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February 22, 2022

**Invitation to MindLeaps-Guided Trip to Rwanda – July 11-16, 2022**

We invite you to join our week-long guided trip to Rwanda hosted by MindLeaps Executive Director, Rebecca Davis. This annual trip gives a small group of guests the opportunity to view the programs and operations of MindLeaps in Rwanda.

We invite you to meet our Rwandan students and local staff and experience activities at the MindLeaps Center in Kigali. There will also be arrangements to meet with other local NGOs and visit cultural and historical sites.

Rwanda has recently been named the sixth safest country in the world and safest country in Africa for travelers ([Business Insider](#)). In accordance with COVID-19 guidelines, all travelers are required to provide a negative PCR test within 72 hours of their departure flight. Temperature checks and sanitization procedures are in place at the MindLeaps Center.

The trip fee is \$2,500 per person and covers all meals, ground transportation, visa arrangements and logistics. We would be happy to answer any questions you have or connect you with guests on this trip from prior years.

I hope you will be able to join us for this special experience.

Best wishes,



Rebecca Davis  
Executive Director



## Summer 2022 Dates and Registration

**Departure:**

Please choose flights that arrive in Kigali by July 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Return flight:**

Please choose flights that leave July 17<sup>th</sup>. If you choose to stay in country longer, you will be responsible for your own logistics.

**Trip fee:** \$2,500 per person. The trip fee includes your visa, in-country transportation and guides, all meals, cultural event costs, and airport pick up and drop off. The fee does not include airfare or accommodations, vaccinations, malaria pills, or COVID tests. We would be happy to recommend and help book your accommodations.

**Deposit due:** Non-refundable \$500 per person deposit is due *April 11th*

**Remaining due:** The remaining amount of \$2,000 per person is due *May 11th*

**Please send your deposit by check to:**

*By check:* Mail a check made out to *MindLeaps* to

116 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 500

New York, NY 10011

*Online:* Please email [info@mindleaps.org](mailto:info@mindleaps.org) or call 646.902.1295 to receive an invoice you can pay online through ACH or credit card (includes 1% fee for ACH and 2.9% fee for credit card)

MindLeaps creates educational paths for the most vulnerable children in the world through a creative arts program that is built on data-driven metrics. Supplemental skill training is provided through academic acceleration courses.

In Rwanda, MindLeaps serves children at The Jim Bell Centre in Kigali, Nyabihu in Northern Rwanda, and in the UNHCR refugee camps.

[www.mindleaps.org](http://www.mindleaps.org)



## About Rwanda

Rwanda is a landlocked East African country whose green, mountainous landscape has earned it the nickname "Land of a Thousand Hills." Its renowned Volcanoes National Park is home to mountain gorillas and golden monkeys.

Kigali is the nation's capital city with a population over 1 million.

The country has made an incredible recovery and become an example of reconciliation following the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi.

## EXCLUSIVE GUIDED TOUR



### Who will you meet?

MindLeaps works with vulnerable youth living in extreme poverty. The youth change their mindset of survival and learn skills that are in demand in Rwanda's labor force. This opens the way to employment and self-sufficiency. After completing MindLeaps program, many students are sponsored to join formal education. You will meet youth who are at every stage of this life-changing journey. Through doing so, you learn about Rwanda and the fight against poverty.

MindLeaps invites you on an exclusive one-week guided tour for a small group of up to eight people. You will meet our children who are working to transform their lives and now succeed in school. You will see first-hand how the arts rehabilitate youth in a post-war country. The tour includes travel around Rwanda, discussions about Rwanda's past, private meetings with NGOs, government officials and local entrepreneurs.



# EXAMPLE ITINERARY

## Day 1: Understanding Rwanda

Visit the Kigali Memorial Museum and learn about the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi.



## Day 2: Inside and Outside of the Capital

Travel outside of Kigali to visit Murambi. See where some of the MindLeaps' children live.



## Day 3: Dance Day & NGO Visits

Observe dance class and other activities at the MindLeaps Center. Rwandan staff explain how we use dance to develop cognitive skills. Engage in a Q&A session to learn more, and then visit other innovative NGOs in Kigali.



## Day 4: Visiting the North: Musanze

Visit where some of our top students are now in school. Stay overnight in Musanze.



## Day 5: Visiting the North: Gisenyi

See beautiful Lake Kivu that borders Democratic Republic of Congo, and visit the village of Rugerero.



## Day 6: Wrap Up & Market Visit

Visit the MindLeaps Center one last time to observe IT and academic classes. End your trip with the Nyamirambo Women's Tour and visit local markets.



## Evening Events

At night, enjoy private meetings and dinners with international entrepreneurs, representatives from the US Embassy, government authorities, local NGO leaders, and MindLeaps Rwanda staff.

### MindLeaps provides pre-departure & in-country logistics:

- Visa invitation letter and application
- In-country transportation & translation
- Coordination of hotel bookings
- Information on required vaccinations

### Suggested hotels:

\$\$\$ Marriott, Serena (\$175+)

\$\$ St. Famille, Iris, Chez Lando (\$80-\$150)

\$ San Jose Carmelo, Hotel Baoba (\$45)



## About the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi:

- On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1994, President Habyarimana's airplane was shot down and unleashed an organized campaign of extermination.
- Approximately 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu moderates died in 100 days.
- Approximately 250,000-500,000 women were raped.
- By July, the Rwanda Patriotic Force had predominantly liberated the country.
- Approximately 100,000 children were orphaned or abandoned.
- 26% of the population still suffers from PTSD.



*"What happened in Rwanda happened to us all -- humanity was wounded by the genocide."*

-- Immacuee Ilibagiza

*"Nobody hates himself more than he who hates others."*

-- Rwandan Proverb



## About Rwanda Today:

- Most densely populated African country.
- Main economic sectors: tourism, minerals, coffee/tea exports.
- Languages: Kinyarwanda, English, French, Swahili.
- 90% of population in subsistence agriculture & mineral processing.
- According to World Bank, Rwanda has the 12<sup>th</sup> fastest growing economy in the world.
- According to Business Insider, Rwanda is one of the safest countries in the world.

## Suggested Readings & Viewings:

*Ghosts of Rwanda*, Frontline/PBS

*We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*, Philip Gourevitch

*A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, Samantha Power



In February 2021, a permanent MindLeaps program in the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement was secured. The settlement hosts almost 76,000 refugees, primarily those who have fled violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



In July 2021, MindLeaps hosted Kirven Douthit-Boyd, former dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Kirven traveled to the Jim Bell Centre in Rwanda to choreograph a dance piece for the Ubumuntu Arts Festival and host five artistic workshops.



In September 2021, MindLeaps partnered with Chance for Childhood (CfC) and Empowering Children with Disabilities (EmCD) to launch a new program that focuses on D/deaf girls from the Nyabihu School for Deaf Children (NSDC) in Rwanda.

February

June

July

August

September

October



In June 2021, 600 MindLeaps students completed their academic year. In addition, 116 of these students began preparing for their national examinations in July to graduate from Primary or Secondary School.



Beginning in August 2021, local Guinean youth began a 12-week intensive Train The Trainer program. 13 of these youth graduated from the training and will be hired by MindLeaps in 2022.

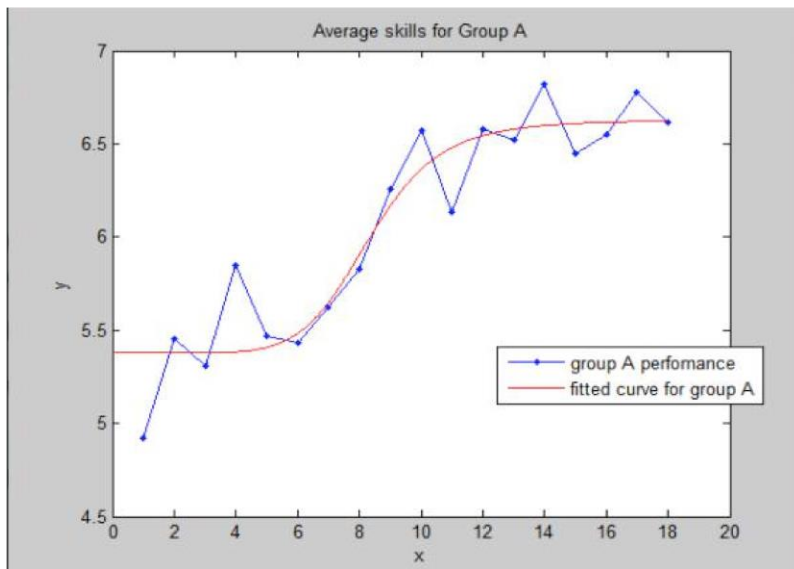


In October 2021, MindLeaps opened the Women's Digital Dreams Center at MindLeaps Guinea. This center is made possible through the support of Fondation Orange Guinée.



# MindLeaps Research

Working with **Carnegie Mellon University Rwanda** and **Drexel University**, MindLeaps has developed an analytical tool to measure the change in 7 cognitive and non-cognitive skills in vulnerable children through the MindLeaps' dance curriculum. These skills are considered critical for success in a formal classroom setting. Below is a typical graph showing the average change in these 7 skills in a class of 15 students over 20 weeks in the program. The seven skills measured on a scale of 1 to 7: memorization, language, grit, self-esteem, creativity & self-expression, discipline and teamwork & collaboration. [www.mindleaps.org/research](http://www.mindleaps.org/research)



*70% of MindLeaps children performed in the top 20% of their class when enrolled in school*

*X-Axis: # of Weeks at MindLeaps Center in Rwanda*

*Y-Axis: Average scores on 7 cognitive and behavioral skills on a scale of 1-7*

*Sample: 15 children ("Group A") who take dance class three days/week (2 hours/class) at MindLeaps*

## About Rebecca Davis, Founder of MindLeaps

In founding and serving as the Executive Director of MindLeaps, Rebecca is responsible for the strategic direction, fundraising and management of an organization currently operational in six countries and with headquarters in New York City. Prior to MindLeaps, Rebecca worked for The Carter Center, Stage Holding Russia, and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. She ran a professional dance company and a pre-professional training program in Philadelphia for five years known as RDDC: Rebecca Davis Dance Company. Rebecca graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelors of Business Administration in Entrepreneurship from Temple University, and she holds a Masters in International Relations with a concentration in Peacekeeping from American Military University. She received a post-graduate certificate in Ballet and Choreography Studies during her Fulbright year in Russia. Rebecca has been recognized for outstanding leadership and MindLeaps' potential to scale an innovative solution: how to achieve and quantify behavioral change through movement. Rebecca is a two-time Fulbright Scholar (Russia, Ukraine) and a former Greater New York City Fulbright Alumna- in-Residence. She was a 2017 Truman Security Fellow, and a 2018 Gratitude Network Fellow. A sought-after speaker whose accomplishments are frequently noted in various news media, Rebecca has most recently spoken at The World Bank's Human Development Week (2019), Segal Family Foundation's Annual General Meeting (2019) and chaired the Arts & Resiliency Panel for Ubumuntu Arts Festival with panelists Reggie Van Lee, LaMar Baylor and Royce Zackery.