

9-8-2004

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Recommended Citation

Wright, Lori, "MEDIA ADVISORY Seven Congolese Children to Reunite with Parents Sept 10 at Logan Airport" (2004). *UNH Today*. 1733.
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MEDIA ADVISORY

Seven Congolese Children to Reunite with Parents Sept. 10 at Logan Airport

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UNH Media Relations

September 8, 2004

EDITORS: The family will reunite in the level one public area of Terminal E at Logan Airport after the children pass through U.S. Customs/Baggage Claim. A press conference with the parents and those involved with the UNH, congressional and community effort will be held at 9 p.m. at the location. If you are planning to cover, please contact Lori Wright at lori.wright@unh.edu or 603-862-0574. Broadcasters with TV news vans should contact Phil Orlandella with MassPort at 617-561-1819 regarding parking.

WHAT: Hubert and Helene Simwerayi of Manchester, N.H., reunite with their seven children after more than two years of separation. Parents and those involved in reunion effort will hold a press conference prior to children's arrival.

WHEN: Friday, Sept. 10, 2004. Children are arriving on a 9:40 p.m. British Airways flight. A press conference will be held at 9 p.m. Speakers: Hubert and Helene Simwerayi; UNH Professor Nina Glick-Schiller; Kelli Swazey, UNH senior and head of the UNH Committee for Rights and Justice; Congressman Jeb Bradley; Durham community activist Dudley Dudley; and Tom Hildreth, attorney with McLane, Graf, Raulerson and Middleton law firm of Manchester, N.H.

WHERE: Level one public area near U.S. Customs, Terminal E, Logan Airport, Boston.

BACKGROUND: The effort to reunite the Simwerayi family was started by Nina Glick-Schiller, professor of anthropology, and her students in spring 2003. After meeting the Simwerayis and learning of their situation, Glick-Schiller told her anthropology class about the family, which resulted in the forming of the UNH Committee for Rights and Justice (CORAJ). Glick-Schiller and Kelli Swazey, a senior at UNH and head of CORAJ, immediately began working to complete an application for Humanitarian Parole, which grants legal immigrant status in the United States.

The student-led effort quickly grew into a communitywide and congressional effort. Glick-Schiller and the 20 students on the committee began working with Durham community activist Dudley Dudley, local charity Danny's Team and concerned citizens to gather donations for travel expenses and signatures for a petition requesting Humanitarian Parole.

More than 700 community members signed the petition for Humanitarian Parole, which was submitted to First District Congressman Jeb Bradley in April 2004. Congressman Bradley and

his Manchester office staff worked tirelessly with immigration officials in the United States and two African nations to ensure the children were reunited with their parents. With the congressman's support, the children's applications were moved to the top of the application list. They were granted Humanitarian Parole in May 2004, and in late August 2004, parole travel documents for the five biological children were granted. On Sept. 7, 2004, parole travel documents for the Simwerayis' two adoptive children were granted.

Previous Press Releases:

http://www.unh.edu/news/news_releases/2004/september/lw_20040902reunite.html

http://www.unh.edu/news/news_releases/2004/june/lw_20040608coraj.html