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Benefit Concert to Support Kenyan Clinic

July 16, 2014

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— African music, dance and storytelling will take center stage Aug. 10 at a benefit concert with numerous ties to Illinois Wesleyan University. The concert will raise funds for the **Lamu Center of Preventative Health** (LCPH) in Lamu, Kenya.

LCPH is a clinic that provides free, high-quality healthcare to one of the most impoverished communities in Kenya. Illinois Wesleyan alumnus Munib Said Abdulrehman '02, who was raised on the island of Lamu, founded the clinic, along with Associate Professor of Anthropology Rebecca Gearhart. Abdulrehman also serves as executive director. His sister Miaad Abdulrehman '12 serves on the clinic's board of directors, along with Gearhart, Professor of Political Science Jim Simeone and Art Killian, retired Illinois Wesleyan groundskeeper.

The 6th annual benefit will be held at Bloomington's Castle Theatre for the first time. The choice of venue is possible because of the generosity of Castle co-owner Rory O'Connor, Illinois Wesleyan Class of 1983, according to Simeone.

"Rory and the Castle staff have been great," Simeone said. "They are professionals with a state-of-the-art facility, sound system and website. They could have commanded a higher booking fee but they respect what LCPH does and gave us a good deal."

Entertainment for the Aug. 10 event includes Morikeba Kouyate, a seventh-generation jali (griot) musician and storyteller. A griot, or jali, is a West African historian, storyteller, praise singer, poet or musician. Often seen as a societal leader due to his traditional position as adviser to royals, the griot is a repository of oral tradition. Kouyate has recorded two CDs of songs and stories that share a 700-year-old history of the Mandingo people.

The Griot Ensemble will also perform. The ensemble performs high-energy African percussion music. Their repertoire includes African folktale storytelling, dance and performance on traditional instruments.

Tickets are \$30 and available at the Castle Theatre for the all ages-appropriate performance. The show begins at 4:30 p.m. Proceeds from the concert will raise funds to pay the salaries of the full-time nurse practitioner and the lab technician at LCPH.



Poster by retired IWU groundskeeper
Art Killian

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