

Menstruation, STIs, and Puberty, Oh My!

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My first week of training with the Masakhane Center is complete! Not only have I learned how to properly pronounce Masakhane (ma-sah-kah-nay), I've also gotten to know my fellow interns, as well as our director, Stephanie.

The Masakhane Center doesn't have a central office, because of the nature of the work we do. Since we generally meet at our workshop locations (different schools,

etc.) we've been conducting training at a few different libraries around Newark. I'm actually enjoying that we have multiple meeting locations, because it has allowed me to get the lay of the land a bit quicker. One of our training days, we spent the entire day on scavenger hunt around Newark. The purpose was to not only get all the interns familiar with the city, but to allow us to get to know the resources we might refer to our workshop participants (things such as clinic locations, where you might find rapid HIV testing, where you could get free condoms, counseling, etc.).

As an intern, I will be responsible for co-facilitating a workshop series with another intern, in addition to working on a project for the center. Since we are still in training, I don't know which particular workshop series I'll be working on. I did, however, sign up to work on a video series for Masakhane. With a team, we will be creating several informational videos as supplements for workshops, on a variety of topics (such as pregnancy, condom shopping, and sexual assault - just to name a few). Finally, I am responsible for updating our Facebook with two new posts, Monday through Friday. I can post whatever I fancy, as long as it is related to sexual health or sexuality education.

Throughout training, I've really gotten to know my co-workers - and they're awesome. In order to co-facilitate well, knowing your partner is key. Since I might be co-facilitating with any of the interns for any given workshop, I've enjoyed spending time and talking with the other interns. All of the women at Masakhane are intelligent, well spoken, and driven to make a difference in their community. I am personally very invested in the mission of Masakhane, and being surrounded by other self-identifying women who feel similarly has been an amazing experience.

Based on my first week at Masakhane, I'm looking forward to a summer of learning and growing. By the end of the summer, I hope to have made a positive impact on Newark, and gained confidence in my teaching abilities moving forward (and fingers crossed, made a few friends, as well).