

## People &amp; Places

## Philanthropy

## Program nurtures talent

## 100 teens get help to foster global change

NEW YORK, Oct. 26. (AP) Christian Maboko wants to change the world. Starting Monday, the 18-year-old from Burundi, who lives in a Kenyan refugee camp and has co-founded a nonprofit to help address poverty there, will get a lifetime of help with his work from a new philanthropic program to nurture talented teens around the world.

Schmidt Futures announced that Maboko is one of the inaugural 100 Rise Global Winners, part of a \$1 billion program funded by philanthropists Wendy and Eric Schmidt, the former CEO of Google and executive chairman of its parent company, Alphabet Inc. The program aims to foster collaboration and new projects from young people to help solve the world's thorniest problems.

Maboko plans to use Rise's financial support to further his work in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya and go to college, even though only 1% of high school graduates in the camp do so.

"I'm trying my best to be among the 1%," he told The Associated Press.

Rise winners will receive lifetime access to higher education scholarships, career development and funding for projects they create for public benefit. They also receive an annual three-week residential summit with the other winners, and mentorship and internship opportunities in their fields of interest. Because the costs of college degrees vary widely around the world, the prize for each winner also will vary.

Rise will notify the winners, which include teens from 42 countries speaking 20 languages, on Monday.

"We think talent around the world is distributed evenly," Wendy Schmidt said. "But opportunity isn't."

Schmidt Futures and The Rhodes Trust invited teens to explain how they would address an issue or are already addressing it. More than 50,000 teens from 170 countries applied last year.

## Solution

For his application, Maboko developed a program to teach girls and young women in his refugee camp about reproductive health and the importance of remaining in school even if they get pregnant.

"I don't want to see my younger sisters dropping out," said Maboko, whose family has been unable to return to Burundi due to political unrest. "So I had to come up with a solution and do it for the community."

The wide variety of global problems that Rise applicants want to tackle — from sustainable farming to female representation in Irish mythology to making shopping more accessible to those in wheelchairs — surprised the Schmidts, who expected an emphasis on scientific projects.

"When I look at this group, I can see the pandemic generation," Wendy Schmidt said. "These kids have been growing up at a time when almost every system in the world that they knew about was failing. If that doesn't give them an opening for creative solutions to some of these really big, hairy global problems that we face, nothing does."

Eric Schmidt said the Rise initiative hopes to prove several theories about supporting teenagers. Unlike other programs that support individuals rather than organizations — such as the MacArthur Foundation's "genius grant" — Rise selects its winners mainly on potential and takes numerous criteria into account, including intelligence and overcoming adversity.

"There's a lot of intuition that you can identify exceptional, creative, powerfully important people at 16 and not 14," he said. "Now, that's still a question, but I believe it to be true. And I think the cohort that has been selected is illustrative of this."

Another winner, **Ella Duus**, wants to reduce political polarization in America. The 16-year-old from Huntsville, Alabama, built an online tool to gauge how much biased information any Twitter account offers.

"Social media algorithms get people stuck in feedback loops," she said. "This ultimately leads to a lot of radicalization of people, which can be a danger to the public."

## Diplomacy

Her tool proved so popular that Duus had to take it down because the server charges to host it grew too expensive. That will likely soon change because of her inclusion in the Rise Global Winners, which also will help her pursue her interest in diplomacy and national security when she goes to college.

Jennifer Uche, 17, of Boston, another winner, said the application process strengthened her writer's voice and she hopes to encourage her peers to raise their voices as well. For her application, she wrote and produced a fictional podcast about mutant teens who suffer discrimination and react by becoming heroes in their community.

"I wanted to really make something interesting out of the idea of advocacy," Uche said. "And I wanted youth to see they have a voice and they can do something."

She combined the podcast with an online forum for people to discuss the combination of art and advocacy and how various works of art could inspire them to take action in their lives.

Uche plans to use the support she gets from the Rise initiative to expand her podcast and forum, as well as pursue a college education in film and computer science.

Applications for next year's class of Rise Global Winners will be accepted until Dec. 22 from those who will be 15 to 17 as of July 1, 2022, through the Hello World Network smartphone app.

Other Rise global winners include:

■ Irfan Ayub, of Afghanistan, who started a tutoring center in his rural community.

■ Adam Dhalla, of Canada, who developed a machine learning algorithm to classify the locations of proteins within cells.

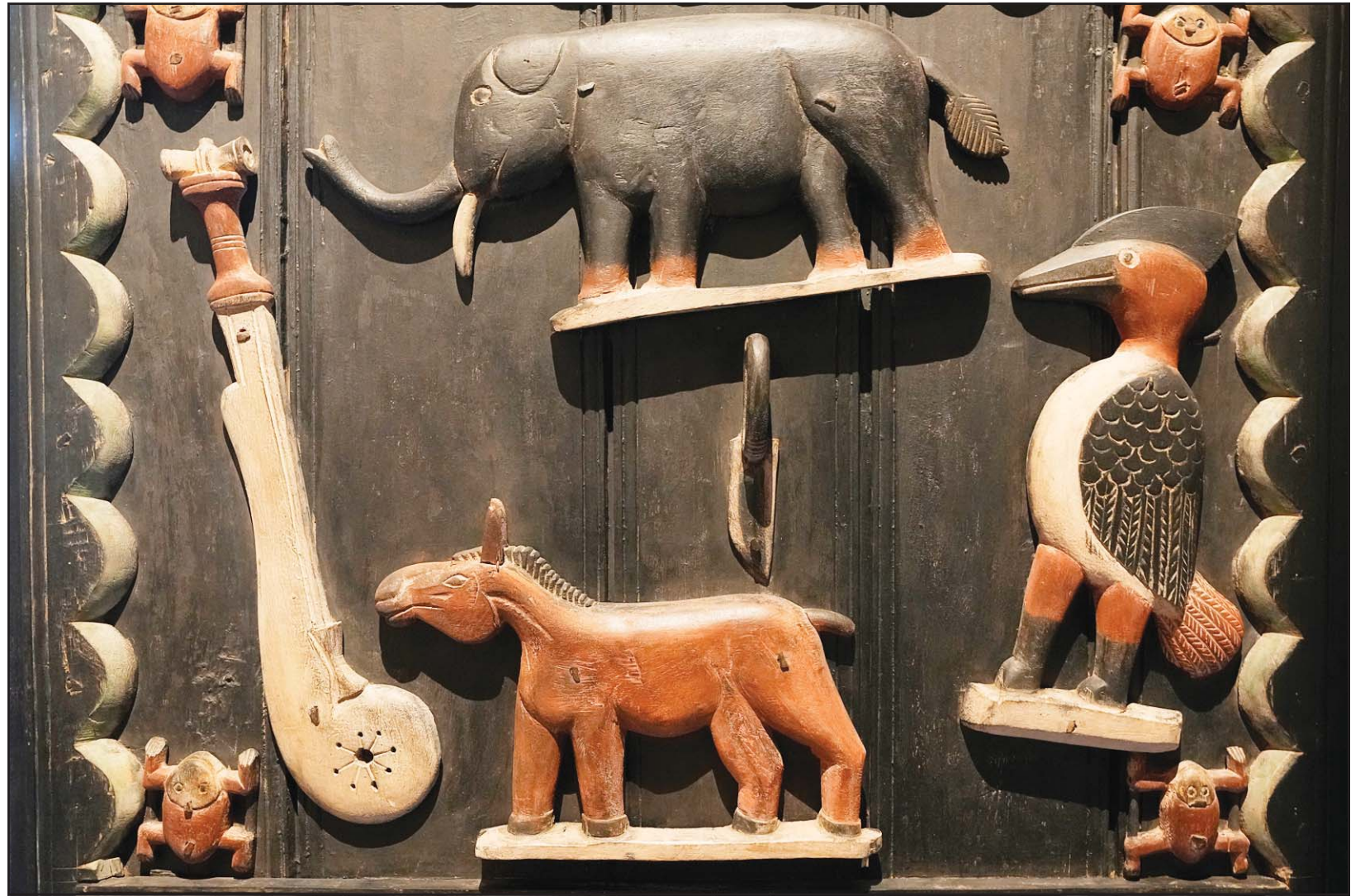
■ Valentina Barrón García, of Mexico, who built a hydroponic system for growing fruits and vegetables.

■ Lydia Ruth Nottingham, of the United Kingdom, who convinced her school to invest in reusable masks.

■ Aryan Sharma, of India, who made a diagnostic app that scans X-rays for abnormalities.



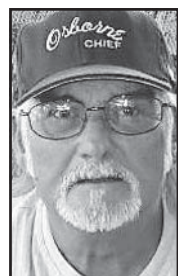
Duus



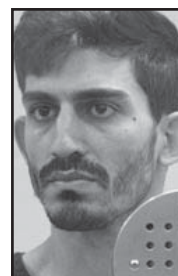
A detail in the door of King Glele's palace, from Benin 19th century, is pictured at the Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac museum, Monday, Oct. 25, in Paris. In a decision with potential ramifications across European museums, France is displaying 26 looted colonial-era artifacts for one last time before returning them home to Benin. The wooden anthropomorphic statues, royal thrones and sacred altars were pilfered by the French army in the 19th century from Western Africa. (AP)



Cast members Anya Taylor-Joy, (left), and Thomasin McKenzie arrive at the premiere of 'Last Night in Soho' on Monday, Oct. 25, at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles. (AP)



Osborne



Abulaban

## Variety

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** Blues musician and singer **Sonny Osborne**, whose fast banjo licks turned "Rocky Top" into a hit with The Osborne Brothers, has died. He was 84.

**Alison Brown**, a Grammy-winning banjo player, told The Tennessean that Osborne died on Sunday. His death was first announced on the website Bluegrass Today, where Osborne was a columnist.

With his older brother, **Bobby**, who sang and played the mandolin, the bluegrass legends were inducted into the Grand Ole Opry, won a CMA Award and help popularize and modernize the genre.

"Rocky Top," written by songwriting couple **Felice and Boudleaux Bryant**, was released in 1967, but they had no idea how big the song would become. It became an anthem for the University of Tennessee-Knoxville football team and became one of the official state songs of Tennessee.

"At one time we would open the show with it and then play it again at the end," Osborne told The Tennessean in 2017. "It was phenomenal, that song. We went to **Japan, Sweden, Germany** — you'd go anywhere and they'd know 'Rocky Top.' It put our name out in front. And it stayed there a long time."

Osborne has also been credited as an innovator in the genre, using double banjos and six-string banjos on stage and in recordings. The Osborne Brothers also pushed boundaries, using electric guitars and drums, playing on college campuses and even the White House. They also changed up the normal harmony sound by having Bobby Osborne sing high lead in his tenor voice, with Sonny singing baritone and a third interchangeable singer on low tenor, creating a signature stacked vocal style.

Other songs they were known for include "Ruby Are You Mad" and "Tennessee Hound Dog." (AP)

■ **SAN DIEGO:** A TikTok star with nearly a million online followers pleaded not guilty on Monday to shooting and killing his newly estranged wife and a man she was with last week at a San Diego high-rise.

Prosecutors said **Ali Abulaban** had surreptitiously installed a listening device on his 5-year-old daughter's tablet device,

## Art

## 129-year journey nears end

## France returns Benin treasures

PARIS, Oct. 26. (AP) In a move with potential ramifications for other European museums, France is displaying 26 looted colonial-era artifacts for one last time before returning them to Benin — a decision authorities in the West African country described as "historic."

The wooden anthropomorphic statues, royal thrones and sacred altars were pilfered by the French army 129 years ago. The French will have a final glimpse of the objects, from the collection known as the "Abomey Treasures," in the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac from Tuesday through Sunday.

Calixte Biah, curator of the Museum of History of Ouidah, Benin, where the artifacts will first be exhibited, said the occasion was historic.

"It's been more than one century that they have been removed from their historical context. And when you look at the quality of each of these artifacts together, you realize that ... there were great artists," he told The Associated Press.

Benin is founding a new museum in Abomey, partly funded by the French government, that will ultimately house the works.

President Emmanuel Macron suggested that France now needed to right the wrongs of the past, making a landmark speech in 2017 in which he said he can no longer accept "that a large part of many African countries' cultural heritage lies in France." It laid down a roadmap for the return of the royal treasures taken during the era of empire and colony.

So far, however, France has only turned over one item — a sword handed to the Army Museum in Senegal. And the 26 works going to Benin represent a tiny handful of the more than 90,000 artifacts from sub-Saharan Africa alone held in French museums.

"We see 26 artefacts. There are others, no? So I wouldn't say that we are

ending a process. I'd say we are at the beginning of a process," Biah said.

"I think it would be decent that other countries which hold African artefacts take the same path as France," he added.

Earlier this year, Germany started a similar move. The decision was taken that German museums should work on a restitution plan to return to Nigeria artifacts known as the Benin Bronzes next year. These were looted from the royal palace of the Kingdom of Benin, in what is now southern Nigeria, by a British colonial expedition in 1897.

Yet critics of such moves — including London's British Museum, in a decades-long tug-of-war with the Greek government over a restitution of the Elgin, or Parthenon, Marbles — argue that it will open the floodgates to emptying Western museums of their collections. Many are made up of objects acquired during colonial times.

## Collections

The British Museum said Monday it is working on a collaboration with Nigeria, linked to the construction of a new museum in the West African country, which will allow to "reunite Benin artworks from international collections."

French Culture Minister Roselyne Bachelot tried to assuage jitters among European museums, emphasizing that this initiative "will not create a legal precedent."

A French law was passed last year to allow the restitution of the statues to Benin, and of the sword to Senegal.

But she said that the French government's law was intentionally specific in applying solely to the 27 artifacts. "(It) does not establish any general right to restitution" and "in no way calls into question" the right of French museums to hold on to their heritage.

The story of the "Abomey Treasures" is as dramatic as their sculpted forms. In November 1892, Colonel Al-

fred Dodds led a pilfering French expeditionary force into the Kingdom of Danhomè located in the south of present-day Benin. The colonizing troops broke into the Abomey Palace, home of King Behanzin, seizing as they did many royal objects including the 26 artifacts that Dodds donated to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris in the 1890s. Since the 2000s, the objects have been housed at the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac.

Gaëlle Beaujean, head of the Africa collections at the museum, stressed that "these artefacts have also been seen by artists (in France, and) inspired (architect) Le Corbusier ... In fact, since 1893, they are very much engraved on the French memory as well."

"They are part, I believe, of a common history," she added.

Macron is to visit the exhibit on Wednesday. The restitution process "aims at allowing the African youth to have access to their own heritage in Africa, and not in Europe only," the French presidency said in a statement.

Benin's Culture Minister Jean-Michel Abimbola called the return of the works a "historic milestone," and the beginning of further cooperation between the two countries, during a news conference last week. The French Development Agency will give some 35 million euros toward the "Museum of the Saga of the Amazons and the Danhome Kings" to be built in Abomey under a pledge signed this year.

The official transfer of the 26 pieces is expected to be signed in Paris on Nov. 9, and the art is expected to be in Benin a few days later, Abimbola said.

While locals say the decision is overdue, what's important is that the art will be returned. "It was a vacuum created among Benin's historical treasures, which is gradually being reconstituted," said Fortune Sossa, President of the African Cultural Journalists Network.

and when he heard his wife and another man talking, he went to her apartment and shot them to death, the Union-Tribune reported.

After the shootings, Abulaban, still armed, picked up his daughter from school, Deputy District Attorney **Taren Brast** said.

The details were revealed during the San Diego County Superior Court arraignment for Abulaban, who pleaded not guilty to two counts of murder as well as

special-circumstance allegations of multiple killings, the newspaper reported.

Brast said outside court that Abulaban, 29, is a TikTok star known as JinnKid, with more than 940,000 followers on the social media app. His account features comedy skits and impersonations of the character Tony Montana from the 1983 film "Scarface."

Abulaban's attorney did not comment on the allegations during the hearing.

Police identified the victims as **Ana**



In this undated photo provided by the Office of Eric and Wendy Schmidt, the Schmidts pose for a picture. Wendy and Eric Schmidt committed \$1 billion to support service-oriented people from around the world, including 100 teens to launch Schmidt Futures' Rise initiative, on Monday, Oct. 25. (AP)

**Abulaban**, 28, of San Diego and **Rayburn Cadenas Barron**, 29, of National City.

About two dozen family members and friends of the two victims packed the courtroom. Several of them sobbed as Brast shared details about last Thursday's killings in San Diego's East Village neighborhood.

Brast said **Ali Abulaban** confessed to detectives and accused his wife of cheating, although the prosecutor said she believes Barron was a friend.

According to Brast, Ana Abulaban had asked her husband to move out Oct. 18. He checked into a hotel.

Three days later, Brast said, Ali Abulaban sneaked back into the apartment and trashed it while his wife was gone. He also installed the listening app on his daughter's iPad.

Hours later, Abulaban was listening to the app when he heard his wife and a man talking and giggling, Brast said, and he raced back to the high-rise. Security camera video showed him running out of the elevator to the apartment.

Brast said Abulaban shot Barron three times before shooting his wife in her head. Abulaban then called his mother and confessed, Brast said.

After he picked up his daughter, he called police while driving and they arrested him 45 minutes later. His daughter was in the vehicle.

Judge **Kimberlee Lagotta** ordered Abulaban jailed without bail. The judge also issued a protective order that requires Abulaban to stay away from his daughter, who is being cared for by family. (AP)