



March 11, 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Rise Up Advocates for Girls and  
Young Women at United Nations**

*Advocates from Africa and the United States will make their voices heard  
at United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women*

**Oakland, CA** – Rise Up's [Let Girls Lead](#) (LGL) and the [Youth Champions Initiative](#) (YCI), two programs based at the Public Health Institute, will participate at the United Nations' 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, March 14 to 17. Central to CSW activities is a delegation of girls and young women from Liberia and the US South who will raise their voices for change, celebrate stories of daily courage, and speak with global leaders about the need to invest in girls' and young women's education, health, safety, and economic opportunity.

Girls and young women worldwide face tremendous obstacles in securing their basic human rights. For many, obtaining health, education and economic wellbeing is a systemic challenge that affects them, their families, and their communities. The 600 million girls and young women between the ages of 10-24 are arguably the world's most vulnerable group, living with limited access to education and economic opportunities; disproportionate household burdens; and physical and psychological violence. Rise Up understands that even in the face of poverty, violence, and discrimination, girls and young women are inspiring agents of change. Investing in girls creates a catalytic effect that promotes gender equality, contributes to poverty reduction, and improves health outcomes.

**Rise Up's LGL/YCI Delegates**

**Miamah Grace Kannah – Rise Up Girl Leader, Liberia**

Miamah Grace is an 18-year-old high school student, born in Monrovia, Liberia. In 2010, she joined the Sisters with Power Rites of Passage program with Liberia's Helping Our People Excel (H.O.P.E.), Inc. She is also an active member of the Girls Advocacy Forum (GAF) advocating for the rights of adolescent girls in Liberia. Through her work with H.O.P.E., Inc., she developed a strong interest in mentoring girls that were engaging in transactional sex and victims of statutory rape. Her passion is to show young women how to love and care for themselves.

**Monica Atkins – Rise Up Youth Champion, Mississippi**

Monica is a Youth Champion in Rise Up's [Youth Champions Initiative](#). She is currently a part-time teacher and community advocate in the Public School District in Jackson, Mississippi. Monica recently helped

organize a Youth Congress, and created curriculum for sessions on health, education, and labor rights. She holds a Bachelor in English from Jackson State University. Monica hopes to pursue a Master in Community Development or Urban Planning, and establish her own NGO combining education, art, performance, and activism, as well as mentoring.

### **Aisha Wreh-yonnoh Cooper Bruce – Rise Up Country Representative, Liberia**

Aisha became a [Let Girls Lead](#) Fellow in 2010 and has been the Country Representative for Liberia since 2011. She is the Executive Director of Helping Our People Excel (H.O.P.E.), one of the LGL implementing partners. Aisha has over 15 years of experience working on youth and leadership development issues, sexual and reproductive health, advocacy, movement-building and gender-sensitive active non-violence, and behavior change communication. Aisha holds a Bachelor in Family Studies from the University of Maryland-College Park.

Rise Up's panels at CSW include:

### **INVEST IN GIRLS, TRANSFORM THE WORLD**

#### **Monday, March 14th at 10:30am – UN Church Center, Drew Room**

This panel will explore the funding realities and opportunities for investing in girls globally.

**Panelists:** Rachel Wisthuff, Girl Up/UN Foundation; Rachel Tulchin, No Ceilings/Clinton Foundation; Tanya Khokhar, Ford Foundation; Judith Diers, UNICEF; Aisha Cooper-Bruce, Rise Up Liberia.

**Moderator:** Nancy Deyo, Rise Up.

### **#GIRLSVOICES FOR CHANGE: PUTTING GIRLS IN THE CENTER OF DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Tuesday, March 15th at 10:30 am – Salvation Army Auditorium**

This girl-centered panel will highlight girls' experiences, priorities and messages for decision-makers.

**Panelists:** Miamah (Grace), Rise Up Girl Leader; Nester, Plan International Girl Advocate, Malawi; Jeanette, Global YWCA Girl Leader, Papua New Guinea; Jourdan, Girl Up Club Leader, New York; Monica Atkins, Rise Up Youth Champion, Mississippi. **Moderator:** Aisha Cooper-Bruce, Rise Up Country Representative, Liberia.

### **About Rise Up**

[Rise Up](#) creates a better future for girls, youth, and women globally. Rise Up invests in visionary leaders, local organizations, and innovative solutions to achieve large-scale change through leadership development, executive coaching, advocacy, grantmaking, and storytelling. We believe we can rise up together to transform our world – one community at a time, one country at a time.

Rise Up builds on the work of [Let Girls Lead](#), which has transformed the lives of seven million girls since 2009 – ensuring they are educated, healthy, safe and heard. Over the past six years, we have expanded our model to include women, newborns, children, and youth through Let Girls Lead's sister programs, [Champions for Change](#) and the [Youth Champions Initiative](#). Rise Up creates sustainable solutions for girls, youth, and women in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the United States.

### **For More Information Please Visit:**

[www.riseuptogether.org](http://www.riseuptogether.org) | [www.letgirlslead.org](http://www.letgirlslead.org) | [www.youthchampionsinitiative.org](http://www.youthchampionsinitiative.org)