



PRESS RELEASE

Liz Fanning, Founder and Executive Director of CorpsAfrica; Email:

lfanning@corpsafrica.org

Arthur Nkosi, Director of CorpsAfrica/Malawi; Email: ankosi@corpsafrica.org

Pawel Weszka, NBA Africa; Email: pweszka@nba.com

CorpsAfrica and NBA to Inaugurate New Basketball Court at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi

LILONGWE, MALAWI, June 19, 2019 – CorpsAfrica proudly announces that in collaboration with the NBA and OCP Group, it will inaugurate a CorpsAfrica Volunteer-facilitated basketball court at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp on Friday, June 28th. The court will serve as a space for ongoing sports programs promoting dignity, social inclusion, and overall well-being for youth in this protracted refugee situation.

On June 28th at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp near Lilongwe, CorpsAfrica/Malawi staff will bring together refugee youth living in the Dzaleka Refugee Camp, public and private sector partners, and representatives from NBA Africa to tour the camp and celebrate the opening of the court. The full-day event will include speeches from government officials and project stakeholders including NBA Africa, Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) and CorpsAfrica headquarters. Participants will unveil the court with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and basketball tournaments for girls and boys from Dzaleka.

“This project is truly a collaborative effort, bringing together CorpsAfrica Volunteers from across Africa, the NBA, young refugees, JRS and other partners, and the Malawian government,” says Founder and Executive Director, Liz Fanning, who served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco during the 1990s. She modeled CorpsAfrica after the Peace Corps but geared it towards Africans wanting to help other Africans. Despite its global presence, volunteer service through Peace Corps is open only to Americans. “I started CorpsAfrica so young Africans could have the same opportunity I did to learn, grow, and make an impact.”

One such African is Amadou Alpha Ba, a Senegalese CorpsAfrica Volunteer who has been serving at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi since 2017. Alpha developed this project in collaboration with JRS and the “Dream Team,” a group of young basketball players from the camp. In a video explaining the project’s aims, Alpha said, “I should have finished my service here in Malawi in October 2018 – but I extended because of one thing, it’s those guys [the youth at the camp].”

Leading CorpsAfrica’s effort in Malawi as Country Director is Arthur Nkosi, who said of the project, “At CorpsAfrica/Malawi, we are honored to partner with the Malawi Government through the Ministry of Homeland Security. In response to this need identified by the community at the camp, Alpha implemented the building of a basketball court to bring youth development and empowerment to the refugees at Dzaleka Camp through the love of basketball.”

“Our collaboration with CorpsAfrica illustrates once again the capacity of the game of basketball to serve as a conduit to build bridges across cultures and bring people together,” said NBA Africa Managing Director and newly appointed President of the Basketball Africa League, Amadou Gallo Fall. “The new basketball court will provide young boys and girls with an opportunity to play and learn about the values of our game, such as teamwork, respect, determination and community.”

The NBA held its third NBA Africa Game in Pretoria, South Africa in August 2018, partnered with Sports for Education and Economic Development in Senegal (SEED Project) to open a new elite basketball training center in Saly, Senegal last November to serve as the primary training location for NBA Academy Africa prospects, and has hosted 16 Basketball Without Borders (BWB) Africa camps since 2003, with 10 former BWB Africa campers having been drafted into the NBA. This year, the NBA plans to reach more than 2.5 million boys and girls ages 16 and under through Jr. NBA programs in 21 African countries. In February, the NBA and FIBA announced their plan to launch the Basketball Africa League (BAL), a new professional league featuring 12 club teams from across Africa scheduled to begin play next year. To date, the NBA has created 87 places to live, learn and play in seven African countries.

Current and former NBA and WNBA players, including Charlotte Hornets center Bismack Biyombo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and WNBA Legend and New Orleans Pelicans Vice President of Basketball Operations/Team Development, Swin Cash, attended a CorpsAfrica reception showcasing the basketball project in New York City on April 25, 2019. In a speech at the reception, His Excellency Edward Sawerengera, Malawi’s Ambassador to the U.S., said “It is our duty as Malawians, and as the international community, to make sure these refugees have the opportunity to rise above their hardship. As you can see, CorpsAfrica is not shying away from this challenge. I am happy the NBA is supporting this Volunteer-led project at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp.”

###

CorpsAfrica trains and sends college-educated young Africans to live in remote villages in their own countries to facilitate small-scale, high-impact projects that are identified by local people, along the lines of the Peace Corps model.

For more information, visit www.corpsafrica.org.

