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Menno Simons College Alumni Improve Access to Education for Refugees in Kenya

For release February 26, 2013

WINNIPEG, MB – Menno Simons College (MSC) students and alumni are active in not-for-profit and humanitarian organizations around the world. One local organization with a powerful global impact – Humankind International – has a significant number of MSC alumni in its ranks and is working to improve access to education on the other side of the world.

Humankind is a not-for profit humanitarian organization made up of individuals who believe that all children have the right to education. The organization has put its focus on improving access to education in refugee camps and has set out to build the first-ever early childhood education centre in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. In cooperation with local partners, Humankind has recently secured the land where the centre will be built.

MSC alumni Matt Fast, Abdi Ahmed, Noelle DePape, and Nadia Mohammed serve on the board of Humankind International. As well, Muuxi Adam – one of three founders of Humankind International – is a current MSC student and is set to graduate from The University of Winnipeg with a degree in International Development Studies this spring.



Adam, speaking about the organization's vision, comments: "All my life, for as long as I can remember, I have always dreamed of helping children in need simply because I was once one of those children myself. Together, we can help children reach their highest potential and together we can achieve our dreams."

Muuxi Adam

"I think our time at MSC has definitely inspired, informed, and guided us in our work with Humankind," says Matt Fast. "For many of us, it was through our time at MSC that we first became aware of issues and challenges facing refugees – and the knowledge gained through that experience is informing and guiding our work now."

This fits with what MSC Student and Community Relations Coordinator Samantha Kornelsen says are the goals of the school. "The International Development Studies program at MSC emphasizes creative thinking rooted in development processes at global, national, and community levels," says Kornelsen. "Students are encouraged to engage in experience-based learning through case studies and practicum opportunities in real-life settings. Through this experience, they are prepared to work collaboratively to create change and make a real difference in our world."

She adds: "I am inspired by our alumni as I see the exciting ways they are making a place for themselves in this world and working for positive change."

Over the past year, Humankind has been engaging youth in Manitoba schools and hosting fundraisers to raise awareness of and support for this project – and to do even more for the people living in Dadaab. To date, they have raised \$30,000 and are almost halfway to their goal.

Menno Simons College Students' Association is holding a fundraising concert for Humankind International on Friday, March 8 at 8 PM at the Park Theatre. Music will include the JD Edwards band the Solutions, and Kobalt. Tickets are \$12 at the door or can be purchased in advance for \$10 at Menno Simons College or The University of Winnipeg Info Booth.

Menno Simons College fosters a learning community that prepares students from diverse backgrounds for participation and leadership in local and global communities. MSC, considered a pioneer in International Development Studies and Conflict Resolution Studies, offers a wide range of courses and experienced faculty in these areas that are unparalleled in Canada. Programs at MSC also include practicum opportunities and supporting scholarships. MSC is a College of Canadian Mennonite University and is located at and affiliated with The University of Winnipeg.

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