



That's me (center right) and fellow Zimbabwean playwright, Thandiwe Mawungwa (center left) last year at Townies HQ with some Word Nerds.

Dear Townies,

Imagine a world where, at the click of a button, you can connect teenagers on two different continents. Imagine in that world, watching those teenagers craft original pieces of writing that make you laugh and ugly-cry in the same breath. Imagine those teenagers coming alive because this is probably the first time they have been in a space where they are accepted with all their delightful weirdness.

What's awesome for me is this 'imagined' situation grew into being with The Townies, Inc.'s reimagined Youth Workshop through the Ojai Playwrights Conference for which I am the Playwright in Residence. Together with Almasi Arts Alliance, **we were able to bring six Zimbabwean high school students and five American high school students into one collaborative virtual writers' room.** Over the past eight weeks I have ended each Saturday night with a smile on my face knowing this class has allowed these teenagers the space to dream beyond their countries' borders. They have poured their hearts into their freewrites and have been kind and generous in their feedback. I mean, if I had been given this opportunity at their age, I might not have spent so much time thinking a s'more was some made up alien food!

I say all this because I believe in The Townies. I have seen what storytelling does to a kid in Zimbabwe who doesn't know crafting stories and performing them could be a path to growth and healing. So, I ask you to join me in donating to The Townies, Inc.; our fundraising goal for the end-of-year campaign is \$25,000 and I am supremely confident we will reach it – only if you join us.

Ok... dance break and let me say this: When was the last time you were in a space that tells you how good you are doing instead every little thing you suck at? Kim Maxwell's class is where you get to be told how awesome you are, because you are! I mean it! Ok. Dance break over.

We have to admit 2020 has been a tough year and it's still going but it gives me joy to see that The Townies, Inc. has been able to smoothly shift online, provide the same level of depth in storytelling and even to expand their programming. Your donation will be used to provide even more scholarships to even more people and to design even more adaptable, accessible programming for students in Ventura County, Harare and beyond. Everyone has a story to tell and The Townies, Inc. is providing that platform. **When you donate you are investing in humanity, in our ability to leave a mark on this world by telling our stories.**

ADDITIONAL VIRTUAL TOWNIES OFFERINGS:

13-WEEK WORKSHOP:

Kim Maxwell's classic storytelling workshop, adapted for the virtual medium. Meeting two hours a week with a culminating Zoom performance!

ONGOING WORKSHOP:

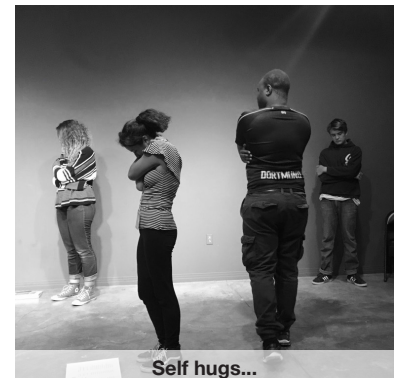
Kim's new one-hour writing classes, going on once a week and for just \$40 per month.

THE TOWNIES INK:

The upcoming printed and digital journal containing all the material from 2020's 13-Week Workshops!

MUSIC WORKSHOPS:

Rain Perry, Songwriter and Board President, is now offering her music-related workshops through The Townies, Inc., for newbies like me and pros too – like I will be.



I'm also happy to say that besides saving humanity (What a hero!) you also get our absolutely gorgeous (and seriously relevant) *Dear Abyss, I Have Survived Things* pin when you donate \$50 or more before December 31st! With \$250 or more you walk away with the *Dear Abyss* pin plus the coolest Townies hat in the color of your choice – shhh... tell everybody!



So please consider The Townies, Inc. for your end-of-year giving... because it matters... and it's cool. We made it cool. I sincerely hope you get to join one of the classes and sign up for The Townies, Inc.'s newsletter because more incredibly cool stuff is coming – like our very first, very cool international Youth Workshop performance! Did I say cool too many times?

Sending you love, light, laughter and joy in these trying times. You are adored!

Regards,

Gideon Jeph Wabvuta, *Playwright & Certified Word Nerd*

With love and support from the rest of the Townies team:

Molly Allison, *Managing Director*
Lily Brown, *Producing Director*
Katie Deutschman, *Board Member*
Vanessa Frank, *Board Member*
Doug Green, *Board Member*
Theodora Holt, *Producer*
Dena Jenson, *Board Member*
Kim Maxwell, *Executive Director*
Jessica Mendiola, *Board Member*
Rain Perry, *Board President*
Carol Ramser, *Board Member*
Cari Shore, *Board Member*
Eric St. James Lopez, *Board Member*