



ABOUT Under The Same Sun (UTSS) CANADA & TANZANIA

OUR STORY:

UTSS began as a collision of the heart, mind and vision of Peter Ash and Vicky Ntetema. At the time, Vicky was a journalist and Tanzania's BBC bureau chief, and Peter a Canadian businessman whose professional life was in transition. It was *Vicky's report in July of 2008 that broke the crisis* of persons with albinism (PWA) in Tanzania to the world. *It also broke Peter's heart.* Shortly after her report, Peter called Vicky and 2 people with big visions and even bigger hearts were united in a battle much bigger than themselves, a battle against discrimination so sinister that it had turned into grisly mutilations, murders and the trafficking in the human body parts of persons with albinism in Tanzania. Later in 2008 founder and CEO Peter Ash, registered UTSS as a Canadian, federally registered, non-profit organization. In 2009 UTSS - Tanzania branch was also registered as an international non-government organization (NGO) and the doors of our office in Dar es Salaam were opened to the public. Since the earth shattering report in 2008, Vicky Ntetema has resigned her post with BBC and joined UTSS as Executive Director. Today UTSS - Tanzania has 20 staff and interns, over half of whom are PWA serving their own people in their own country.

OUR VISION:

Under The Same Sun (UTSS) Fund is a Canadian, federally registered, non-profit organization founded in 2008 by the current CEO, *Peter Ash.* *We exist to promote, via advocacy and education, the wellbeing of persons often marginalized and misunderstood. Specifically, we focus on those who are disadvantaged by disability and/or poverty.* At UTSS, we are driven by the belief that all persons have intrinsic value as each is created in God's Image. Accordingly, we also believe that all persons are worthy of love, respect and, above all, dignity. The UTSS Fund will support causes globally that meet these objectives and are approved by the Board of Directors.

OUR MANDATE:

Currently, all efforts are focused on the crisis of *persons with albinism (PWA)* in Tanzania. We are investing significantly in Tanzania to improve the lives of *PWA* by establishing a well staffed office and resource center there. Along with our focus on advocacy and education, we assist *PWA* to access external information, education bursaries, health care and other community supports available in the country to assist with *their genetic condition.* UTSS will continue to work alongside PWA in Tanzania until they are able to take their rightful place as fellow citizens in their homes, communities, schools, work places, government, culture and country; until this "fatal" discrimination is a faint memory in their history.



OUR PROJECTS:

Our amazing Tanzanian team makes up 2 well-staffed departments to help achieve its goals. The departments are:

1 - Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) is the UTSS flagship, offering education grants to keen and dedicated students with albinism demonstrating a need for financial or other schooling assistance. Beneficiaries are grantees for primary, secondary and all levels of higher learning up to PhD levels. Due to the multiple attacks on PWA in Tanzania, hundreds of children were herded into 9 Government boarding schools throughout the country for “safe keeping”. The extreme overcrowding and poor living conditions in these schools compelled UTSS to relocate hundreds of these “displaced children” into higher quality private boarding schools. The ESF program also covers the costs of the medical services for sick grantees and ensures that they get protective gear including sunscreen lotion and low vision devices. These students will be future models within their own society of what PWA can be when given equal opportunity. This is our greatest “weapon” against discrimination and our most powerful source of educating and advocating a culture towards change.

2 - Advocacy and Public Awareness (APA) deals with public education on albinism, disseminating information on health and offering truths about albinism to diffuse existing myths that often lead to discrimination and stigma used by witchdoctors and their clients to justify the macabre killings of PWA. APA uses media to educate and advocate both nationally and internationally. It informs and educates the public on human rights violations by investigating, collecting and publishing data about the atrocities against PWA. There is also a strong emphasis on the domestic understanding of albinism with simple, de-mythologizing messages about human dignity and respect. We also focus on simple genetic / medical explanations along with easy ways to live with and care for the condition.

OUR DOCUMENTARY:

WHITE AND BLACK: Crimes of Colour, is a 58 minute, HD quality, feature-length documentary produced in 3 languages (English, Kiswahili & French) for the purposes of education and advocacy. By following the stories of 3 children, it depicts the struggle with profound and sometimes fatal discrimination faced by persons with albinism (PWA) in Tanzania. Since discrimination against PWA is a pan-African problem, UTSS wants as many eyes on the continent to see the message in this film as possible. For this reason, JF (Jean-Francois Méan), the director of our documentary, spent a year on the task of film distribution in sub-Saharan



Africa. Since then he has completed an 8 month prolonged focus on Tanzania, with both indoor and outdoor film screenings, in all of the major areas where attacks and killings occur.

- ***Premier galas were held to launch the documentary*** in Surrey, B.C., Canada, on October 23, 2010 with 150 guests in attendance and in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on November 22, 2010 with 180 guests in attendance where Prime Minister Mizengo Peter Pinda was the guest of honour.
- ***The documentary has subsequently been produced in a 4th language;*** Peul (one of the most spoken languages in rural West Africa).
- ***Sub-Saharan film festival and community screenings*** of White and Black documentary took place between the months of March 2011 through July 2012.
- ***Tanzanian film festival and community screenings*** of White and Black documentary took place between the months of June 2011 through November 2012.

OUR MEDICAL TOURS: *Raising awareness about the connection between albinism and low vision in Tanzania.*

Ongoing Low Vision Clinics (LVC) have been initiated to serve the students with albinism in our Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) program. These LVC's are offered in various locations throughout Tanzania and are set up in the schools where the majority of our ESF students attend. Dr. Kammer serves as our volunteer Director of Vision Services. She regularly gathers teams of professional volunteers to join in the LVC's. Dr. Kammer has also started the process of collaborating with health care professionals in Tanzania to provide training that addresses the unique low vision needs associated with albinism.

OUR LEADER:

Founder & CEO, Peter Ash, is also a person with albinism. Peter is a passionate philanthropist and entrepreneur. He holds an undergraduate degree in Theology and a graduate degree in psychology. His background includes a decade of work in church ministry followed by over a decade in business. As a result of Peter's faith, disability and business background, his heart compels him to do whatever he can to provide resources and assistance to those most disadvantaged by disability, discrimination and poverty. ***UTSS aims to provide these groups of persons with resources that will help them to increase their quality of life, gain increased independence and take their rightful place in their own culture and society.*** Assisting Peter in this endeavor is his brother Paul Ash (also with albinism) who resides in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, as well as his longstanding friend, Don Sawatzky, who lives in Langley, B.C., Canada.

OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN TANZANIA:



VICKY NTETEMA former BBC Bureau Chief –Tanzania, has joined Under The Same Sun (UTSS) as the Executive Director of their Tanzania office. It was her story, at great risk to herself, which broke the albinism crisis in Tanzania to the world. Vicky loves her homeland and fellow citizens deeply and is quickly becoming the “Mother Teresa” of persons with albinism there. She yearns for her people to live in the kind of peace that Tanzania claims for itself as “*The Island of Peace*” located between war-torn neighboring countries. In her combat against the “white & black” discrimination, Vicky lives with threats (including death threats) and misunderstanding from some of her fellow countrymen as she seeks to ensure that both pigmented and non-pigmented citizens understand one another. Vicky was nominated for the 2010 *Courage in Journalism Award* by the International Women’s Media Foundation. In October of 2010 she was honored in New York City, N.Y., and Los Angeles, California. The Tanzania Women of Achievement Award in the Information and Communication Category was also presented to Vicky on March 28, 2013.

OUR OFFICES & STAFF:

UTSS has 2 offices, 25 staff and 2 interns; ***fourteen are Persons with Albinism (PWA).***

- ***Our UTSS office in Vancouver, B.C., Canada,*** has a total of 2 full-time and 5 part-time staff; ***four are PWA.***
- ***Our UTSS office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzanian*** has a total of 18 full-time staff plus 2 interns; all are Tanzanian citizens; ***ten are PWA.***

OUR 2 OFFICE ADDRESSES:

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OUR SPEAKING, PRESS & ADVOCACY ENGAGEMENTS RELATING TO PWA IN AFRICA:

African Union`s Commission on Human and Peoples` Rights, Banjul, The Gambia,
November 2013

- ***On November 5, 2013,*** due to UTSS’ advocacy and cooperation with various African Union (AU) bodies, The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, passed Resolution 263: *On the Prevention of Attacks and Discrimination Against Persons with Albinism.* The resolution was the first of its kind on the continent and was very thorough in calling on member states of the AU to: protect



PWA and their family members, avoid the impunity of perpetrators of attacks against PWA and consider responding to the disabling aspects of albinism.

United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland, September 2013.

- **On September 27, 2013**, due to UTSS' advocacy and cooperation with various UN bodies, a second resolution was passed by the UN Human Rights Council (The first resolution is described below). This second resolution, Resolution L36, titled, *Technical Cooperation for the Prevention of Attacks against Persons with Albinism*, requested that the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council take on the issue of albinism for further study and research. The report from the work of the Advisory Committee will be considered at the Human Rights Council's 28th session in March 2015. UTSS will work hard to support and cooperate with the Advisory Committee in this regard.
- **On September 26, 2013**, the UTSS delegation led by Peter Ash meets with Ms. Flavia Pansieri - Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **On September 24, 2013**, for the third time, Peter Ash, Founder and CEO of UTSS spoke to the UN Human Rights Council. Peter called on the Council to deal with persons with albinism as a unique and specific people group due to the unusual trade in their body parts which occurs in a grisly manner, almost unheard of when compared with other people groups.
- **On September 12, 2013**, the preliminary report on albinism mandated by the first resolution was released by the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights. UTSS contributed to this report and was instrumental in encouraging participation from a broad section of civil society groups including but not limited to its partners across sub Saharan Africa.
- **On September 16, 2013**, Ms. Ikponwosa Laretta Ero, UTSS' international advocacy and legal officer of UTSS spoke to the Human Rights Council, in response to the preliminary report on albinism published by the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights. She also called for the appointment of an independent expert to deal with albinism due to the uniqueness of the condition.

United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland, June, 2013.

- **On June 10, 2013**, due to UTSS' advocacy and cooperation with various UN bodies, (specific thanks to Ambassador Yusuf of Somalia and members of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) a historic first resolution on albinism was adopted by consensus by the UN Human Rights Council. This was the first global response to albinism and therefore marked a historic event for persons with albinism worldwide. The resolution entitled, *Attacks and Discrimination against Persons with Albinism*, among other things, condemned impunity regarding injustices against



- PWA. It also called for a preliminary report on the issue. That preliminary report was published by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on September 12, 2013.
- **On June 6, 2013**, the UTSS delegation led by Peter Ash meets with Ms Navanethem ``Navi`` Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
 - **On June 5 & 6, 2013**, by invitation from the UN, Peter Ash addressed several groups of officials within the office of the High Commission of Human Rights. While there, he was also able to speak with many other senior officials on the matter of violence against PWA in Africa.
 - **On June 7, 2013**, for the second time, Peter Ash was given 2 minutes to address the General Assembly of the UN Human Rights Council. Although the speech focused on albinism globally, it also referred to the atrocities taking place across Africa.

Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry, Pomona, California, April 16, 2013.

- Address the administration, faculty and students on the Crisis of Albinism in Africa and & the role of optometry in health, education and emergency care. Next to stigmatization & discrimination, the 2 greatest vulnerabilities faced by persons with albinism in Africa are low vision and skin cancer.
- The event was hosted by Dr Rebecca Kammer, a low vision specialist who continues to direct teams of medical expert volunteers to provide low vision care to persons with albinism in Tanzania.

University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus, Kelowna, British Columbia, February 2, 2013.

- Presented with UTSS Advocacy Officer for French Africa, Amadou Diallo.
- The event was hosted by Ali Young and other students representing KULU, a fundraising initiative. Our purpose was to address the administration, faculty and students on the crisis faced by persons with albinism in the country of Tanzania and sub-Saharan Africa.

Southern California College of Optometry, Fullerton, California, February 1, 2011 and September 15, 2011.

- Address the faculty and students on the Crisis of Albinism in Africa and & The Role of Optometry in Health, Education and Emergency Care. After discrimination, the 2 greatest vulnerabilities of persons with albinism in Africa are skin cancer and low vision.



- The event was hosted by Dr Rebecca Kammer, a low vision specialist who is directing a team of medical expert volunteers to provide Low Vision Care to persons with albinism in African countries recently traumatized by attacks and killings.

Harvard Foundation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 28, 2010.

- Presented on a panel with UTSS Tanzania Executive Director, Vicky Ntetema.
- Ms. Ntetema was previously the BBC Bureau Chief for Tanzania who broke the crisis of persons with albinism in Tanzania to the world in her July 2008 report.

Canadian Human Rights Committee (“HRC”), a committee from the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa, Canada, October 26, 2010.

- Addressed the HRC in an attempt to get Canada to pass a bill addressing the violation of human rights against PWA in Tanzania.

The National Association of Albinism & Hypo-pigmentation (NOAH), Washington, DC, July 15, 2010.

- Addressed the bi-annual conference in an attempt to raise awareness of the crisis of fellow PWAs’ in Africa.
- The event was hosted by ABC’s 20/20, JuJu Chang.
- Also on the panel was Congressman Gerry Connelly of the State of Virginia to explain his part in getting house bill 1088 to pass in the U.S. senate. This bill decries the atrocities against persons with albinism in Tanzania, and takes to task the Tanzanian Government on this human rights issue (see “US House Resolution 1088”).

United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland, September 2009.

- ***On September 30, 2009*** Peter Ash was given 2 minutes to address the General Assembly of the UN Human Rights Council specifically on this subject. Although the speech focused on Tanzania, it also referred to these same atrocities taking place across Africa.
- ***On September 24, 2009*** Peter Ash addressed a group of UN officials in Geneva who were assigned to the continent of Africa. While there, he was able to speak with many other senior officials, including the High Commissioner, on the matter of violence against PWA in Africa.

UTSS has published a variety of documents:

- To view, go to the RESOURCES page of www.underthesamesun.com



UTSS played a leading role at the UN and the AU in helping to form and pass the first of its kind resolutions and reports on the prevention of attacks & discrimination against persons with albinism. To view, go to the RESOURCES page of www.underthesamesun.com

- UN Resolution 23/13 – In Geneva, Switzerland, June 20, 2013
- UN Preliminary Report – In Geneva, Switzerland, September 12, 2013
- UN Resolution L36 – In Geneva, Switzerland, September 24, 2013
- African Union Resolution 263 – In Banjul, The Gambia, November 5, 2013

UTSS has had numerous interviews with media groups including:

- ABC News, BBC, CBC The National, CTV, Global TV, Discovery Channel, The Globe and Mail, Reuters, Red Cross, UNTV, Dolce Vita Magazine, and many more.

ASYLUM VICTORIES:

Legal history was made in Canada on June 4, 2013 when Amadou Diallo, a man with albinism from the African country of Guinea was granted Permanent Residency status. Originally, Amadou fled Guinea to Norway and from 2008 to 2012 urgently sought asylum there. He was held in a refugee camp for 3 of these years during which time his asylum request was denied 4 times even though 2 persons with albinism had been murdered in his home country. UTSS worked extensively with Amadou's case during this time, providing written testimony on the plight of PWA in Guinea. We also worked with the Canadian government and on July 16, 2012 he was granted a work permit and moved to Canada. On Tuesday, June 04, 2013, the country of Canada received Amadou with open arms by offering him permanent residency status.

Legal history was made in the Spanish Canary Islands on December 29, 2009 when a man with albinism from Mali, was granted asylum.

Legal history was made in Italy in April of 2009 when a man with albinism from Cameroon was granted asylum.

Legal history was made in the state of Florida, USA on February 16, 2011 when a man with albinism from Nigerian was granted asylum.

Legal history was made in Spain on May 12, 2011 when person with albinism from Guinea was granted asylum.

Legal history was made in Israel on October 1, 2011 when an Ivory Coast family with an



infant daughter with albinism was granted refugee status. The minister of interior signed the final asylum documents on November 6, 2011.

For the second time in USA history, on November 29, 2012, a woman with albinism from Zimbabwe was granted asylum in Atlanta, Georgia.

OUR AWARDS:

The Tanzania Women of Achievement Award in the Information and Communication Category was presented to UTSS Tanzania's Executive Director, Vicky Ntetema, on March 28, 2013.

The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal was awarded to Peter Ash in Langley, B.C., Canada on November 24th, 2012 to honour his significant contribution and achievement as a Canadian on behalf of persons with albinism in the country of Tanzania.

The New England College of Optometry Presidential Medal was awarded to Peter Ash for his humanitarian efforts in Tanzania on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Their Excellencies The Right Honourable David Johnston Governor General of Canada and Mrs. Sharon Johnston were pleased to invite Mr. Peter Ash to a State Dinner in honour of His Excellency Jakaya M. Kikwete President of the United Republic of Tanzania on Wednesday, October 3, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at Rideau Hall, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa.

The V-Award by Southern California College of Optometry (SCCO) was given to Peter Ash on September 15, 2011, in the Richard Nixon Presidential Library in Yorba Linda, CA. In this inaugural event, Peter was highlighted for his distinguished humanitarian service relating to persons with albinism in Tanzania.

The British Columbia Community Achievement Award was given to Peter Ash on April 20, 2011, in Government House, Victoria, by Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, The Honourable Steven L. Point, OBC. This award celebrates the spirit, imagination, dedication and outstanding contributions of British Columbians to their communities.

The 2010 Courage in Journalism Award was given to Vicky Ntetema on Tuesday, October 19, 2010, in New York City, NY, and Thursday, October 21, 2010, in Los Angeles, CA. The International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) honoured Vicky for her freelance



investigation and reporting in Tanzania on the brutal killings of albinos by witchdoctors in 2007. Now the Director of Operations for Under The Same Sun's Tanzanian office, Vicky previously served as BBC bureau chief in Tanzania and had been working with the BBC since 1991.

OUR SUCCESS:

To date, UTSS greatest success comes through our ESF program which has seen several hundred PWA, mostly abandoned and displaced children, relocated into some of Tanzania's finest private boarding schools. **THEY WILL BE FUTURE MODELS IN THEIR SOCIETY OF WHAT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM CAN BE WHEN GIVEN EQUAL OPERTUNITY.** This could not have happened without 2 amazing teams which have been gathered to form our offices in Tanzania and Canada. The production and distribution of Our documentary will forever capture and honour the story of PWA in Tanzania while dispelling the discriminatory myths and informing people about the genetic condition of albinism. It casts the LIGHT of dignity on all persons with albinism and is an amazing advocacy and education tool. There has also been a significant drop in both the attacks and killing of PWA in Tanzania since 2007. While this gives us great delight, the profound discrimination that gave rise to the killings is still deeply rooted in African culture. Our dream is that a day will come when persons with albinism in Tanzania will take their rightful place in every aspect of society and that the days of discrimination will be a faint memory. While there are traces of hope now, we will likely not see this day in our lifetime except in our dreams.

OUR SUMMARY OF ALBINISM:

Albinism is a rare, non-contagious, genetically inherited condition occurring in both genders regardless of ethnicity, in all countries of the world. BOTH the father and mother must carry the gene for it to be passed on even if they do not have albinism themselves. The condition results in a lack of pigmentation in the hair, skin and eyes, causing vulnerability to sun exposure and bright light. Almost all people with albinism are visually impaired, with the majority being classified as "legally blind". While numbers vary, in North America and Europe it is estimated that 1 in every 20,000 people have some form of albinism. In Tanzania, and throughout East Africa, albinism is much more prevalent, with estimates of 1 in 2,000 people being affected. The term "*person with albinism*" (PWA) is preferred to the term "albino".