Happy 2012!

Welcome to the United African Organization's (UAO) e-newsletter - African Advocate!

Each new year, since its founding in 2005, the UAO has steadily strengthened its capacity to serve the rapidly growing African community in Illinois. In 2011, UAO:

- Advocated for public policies to enhance immigrant integration and dignified refugee resettlement, as well as advance social and economic justice (See our work with Hair Braiders and the Dogan Act.)
- Promoted citizenship and civic participation to empower the African immigrant & refugee community.
- Built on the leadership and organizational capacity of the community through monthly workshops in the African Leadership Development Program.
- Launched African Voices Podcast to cover pertinent community issues and perspectives.
- Initiated the Africans in Chicago oral history project.
- Expanded our role as the information and resource clearinghouse of the community to assist individuals and families in accessing social safety net programs.
- Increased educational scholarship opportunity for African undergraduate students.

With your support, we look forward to building on this invaluable work in 2012!
We are once again in an election year. It is extremely important to exercise your right to vote in the 2012 elections. But democracy is more than voting every four years for a president; it is a sustained process of engagement and advocacy around the critical issues affecting our communities both in the United States and on the African continent. As you make your New Year’s resolutions for 2012, consider how you can work with others to deepen our democracy.

We wish you all a happy, prosperous and fulfilling year ahead!

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**UAO to host Youth Symposium**

UAO will host an African Youth Symposium in March 2012. The aim of the African Youth Symposium is to bring together African and African-American Youth, as well as other immigrant and native-born young people in Chicago to engage in dialogue around issues and challenges in their communities.

Through dialogue, we hope that young people will build understanding of each others’ points of view, and in the process find common ground. We hope that the symposium will be a catalyst for sustained youth dialogue and organizing in Chicago, with committed and open engagement from African youth. The symposium will be a day-long affair, and will include performances, music, talks and discussions.

Look out for more information over the coming weeks on how to participate in events leading up to the African Youth Symposium, and the symposium itself.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOP**

Next Citizenship workshop:

**Date:** Saturday, Jan 14, 2012  
**Time:** 8:30am - 11:30am  
**Venue:** Salvation Army Mayfair Community, 5020 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60630

To register or for more information, contact Cheikh Diop:  
[cheikh_diop@unitesaficans.org](mailto:cheikh_diop@unitesaficans.org)
UAO leadership workshops continue

We are only as strong as our community! So it is incumbent upon us to develop the leadership and organizational capacity of the community. At the most recent UAO Leadership Workshop, Dr. Alle Kabba, Executive Director of the UAO, led an engaging session on strengthening organizational capacity.

Participants learned essential skills, strategies, and best practices for building strong and effective community organizations. The UAO's African Leadership Development Program is targeted at African community leaders in and around Chicago.

Leadership workshops take place every month and cover a range of topics. The workshops are free, but you must register in advance to attend. The next workshop will be:

- **Date:** Saturday, Jan 21, 2012
- **Time:** 9:00am-1:00pm
- **Venue:** 6th Floor, 10 West 35th Street, Chicago IL 60616
- **Topic:** Grant Writing

**Facilitator:** Maria Gray, who has a long history of working in and consulting with non-profits, will facilitate the workshop.

E-mail training@unitedafricans.org to register or call (312) 949-9980 for more information.

WBEZ runs segment on African food in Chicago

Earlier this month, WBEZ’s Worldview ran a segment on African food. The station interviewed a number of African immigrants and refugees in Chicago about how they have adapted food from home in America. They also spoke to an author on African cuisines.

You can now download the Worldview episode at WBEZ’s website. Or click here for direct download.
UAO commemorated 50th Anniversary of Tanzanian Independence

On December 9, 2011, Tanzania celebrated its 50th anniversary of independence from Britain. To commemorate this special milestone, the UAO featured an interview on its monthly CAN TV show with Rachel Wasira of the Tanzanian Community Association of the Midwest. UAO Executive Director, Alie Kabba spoke to Wasira about the Tanzanian independence struggle, Julius Nyerere, and Tanzanians in the United States. Click the link above to watch the video or check out the UAO's video channel.

UAO's Alie Kabba hosts new show, Africa Speaks, on WVON

UAO's Executive Director Alie Kabba will host a monthly show on Chicago's WVON, AM1690. The radio station provides an interactive forum for the African American community to discuss current, social, economic, and political issues. Africa Speaks will feature discussion on issues affecting the African continent. Tune in Saturday, January 14 at 2:00pm (CST) as we focus on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. You can listen live on www.wvon.com, and call-in during the show with your comments or questions.

GHANAIAN LEGEND KOO NIMO VISITS CHICAGO

85 year old Ghanaian musician Koo Nimo is in Chicago next week. Sponsored by the Northwestern Program for African Studies, Nimo will be participating in 2 FREE events.

Concert: Koo Nimo & The Occidental Highlife Association
Date: January 11, 2012, 8:30 pm
Venue: Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Avenue, Chicago

Palm Wine Guitar Workshop with Koo Nimo
Date: January 12, 2012, 7:00 pm
Venue: Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Avenue, Chicago

Registration required - contact african-studies@northwestern.edu

HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTARY, "BENEATH THE BLINDFOLD"

This month in Chicago is the World Premiere of BENEATH THE BLINDFOLD, A Human Rights Documentary by Ines Sommer and Kathy Berger.

In the film four torture survivors, who all now live in the U.S., share personal stories of trauma that reveal a singular truth: this should not happen to anyone. One of the torture survivors is a nurse from Liberia.

Dates and Times:
January 13th @ 8:15pm
January 19th @ 8pm
Venue: Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State Street, Chicago, IL 60601 at the School of the Art Institute,

A 6:30pm reception precedes the Friday, Jan 13 screening.

Tickets Available at the Gene Siskel Film Center Box Office (+1-312-846-2600) and www.ticketmaster.com
African Voices in December

December was a bumper month for African Voices Podcast, the UAO's online radio show. December's podcasts:

World Aids Day Edition
- with South African journalist Johnny Steinberg, author of Sizwe's Test.
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Holiday Edition
- featuring interview with and music from Malian Band Tinariwen.
CLICK TO LISTEN

African Voices Episode 3
- News and events
- Interview with author Bobby Gboyor about the civil war in Sierra Leone and Liberia
- Info on the UAO's free ESL classes
CLICK TO LISTEN

We all have stories about how we, each in our own way, enrich our communities.

Tell us how you GIVE BACK to YOUR COMMUNITY...

You could be featured in the next issue of African Advocate!

Email: editor@uniteafricans.org

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