

## YARRIE BANGURA



Yarrie's carefree childhood was disrupted by civil war in her home country of Sierra Leone. After experiencing poverty and trauma for many years, Yarrie and her family were accepted by Australia to start their lives over in 2004. Yarrie struggled with the trauma of the Civil War and her experience in the refugee camp for several years after she arrived and her life demonstrates a triumph over adversity. She spoke and shared her experiences at an International Creators of Peace Conference in Sydney 2009 when she was 16.

Yarrie is an entrepreneur starting her own business *Aunty's Ginger Tonic* as a recipient of the AMP's *Tomorrow Fund*. Yarrie's own experience coming to Australia as a refugee has inspired her to assist others to dream big and not to be afraid. She is also a mentor and motivational speaker (with the group *Kids Giving Back* based on her refugee lived experience) at high schools, especially providing support to youth suffering hardship, neglect, and personal challenges, assisting teachers and Police community workers in the delivery of support plans. She is an African Project Companion Officer with the Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre (DAMEC) which involves assisting with development learning and educational programs for African migrant and refugee communities. She is a Member of the Board of Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) NSW.

Yarrie has extensive experience in the performance and arts industry and was co-star in *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe* play which became a documentary. The goal of the performance was to celebrate women, human rights, laughter and resilience. In 2015, Yarrie became Special Youth Representative for UNHCR. She has a degree in International Development from the Australian Catholic University Sydney and is a Student Ambassador for the University which involves delivering workshops on entrepreneurship for refugees and disadvantaged students in Western Sydney. Yarrie has been a public speaker at fundraising and educational events, where she uses her creativity with poetry, rap and songs which reflect her vision and passion to see peace and change.