. In 2008, Davidson awarded her the Hanafi/Dean Rusk grant so that she could complete a 9-week independent research project on the contestation and mediation between pilgrims and tourists in Western Europe. In the fall of 2009 she studied abroad in Cameroon, where she researched development and social change, lived with multiple host families and visited with local NGOs and government officials. In the Spring of 2009 she presented her research at the Southern Anthropological Conferences in Wilmington, North Carolina. At Davidson, she is a former editor of the opinion section of Davidson's campus newspaper, and a four-year volunteer at the Ada Jenkins after school tutoring program. She has served as the Gym Coordinator there for three years, supervising groups of underprivileged elementary school students. She attended two summer trips to the Three Affiliated Tribes Reservation in ND, organized by Mr. Mathis. She first became interested in underdeveloped community issues during the Whitman-sponsored trip to North Dakota.

Uganda Sponsors

Olive Wolimbwa --- Chairperson of the Bulambuli Widows Association and Local Director for the Women's Microfinance Initiative. Ms. Wolimbwa interviews potential borrowers, oversees loan distributions and survey collection, and supervises current borrowers' support group meetings and training sessions. She is a former elementary school teacher in the Bulmabuli village school. Ms. Wolimbwa will organize the community members for the computer training sessions, contact families about the one-night home-stay, oversee the Welcome Ceremony, and provide translators and other necessary back-up support for the program.

Dominic Joseph Kizito – Owner of Assured Uganda Safaris Limited, a registered tour company in Uganda. Mr. Kizito has provided transportation services to many members of the WMI team and is also very knowledgeable of the Ugandan Tourism industry. He will be in charge of organizing transportation of the students as well as entrance fees to National Parks and the permits to view the Mountain Gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Denise Kalule --- Kampala, Uganda, is Business Manager and Personal Assistant to the Head of Audley Limited, a diversified holding company operating numerous businesses in Uganda. She grew up in the United States, obtained a B.S. in Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines and an MBA from MIT's Sloan School of Management. She is also currently a Board Member of the Vienna College Namugonogo and helped transform the boarding school into the largest Cambridge International Education center in Eastern Africa. Ms. Kalule is a member of the WMI Advisory Board and will assist with visits to non-profits and act as a guide in Kampala.

Anita Mpambara Cox --- Founder of the Mpambara-Cox Foundation (MCF), Derwood, MD. Ms. Mpambara Cox is Ugandan and lives in Derwood, MD. Her Foundation supports education in rural Africa through outreach programs such as the Pack-a-Backpack, where students in the U.S. send a backpack with school supplies, clothes, and toys to a child in Uganda, and the 10.30 Porridge Program, where MCF provides porridge with milk and sugar to children during a school break so that they will have at least one meal during the day. Ms. Cox will facilitate a service project at one of her Foundation's sponsored schools in Kabale.

Costs

20-day Program: \$2,200

The Uganda government permit for one day of gorilla trekking is \$500. The cost helps support the gorilla sanctuary. **Students who want to gorilla trek add an additional \$500 to the trip price to cover the purchase of the permit.**

Costs do not include airfare, which will be about \$1,800.

For more information contact: robert_j_mathis@mcpsmd.org

For more information about WMI log on to : wmionline.org