

# EDUCATION UPDATE ONLINE

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## **HS Student & Tanzanian Ambassador Build Bridges in Education**

By Liza Young

During a time of natural disaster occurrences and threats of terror, it's especially reassuring to know that there's hope for growth and revitalization and fostering of friendships between democratic and pluralistic societies. This was evident at a recent American Jewish Committee (AJC) meeting, where there was a gathering of AJC members and members of Miracle Corner's of the World (MCW), a non-profit community development and revitalization organization, to welcome the Tanzanian Ambassador and other representatives of Tanzania.

The AJC is committed to safeguarding the rights and well-being of Jewish people worldwide, through the promotion of societies which support freedom and human rights, and through the encouragement of understanding between peoples.

AJC thus recognizes the importance of strengthening connections between the democracies of America, Israel and Africa. It was with great warmth and friendship that the committee welcomed Ambassador Augustine Mahiga of Tanzania-recently appointed to the United Nations Security Council-as well as other Tanzanian representatives. As described by Robert Goodkind, President of the AJC, the relationship will be mutually beneficial to Jews and to citizens of Tanzania.

Ambassador Mahiga gave warm greetings and expressed the wish that this will be the beginning of a longstanding relationship with the AJC. He expressed his admiration for the Jewish people, and that on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the Holocaust, it is fitting for international communities to stand together and say "never again." The Ambassador additionally gave thanks to the AJC for its involvement, in collaboration with MCW, in the development of the St. Augustine University Library through the donation of computers and a Jewish Library comprised of books that provide an understanding of Jewish History.

With respect to MCW, their involvement in a library project in Tanzania is yet another example of their continuing dedication to community development across continents, ranging from the United States to Africa. In Arusha, Tanzania, MCW has been involved in developments such as the Dr. Herman Wrice Community Center, which provides services to thousands of youth in the areas ranging from pre-school education to computer and entrepreneurial training. Other efforts include the partnering with NYU's College of Dentistry in organizing a community outreach program in Tanzania, treating thousands who would otherwise have no access to dental care.

At the AJC meeting, the mutual admiration between guest speakers Eddie Bergman, Co-Founder, during his teen years, of MCW, and Ambassador Mahiga was clearly evident. The Ambassador summarized some of the many accomplishments of the MCW and personally praised Eddie for his vision at such a youthful age, describing him as "inspirational," having "won the confidence of villages" in his journeys to communities throughout West Africa.

Eddie respectfully introduced Ambassador Mahiga as one of the "most brilliant scholars and minds on African affairs-A global leader but also dedicated to his people."

Overall the meeting at the AJC signified an international meeting of the minds, with important repercussions on an educational, political and social scale. As Roberta Richin, Advisory Board member of MCW and Council Administrator for SAJES Council for Prejudice Reduction stated, "It's important for peoples of the world to be one, to be part of the human family," and hopes for this were clearly evident at the meeting."