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Rwandan orphans perform in Wilmington

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Twelve Rwandan children served as ambassadors Tuesday night, representing the more than one million orphaned by the genocide in their country. A group called Mizero Children performed in Wilmington, bringing with them their message of hope.

The Mizero children have toured the United States and come to Wilmington after the group lost its funding. When members of the Wilmington community found this out, many chipped in, donating money, time and a place to stay to help them continue to spread their message.



"We are here in the hope to perform in different states singing different songs and worship songs and other traditional songs," Performer Olivier Adayishimye said.

Rwandan tradition says the dances performed Tuesday are dances of royalty. Like many of their kind, they tell a story of a bright future and good things to come. A message the Mizero Children of Rwanda bring to Wilmington.

"Little by little people have jumped in in terms of what the community has done is overwhelming in terms of the clothing and the food everyone has pitched in," Resident Grant Pace said.

Pace opened his home to the 12 Rwandan performers, and six group organizers, after funding for their tour fell through.

"It's nice, they're just so grateful. They're grateful for a pair of shoes, a bowl of rice and beans. They're grateful for a chance to dance with the people that are going to be here tonight."

Joyous dances and faces make it hard to believe the children are all orphans. Genocide, AIDS, abandonment; these children represent the countless others like them back home.

Here in North Carolina, they've done some new things including trying ice cream for the first time and swimming in the ocean.

"The people of America are very kind," Performer Olivier Adayishimye said.

The Mizero Children head to Knoxville to perform next. In December, they'll head to New York to perform for the U-N. Their leader says the group is very excited about that.

Money raised from their performances go toward an arts and cultural center in Rwanda. For information about how you can help, visit www.mizerochildren.org [1]



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[1] <http://www.mizerochildren.org>

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