

Mama Makeka House of HOPE

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*Where There is Always Room
for One More*

See our website: www.mmhhope.org

Mama Makeka House of Hope (MMH Hope) is a charitable Non-Governmental Organization incorporated in the State of California under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code in memory of Mama Makeka Rebecca Tshimika.

MISSION

The mission of MMH Hope is to promote, advocate, and support Health, Education, and Community Organizing/ Empowerment Initiatives among the underserved populations of Africa, the Caribbean and Central San Joaquin Valley, California.

VISION AND SCOPE

Mama Makeka House of Hope is committed to the advancement of existing services and assisting in the development of new initiatives.

GOVERNANCE

Mama Makeka House of Hope is governed by a Board of Directors that has the power to manage the property, programs, affairs, and business of the organization, and any other functions which are permitted by the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of the Organization.

McLane High School Holds First Annual Health Fair

On May 19th, 2007, McLane High School's Medical Education and Research Academy students hosted the first annual health fair. The health fair was part of the senior project for MMH Hope students. It turned out to be a successful event, not only for McLane students but also for their families and the community.

Several local organizations and businesses were represented, including Kaiser Permanente, Children's Hospital, American Red Cross, Fresno Fire Department, and American Ambulance. Participants shared resources and information on how to access health-care, and live a healthy lifestyle. The American Red Cross generously offered free CPR and water safety classes for the community. Mama Makeka House of Hope was represented displaying local and international projects and focusing on students and activities from this year's Youth Theater Project.

As one of the medical academy's community partners, we are very proud of these students. We have enjoyed working with them throughout this past year. We see in them the desire and drive to use what they have learned to make a positive impact on their communities. We applaud the efforts of all medical academy seniors, teachers, and community partners who donate their time and energy to make a difference in Fresno.



July–September 2007

Mama Makeka House of Hope Newsletter

From the Executive Director's Desk

On May 8, 2007, ten seniors and two juniors from McLane High School shared their final projects with McLane High School teachers and MMH Hope board members. Presentations included summaries and thoughts about experiences in the program, and poetry and dramas written and performed by the students as they shared what they had learned through this year's journey in Youth Theater Project. Each one's story proves to be a shining example of success despite adversity.

In 2007-2008, MMH Hope will begin, "Fresno: One Chapter Yet Many Stories" working together with Fresno Parks and Recreation to expand the program to work with youth in five community centers as well as students at McLane High School. Kaiser Permanente continues to provide financial support.

We wish to congratulate and thank this year's students for an enjoyable and successful year. We look forward to watching their stories unfold as they continue to write new chapters of their lives and as they transition to university life next year.

Pakisa Tshimika

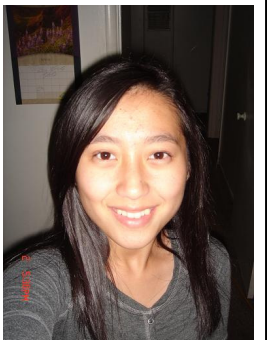


Mama was a Bitter Woman

Mama was a bitter woman:
She'd been through
Too many wars and battles,
Leaving her homeland,
Watching people dying around her,
Losing her husband,
Remarrying too many times.
She'd lost her husband in war
Her second in divorce, her third of disease
And her fourth through her own death.
Mama was a bitter woman:
Life had been too hard on her
But life will never get easier.
She'd been through too many trials, too many conflicts
She couldn't handle it anymore.
But you have to be wrong to understand being right.
Sadly, she died of cancer,
Adding to the bitterness in her soul,
Overwhelming herself.

Mama was a bitter woman:
She was full of her own thoughts and stress,
She couldn't comprehend what was going on,
She didn't make the right choices,
And she never learned from her mistakes.
She always wanted to be right
Mama was a bitter woman:
But you have to know her story
To understand her bitterness.

Mama was a bitter woman:
Yes, I know...But...
Does that mean I will become like her in the future?
It's unsure what will happen in the future,
Because the future is unclear and no one knows what will happen.
Pachialia Vang



Even though your family can be the cause of your violent behavior, it could also be the solution to it...I also learned that you don't have to be the one receiving the violence to be affected by it. Everyone around can be affected by it.

Juan Becerra

I think that what I've learned is that violence is not only in our community but it is worldwide. It's not little; it's a big problem. It can take a toll on a person physically, mentally, and emotionally. I think of seeing the slides that Pakisa showed us from Africa and how people, especially the women, were victims of sexual abuse all the time. It's sad because so many people are victims of violence and no one really knows.

I think that now I do have more knowledge or background. I think I can handle my problems and situations a little better than I did before. I will try to help people who I know are experiencing violence or abuse. Anna Valenzuela

My Story

I used to be normal
Just like every other girl
Going to school and being with all my friends
But that changed
For I am trapped in a cage that won't set me free
And I'm afraid,
Afraid to face the world I once knew
As I walk down this muddy street
I look like a maniac
Ready to pounce on prey
But the people who stare don't know what I've been through
I was taken away at the age of 10
Scared and alone
Facing all the pain on my own
I didn't know what to do
Because I was too young to understand
I was taken advantage of and abused
Left with scars that haunt me everyday
I live my life wondering if I will survive the next day
From this awful torture that repeats itself every day
I was fed nothing but scraps
And locked up in a room of darkness
I prayed night and day for the little miracle of being saved
Not knowing what tomorrow would bring
My prayers soon came true and I was saved
Tears of joy fall, as I am set free from this prison
And taken back to where I belong
But something felt different for I was never the same

The thoughts of the past traumatize me
Like a leech stuck on me and never letting go
I never lived a normal life again
My own people look down on me
Pushing me around till I fall to the ground
Like I'm a piece of trash
That can be thrown away if not wanted
I thought of taking my life
And putting an end to all my miseries
But as times pass I soon realize
That there were many out there who have been through what I've been through
And I soon learn to forgive and accept the fact
By telling my story....

Michelle Mua



This past year I learned more about my friends than I did in all four years of high school. Everyone has their own aspect of what violence is and how to deal with it. The biggest concept I probably learned was that, no matter how big the problem is or what the situation is, as long as I know what is right from wrong I should help somebody in a violent situation. This program has given me a whole new aspect of what violence is and how it should be handled. Jesse Estrada

I am planning to use this experience in my future and every day of my life. I learned that problems are not called problems; they are challenges. I will teach other people how to control their anger. I know that I can't change the world, but if I can change one, I will be glad that person can change someone else, like a chain. Little by little, we hope to change the whole world. Jorge Arriola



Standing from left to right: Mai Vue Yang, Heather Hallmark, Jorge Arriola, PaoHoua Lee, Michelle Mua, Anna Valenzuela, Melissa Graybill, Julia Reimer. Sitting from left to right: Tabitha Graybill, Juan Becerra, Pachialia Vang, Brittney Page, Julie Yang, Samantha Holguin, Joey Graybill. Not pictured are Jesse Estrada, Rebecca Allen, Pakisa Tshimika

You Know Who I Am

You know who I am
I'm the one you pass every day on the street
The one you see with the sad eyes and broken spirit
I always ask if you have any extra spare change
But, with a snobby look on your face, you tell me, "I work hard for my money."
You know who I am
I was just like you once
I had a corner office on the top floor
Three cars and a family

I worked hard for everything I owned
Never willing to spare any change for someone holding up a sign
Until, I decided to take a vacation and enjoy life
My company realized they didn't need me anymore
They let me go
You know who I am
Everything I've worked for was gone in the blink of any eye
My wife took my kids and every possession I had
All I was left with was my hands
Finding work was even harder now

No place to stay, nothing to eat, no money to make
You know who I am
I am the one you see holding up the sign that says,
"Will Work for Food"
You say I'm not trying, but I've tried with all my might
It's hard to pick yourself up when you've already fallen, and there's no one there to give you a hand
You know who I am
So, please, can you spare me some change?

Samantha Holguin