



Giraffe Heroes Project

#StickYourNeckOut

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Dear --FNAME--,



It's vital to know, in these times of crackdowns and shutdowns and far too many moves against human rights, health, and dignity, that there are people standing up for what's right, no matter what forces are arrayed against them. Read on!

As long as there are Giraffes, there's hope—
Ann Medlock Founder

*These are "teasers," quick looks at new Giraffes.
For their full stories, click on their names, in blue.*



When teen-aged [Laxmi Agarwal](#) was disfigured by a rejected suitor, her community was full of people who expected her to be silent, even to kill herself in disgrace. Instead, she braved endless insults and threats as a champion of all the women who have been victims of acid attacks in India. Thanks in part to her speaking out, there are now new laws restricting the sales of acid.



Returning to Zimbabwe after a conference abroad, [Stabile Dewa](#) was arrested at the airport—for treason. The conference subject was democracy and human rights; Dewa has a history of being an advocate for democracy and for the rights of women and children in her country. Now out on bail, she faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted.



Attorney [Steven Donziger](#) represented indigenous people against a multi-national oil company that had dumped toxic wastes in the Amazon basin. An Ecuadorian court fined the company billions of dollars, but they moved their assets out of reach and charged Donziger with racketeering. He's been disbarred, his bank accounts frozen, his passport seized, and he's restricted to his New York apartment, wearing an ankle monitor.



[Ellen Gallagher](#) was working at the US Department of Homeland Security when she discovered that Immigration and Customs Enforcement—ICE—was putting far too many immigrants into solitary confinement for trivial reasons. She informed her employers and then government watchdogs about the practice, but nothing changed so she went public to stop this form of torturing innocent people.



For years, [Songezo Mazizi](#) has fought for justice in South Africa, beginning when he was a student at the University of the Western Cape. Concerned that young people who are poor couldn't afford to attend, he led a "Fees Must Fall" campaign, which advocated for more government funding.

Mazizi was suspended from the university, arrested, charged with various offenses, and beaten by police. But his efforts led to more grants for students.

He continues to be a force for justice, focusing on government accountability and on protecting the environment.



When twins [Rhea](#) & [Renee Mendonca](#) watched their grandfather die from pulmonary fibrosis as a result of smoking since he was a kid, the girls were determined to keep a new generation from becoming tobacco addicts. Their nonprofit runs campaigns against tobacco products, despite threats to the young founders. Thanks to their efforts, thousands of youth have quit smoking and vaping, there are bans on flavored e-cigarettes, and vaping companies are prohibited from advertising to kids.



[Jennifer Mitchell](#) and [Rosemary Webb](#) are the first daughters of a Giraffe to be commended as Giraffes themselves. Trained by their father, Giraffe Hero [Ken Wooden](#), the two women have devoted their lives to preventing the abuse of children. They've interviewed convicted abusers in prison to learn their methods and have gone on to teach thousands of kids, families and teachers how to recognize, prevent, and stop the crime, ignoring threats from abusers and taking no money for their work.



As a US Customs & Immigration Service officer, attorney [Doug Stephens](#) interviewed asylum seekers from Mexico, assessing their claims to be in danger at home and determining whether it was safe for them to go back. Then a new federal order said *all* seekers must “Remain

in Mexico” whether or not they were in danger there. Stephens refused to conduct any more interviews and quit his job after letting his colleagues, his supervisors, and a US Senator know why the new policy is illegal and immoral.



Canadian teenager [Morgan Wienberg](#) went to Haiti to help victims of the 2010 earthquake and stayed to take care of children in an orphanage. Discovering that the children were abused there and some were not orphans at all, Wienberg got the children back to their families and created a real home for those with nowhere to go. She takes no salary and lives in the safe house she established for the children.



In a culture where traditionalists do not honor women's rights and turn against people trying to change that, [Hannah Yambasu](#) has helped thousands of Sierra Leonean women who are victims of violence and other forms of abuse, women who are under-privileged, and women who need counseling, education, access to the courts, or escape from childhood marriages. Through her organization, Women Against Violence and Exploitation Society (WAVES), Yambasu is there for them.

We hope these Giraffe Heroes gave you some hope in this dire time.
To meet more real heroes, do LIKE [Giraffe Heroes on Facebook](#),
where we post Giraffe stories every day
from the vast storybank we've created over the decades.
That storybank is on [our website](#),
along with all the other freebies we've created over the years,
all yours for the taking.
You'll like it all. We promise.



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