

Board Meeting
May 17, 2007

RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND
VOLUNTEERISM BY UIC STUDENTS: PROJECT FOCUS, CHICAGO

The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois recognizes the dedicated leadership and volunteerism demonstrated by three Chicago campus students who shared a vision of bringing the plight of Ugandan orphans affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic to wider public awareness. These students set a goal to “help the people help themselves” through an empowerment-through-art program they called PROJECT FOCUS.

Inspired by a documentary film about children living in war-torn Northern Uganda, these Chicago campus students boarded a plane to Kampala, Uganda, determined to make a difference. On their own initiative, with no formal training, no direction and no money, they created an organization whose objective eventually became public awareness of Uganda through photographs as documented through the eyes of Ugandan youth.

The students found many creative ways to raise consciousness and by doing so, inspired giving. Their largest initiative, a photography exhibit on the campus entitled “The FOCUS Exhibit: Life Through the Eyes of Ugandan Youth,” documented the joys and sorrows of everyday life in Uganda accompanied by a lecture series they organized. They plan to expand their work of artistic self-expression through photography by adding

music and film projects to their program. Their organization grows as they inspire other students with their fervor.

The Board of Trustees hereby commends these Chicago campus students-- Daniel Yang, Harish Patel, and Aura Brickler--for their exceptional volunteerism, selfless dedication, creative energy, and unwavering commitment to making a better world.

The Board of Trustees directs that this resolution be incorporated into the minutes of today's meeting as part of the official public record, and that a suitable copy be given to each of the students as a permanent reminder of the esteem in which they are held.