



Newsletter

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Keth, Kenya

“Sport brings people together and fosters peace,” says Keth, currently a student on JWL’s Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) course in Kakuma refugee camp (Kenya). She applied for the course in order to gain the knowledge required to teach youth in the community and beyond, as well as to have access to further professional opportunities. YSF students in Kakuma interact with peers in Malawi’s Dzaleka refugee camp. They form discussion groups, sharing different ideas and experiences. “When I have questions, I ask my colleagues,” she says.

The course launched in October 2018 and so far, Keth feels like it has helped open up her mind. Although born in Kakuma she is originally from South Sudan, where “we South Sudanese girls, we don’t have opportunities like boys.” Indeed, she often hears girls say that they are not allowed to participate in sports. “But if I have done it, other girls can do it too,” she says, adding that “I want to encourage them – mobilise them.” Keth is increasingly aware of the ability of women to do more, to change the world. “It is an opportunity of learning and this keeps us moving on.” While some discourage her, her family, friends and neighbours support her.

The YSF inspired her to start a volleyball group of girls and women. Having reached out to them and their parents, the group now comes together and practises three times a week, in the late afternoon, to play and improve their technique. Keth’s favourite position is centre.

Keth’s dream is to become a business woman and she therefore would like to continue her education. She hopes to return to her homeland one day. “Then I want to change something in this world and I want to be known.”

Technological development to aid marginalised communities

Earlier this month, JWL attended the OEB Conference held in Berlin, Germany. The conference (held annually) brings together corporate, education and public service sectors, fostering cross-sector exchanges and collaboration in the area of learning technologies. This year, over 2,500 representatives from the business, education and research, government and public sectors, from over 70 countries, attended the event to present and review the latest learning technology developments, challenges and opportunities.

JWL Executive President, Fr Peter Balleis SJ, addressed conference members in our very own boardroom dialogue entitled *Technological Development to Aid Marginalised Communities*.

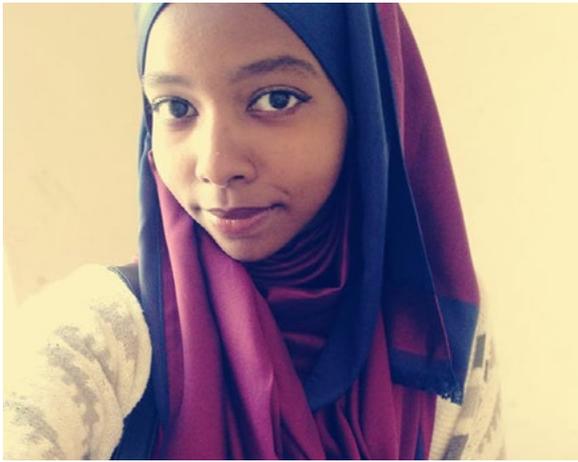
Also an exhibitor at the conference, JWL launched JWL HeLP – our innovative Humanitarian e-Learning Platform. The realities faced by our students often mean they have little or no internet connection at any point in their day, or have to travel long distances to get to their community learning centre. Developed with the support of our partner Seitwerk, JWL HeLP meets the needs of students in challenging contexts around the world. We have designed a secure, intuitive Student Information System and Learning Management System for students and faculties.

Through this online/offline learning platform, students are enabled to interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, bridging the geographical divide to achieve worldwide learning. A content server- the Computer in the Corner- has internal Wi-Fi and allows students to easily download content packages even in locations with little connectivity.

The offline app is built for Android and Windows devices, allowing students to study anytime, anywhere, with a wealth of educational resources at their fingertips.



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From student to coordinator

My name is Fowza, I am from Somalia and I am 23 years old. I live in Amman, Jordan, with my family. Before enrolling with JWL, I was a student with Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). I took one year English language with JRS in a very welcoming and comfortable learning environment. I came from a family that values education and this motivated me to continue improving my English. The Diploma programme was the opportunity I was waiting for. As I remember, I was introduced to the Diploma programme through a friend. My family also had a big role in supporting me throughout the programme. There is no doubt that online learning is very challenging but useful at the same time. It was my first experience ever with online learning. It took me some time to cope with the new learning styles. The challenges and the difficulties I have been through made me the person I am today. I am now eager to develop and build the community I live in. I became a strong, independent woman that is reliable and open-minded. All the courses I took in the Diploma programme were useful. The course I enjoyed the most was Religions of the World. After I finished this course, I had become more accepting and open-minded. I believe this course enabled me to respect and appreciate our differences. Our differences are what make us beautiful.

The reason why I applied for the Bachelor in Leadership [provided through Creighton University] is because the Diploma is half-way and I need to make it to a degree. Through the Bachelor in Leadership, I could expand my knowledge and learn more about the qualities and skills of effective leaders. This will help me to make changes in today's world.

Fowza is now the Community Learning Centre Coordinator in Amman. In addition to her upcoming studies on the Leadership Bachelor, she will be overseeing day-to-day activities of the learning centre, and supporting students on their educational journey with JWL.

Being a coordinator is a challenging work but I am learning many new things regarding this position. I believe this experience will help me in my future career and in my academic life. I want to be a role model for other students; especially the females to keep them motivated and inspired. Part of being a coordinator means; I have to listen to students' concerns and worries and refer their cases to JWL team. I am aware of the difficulties and challenges that students might go through as I experienced them myself. I have to make sure students' voices are heard and responded to.

Finally, my message to the current students and for the new intake is to work hard and be committed. Many people around the world wish they could get such an opportunity to develop and reach their goals and dreams.

On determination

Joyce, from Rwanda, had long dreamt about an opportunity to further her education. She is from Rwanda and has been living in Malawi's Dzaleka refugee camp. As a mother of five children it was challenging but with her husband's support, JWL's flexibility, and being able to leave her children at JRS' day-care centre, she finally completed the JWL Diploma programme this summer. This, she finds, is "a testimony of courage, hard work and determination" on her part.

Despite a life fraught with trials, loss, and her continued challenges as a refugee, Joyce is thankful for having survived and believes in the future. Living and learning alongside persons from different backgrounds and becoming aware of the different challenges she and others faced as refugees, she has realised that "being a refugee doesn't stop one to fulfil one's determinations." As far as she sees it, once one finds answers to questions such as who they are, what they are determined to do and what comes next, living life and fulfilling your goals becomes easier.

Running her own little convenience store provides modest revenues that go towards covering, among other things, care for her whole family, as well as towards renting a plot of land on which she and her husband cultivate tomatoes.

For her internship, Joyce volunteered within the Dzaleka Health Centre's department of home-based care, assisting persons with a range of afflictions. Three days a week, house visits would be conducted to listen to patients' needs and collect data for reporting, as necessary. Now, Joyce collects data about infants under the age of five and also conducts tests for a range of diseases, in the laboratory. Through this work, the number of teen mothers and their lack of access to education and other opportunities became apparent.

As a mother and having learned the necessary skills to bring about social change, Joyce has decided to establish a 'Teen Mothers Association.' The idea would be to "lift" these young girls, orient them towards education, showing them the difference it can make; how despite being a mother of five she still managed to achieve her dreams; and that they still have a chance.



Always believe in your abilities

Odisho is originally from Teklef, a village on Nineveh Plain (Iraq) which he and his family had to leave, when ISIS came. Now, Odisho and his family live in a small village not far from Dohuk. He had to learn Kurdish and study extra hard in order to complete his high school studies. A lover of languages, Odisho joined the JWL Global English Language programme at level B1 and is currently at level B1+.

Blended online learning and the mobile devices provided mean students can study anytime, anywhere, as well as study, discuss and share experiences as a group. In addition to significantly improving his vocabulary and pronunciation, Odisho has found that he has learned a lot about other cultures. "My thoughts and my mindset change every day," he told us.



Becoming an English teacher is one of his goals, along with teaching human development and building his community. "I think as a teacher I can combine both." To further his goals, Odisho hopes to one day pursue a bachelors and a masters. Working in addition to his studies, he seldom sees his family (including his brother, three sisters, his dog, cat and turtle) for more than a few hours a day.

To current and future students he would say, "Study hard. You can't achieve what you want without learning and practising... and practising. Always believe in your abilities."



Going to the margins

Pascal Meyer SJ

Hello! I am Pascal and I recently joined JWL as Global Student Services and Alumni Manager. Normally based in Geneva, Switzerland, I have spent the last 5 weeks at our community learning centre (CLC) in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya. Before leaving Europe I had no idea what it would feel like to work in a refugee camp. I had some ideas and images in mind but in the end, none of them corresponded with reality. "Experience is the best teacher," one of our students told me. I think he's right.

Kakuma Refugee Camp is a huge, noisy, dusty and chaotic place in the midst of a semi-desert in North of the country. The vast majority of persons come from South Sudan, but also from countries such as Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia. Our students consider the

JWL learning centre as their home. They see it as a safe place where they can learn, interact with each other and work towards a better future. There is a remarkable connection between the students and JWL and I would say that many of them feel proud to be part of our programmes. Our students are beacons of hope within the chaotic and often depressing daily life in Kakuma.

I am now at our CLC in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, Malawi. In contrast, Dzaleka Refugee Camp is much smaller and I would even consider it as being a more quiet and safe place. Students here also feel very proud and connected to JWL and I have found this very endearing.

Over these past few weeks, I realised that all of our students struggle with a range of different issues within the camps. Many suffer due to

scarce resources or frequently have to travel long distances on foot, while others face racism or gender-based violence. Still, they don't lose hope - the hope that their life in the camp is only temporary and that one day they will return to their homes, or start a new life somewhere else. All of them are grateful for their education and the prospects it may bring.

Are you interested in volunteering?

Please contact us at jwlinfo@jwl.org



JWL IN THE NEWS

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Building of community learning centre in Central African Republic made possible by your support.

In September 2018, we appealed for your help to raise USD 10,000 in order to complete the building of our new community learning centre (CLC) in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR). We have now raised the amount and construction is ongoing!

The CLC is preparing to open its doors in January 2018, admitting the first group of Global English Language (GEL) students. We hope the centre will be their home away from home, a safe place for learning and broadening their minds. This would not have been possible without your support. In time, we hope to offer professional and academic programmes there as well.

THANK YOU!



International Migrants Day 2018

On 18 December, the world marks International Migrants Day.

["More than 60,000 migrants have died on the move since 2000... and behind every number is a person – a woman, a child, a man, who simply dream for what any of us dream – opportunity, dignity & a better life,"](#) said UNSG, António Guterres, speaking on the occasion of the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (10 December 2018, Marrakesh, Morocco).

JWL believes in the dignity of, compassion and respect for all persons, including refugees and migrants.

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