

African Women's Development Fund USA comes to Minnesota

Written by

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Today's grandmothers are younger, healthier, better educated and better off than grandmothers have ever been.

Across the country and the world, often unheralded women elders are charting a new future for their communities. Whether serving as activists, caregivers, philanthropists, community volunteers or in many other roles, grandmothers are a vital force. Women across the African Diaspora and throughout the world have launched a new international grandmother movement.

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) USA is bringing the movement to Minneapolis Saturday, Oct. 26 from 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the University of Minnesota's Urban Research and Outreach Center (UROC), 2001 Plymouth Ave. N. in Minneapolis. Renowned Author Paola Gianturco, will present her book "Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon."

Gianturco explains the "grandmother movement" in her book by pointing out women not only outnumber men worldwide, but grandmothers are outliving their male peers.

According to a recent Pew Research Center report, 10 percent of American children live with a grandparent, usually a grandmother. Among racial and ethnic groups, Black children are the most likely to be cared for primarily by a grandparent. In Africa most of the continent's 11 million AIDS orphans live with their grandmothers.

"Grandmother Power" (PowerHouse Books, 2012) is a tribute to the lives of grandmothers from five different continents, as well as the lives they support, the traditions they pass on to future generations and the changes they inspire in others to make the world better. According to the book, many African grandmothers have lost their children to HIV/AIDS and are often caring for a dozen or more grandchildren. Canadian grandmothers have created a support network for African grandmothers learning about their cultures, the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS in their families and the type of grief and overwhelming responsibility that the grandmothers are living.

AWDF USA executive director, Jackie Copeland Carson reminds us that Africa is the birthplace of all humanity.

"(The) Our Mother Africa Campaign celebrates the contributions of women at all stages of life," said Copeland Carson. "African grandmothers stand in solidarity with all grandmothers who are building new futures for communities everywhere.

Our grandmother power celebrations convene grandmothers and their allies of backgrounds for

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learning, networking and support of the grandmothers throughout Africa taking on the responsibility of raising the world's largest population of AIDS orphans with very limited resources."

Tickets to the event are \$30 and are tax deductible. Tickets are available online at www.grandmotherpowermn.eventbrite.com