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Young Leaders from Eight Countries Created Personal Vision Plans at MCW's 9th Youth Leadership Retreat

VERMONT & NEW YORK - July 30, 2006—Tanzanian, Zimbabwean, Nigerian, Zambian, Sudanese, Israeli, Palestinian and American youth came together again for MCW's 9th Youth Leadership Retreat from July 21st to July 29th, 2006 in Champlain, Vermont and New York City.

"MCW's youth leadership retreats provide young leaders from around the world with the opportunity to network with a wide range of individuals," said Khalid Elachi, MCW 2006 Retreat Director. "Not only do they interact with like-minded youth, but they also meet other social entrepreneurs working in both the public and private sectors."

The week-long event began when graduates of MCW's youth leadership retreat met at New York University for three days. The ten mentors brainstormed ideas on how to share their own personal experiences at past retreats with the new group of over forty participants. The group then traveled to Champlain College in Vermont, which hosted the MCW Retreat for the first time. While in Vermont, the mentors facilitated interactive workshops on cultural competency, conflict resolution, and social entrepreneurship.

"It's interesting to see how people from around the world share the same experiences and ideas, despite all their differences," said Nelson Cruz, 18, from the Bronx, New York.

The theme of this summer's retreat was "translating dreams into reality." Participants prepared vision plans, which showcased their personal concerns in their own communities and the steps they would take to improve the situation. For example, one teenager focused on developing an after-school tutoring program in her neighborhood for underprivileged elementary school students. Another recognized the need to create alternative spaces for young children to play in after school; she recommended using unused high school gymnasiums.

Special summer events also included MCW's first ever Open Doors ceremony outside New York City—at Champlain College. Dozens of local Vermonters learned about MCW's work worldwide, met with retreat participants and mentors and celebrated the new MCW-Champlain College connection.

Since 1999, MCW has graduated over 300 teenagers from around the world in its internationally recognized leadership program. Through its annual interactive youth retreats, participants develop the confidence, tools and networks to create their own "local change through global exchange.TM" Each year, private and public sector partners lend their generous support to the retreat.

About Miracle Corners of the World (MCW)

MCW was founded as a non-profit organization in 1999 by youth who believe that relationships make all the difference. By bringing together people from the public and private sectors to improve the quality of life worldwide, MCW empowers youth to be positive agents of change, so they can improve their lives and contribute to their global and local communities. MCW provides programs on youth leadership, community development, and healthcare worldwide, with a special focus on the African continent, particularly Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

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9th Youth Leadership Retreat Participants at Champlain College in Vermont