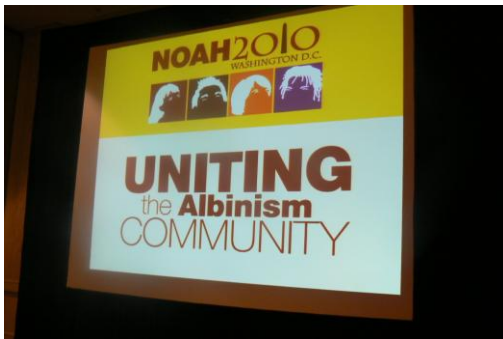




UTSS AT NOAH 2010

This July, UTSS had 12 representatives at the Washington DC national conference on albinism. There were 4 from Tanzania and 8 from Canada.

NOAH (National Organization for Albinism & Hypo-pigmentation) is an American - based non-profit organization that sponsors a



conference every 2 years representing the albinism community. This year's event reported over 900 in attendance with a moderate representation from the international community as well. We met fellow Canadians, Tanzanians, South Africans, a gentleman from Senegal, another from Nigeria, and a number of folk from Australia – a very diverse crowd to say the least.

For those of us with albinism, the sense of kinship, affinity, connection, and understanding was palpable as we were surrounded by this unique fellowship that cannot be found anywhere else on the planet and certainly not in our day to day lives.

For those of us without albinism there was the unique experience of being a minority group to the people with albinism surrounding us. It felt right! For both groups, the deepest expressions of this experience were manifested in tears and laughter as words failed to capture its essence.



Nigeria and Tanzania meet in DC



This year's conference devoted an entire morning to the East African Crisis of Persons with Albinism. The general session was hosted by ABC Good Morning America's Anchor Juju Chang interviewing 7 people who are giving their very best to ultimately put an end to this crisis. This included our very own ***Vicky Ntetema and Peter Ash, both of whom received standing ovations.*** Congressman Gerry Connelly of the State of Virginia was there 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.



Juju Chang & Peter Ash



Congressman Connelly Addresses NOAH

Following the general session, UTSS was given a Side Event Session which was well attended. Don Sawatzky (Director of Operations for UTSS Canada) hosted the session. Peter Ash (Founder & President of UTSS) spoke about his heartbeat and passion for the cause and direction of UTSS. A 20 minute segment of our documentary, BLACK & WHITE, was presented. ***[The documentary will be completed this fall for distribution throughout Tanzania in Swahili and English. Its purpose is to change hearts and minds by educating viewers about the genetic condition of albinism as well as challenging some of the discriminatory myths held there. The film will also have a global launch later in the year, in both English and French.]***



Lastly, Paul Ash (Director of Administration - Canada) interviewed Gamariel Mboya (Program Officer for the Education Scholarship Fund - Tanzania) on what it's like to be a person with albinism living in Tanzania during these dark and trying times.



Paul interviews Gamariel

The cause that UTSS represents had a constant presence at the conference thanks to its beautiful display and even more beautiful staff. We were always eager to get the word out to anyone who showed interest. It is not a pleasant subject but it is a very dignified cause. We could feel both of these reactions from the various people passing our booth.



Theodory with UTSS display



Rick Guidotti of Positive Exposure visits the UTSS booth