

PIAF FELLOWS' FLYER

News and views for and by current Princeton in Africa Fellows.

January 2008



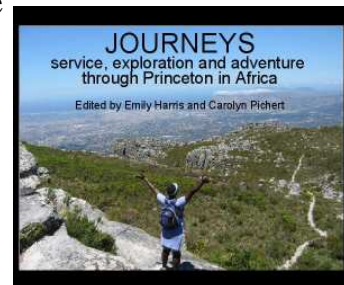
WANTED: YOUR PHOTOS!

Fellows, please share your photos with us! We're looking for pictures of you, your experiences, and your travels in the field. Email piafasst@princeton.edu.

And speaking of photos... our photo book, **JOURNEYS: service, exploration and adventure through Princeton in Africa** is now available for purchase online! Go to

[www.](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/152821)

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COMING UP...

Rebuilding Sierra Leone's Criminal Justice System

New York Supreme Court Justice Michael Corriero (*pictured below*) will speak about his experience working with the criminal justice system in Sierra Leone. Following the

country's ten-year civil war, Judge Corriero assisted the Sierra Leone Bar Association in rebuilding its capacity to function effectively and in confronting the issue of the societal reintegration of child soldiers. Space is limited, so RSVP ASAP to Cherice Landers at chericel@gmail.com.



January 8 — 7:00-8:30 PM
875 Third Avenue, New York City
(Hogan & Hartson Conference Room 2401)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

January 4

Joe Falit

January 15

Liza Hillenbrand

January 5

Marissa Grossman

January 20

Emily Harris

January 6

Lindsey Stephens

January 25

Jessie Cronan

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

by Becca Pass, '07-'08 Fellow at UNWFP in Senegal



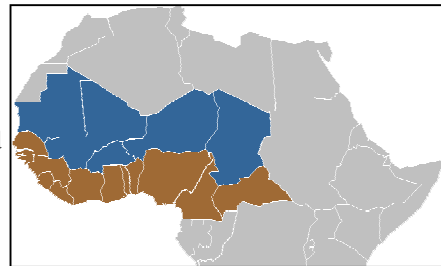
Above: Becca with a friend at a nearby turtle sanctuary.

Ideally, food assistance wouldn't exist. There would be no widespread hunger, no need for the World Food Program (WFP).

I came to the WFP in September with a lot of questions and some healthy skepticism about food assistance and about the United Nations as a whole. Since then, I've seen how far reality is from the ideal world. There are people, displaced persons in Chad for instance, who would not have food to eat if WFP's supply line were interrupted. Yet, the mission of the organization is a whole lot bigger than just moving food. WFP uses food to save lives and livelihood when individuals cannot.

I work on Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition programming for the West Africa regional bureau in Dakar, the capital of Senegal. Within the vivid colors of Dakar I can find nearly everything that New York has to offer—and at New York prices. Yet here we work to provide the food necessary to simply survive to those who have almost nothing.

In the Sahel countries—a region recognized as the large swath of sub-Saharan desert—1 in 5 children still die before their fifth birthday. More than half of these deaths are due to malnutrition caused by pure hunger or disease. Our programs include treatment and prevention measures to address both of these direct causes of malnutrition.



Above: A map of Becca's region, with the Sahelian countries in blue

What does this mean for me? A mélange of project management, program development, and strategic planning work with my boss, who heads the Nutrition and Partnership efforts. A snapshot: In one recent week my boss and I began creating a system to provide results to our donors on a regular basis, sat around a table with local NGOs to begin launching a broad initiative to ensure access to adequate foods for children under 2 in the Sahel, and met with food technologists and nearby factories to explore local production options for WFP commodities. Most recently, we recruited a group of 10 students from my graduate program at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs to work with WFP throughout their spring semester. As consultants, they will propose activities for use by WFP and beneficiaries to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, thereby protecting livelihoods of the most vulnerable in the region.

This last collaboration brings me to my favorite aspect of my life in West Africa—the synergies that result from chance meetings with people who have similar interests. Networking is a whole lot more fun on the sandy streets of West Africa than at cocktail parties in New York. For instance, last week I visited a local hospital to check out the gardens there—a lush patchwork of tasty green planted in PVC pipes, tires, and other recycled items. Established by an organization called Development in Gardening (DIG), the plants are maintained by and provide nutrition for HIV/AIDS patients. DIG was co-founded by a fellow Alabama native I happened to hear about while at home, and yet now our two organizations with shared nutritional objectives may collaborate in the future. This chance encounter provides one of many examples of networking with real benefits here; a sign of how much is possible in this interwoven world.



Left: DIG Gardens at the Fann Hospital; below left: classic pirogues poised for fishing trips in front of a typical West African sky (in Wolof, "Senegal" is derived from "Sunyu gaal" meaning "our pirogue"); below right: a Dakar street scene with colorful car rapides

