

KIZITO KALIMA

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



ECHOES & REFLECTIONS

TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST. INSPIRING THE CLASSROOM.



Kizito Kalima was born June 3, 1979 in Nyanza, Rwanda. He is the youngest of ten children, nine of whom survived the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. As Tutsis were stereotyped to be taller than Hutus, Kizito's height (6'9") was the subject of considerable racist mockery among his Hutu classmates. The Genocide against the Tutsi began on April 7, 1994. After surviving a massacre and several other close calls—acts of violence which claimed the lives of his mother, uncle, and other family members—Kizito and a few of his relatives managed to survive the genocide by hiding in swampland until being liberated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front in late July 1994.

His preternatural basketball ability was noticed by a Ugandan amateur team. A basketball tournament in 1998 gave him the opportunity to travel to the United States, where he would remain to attend high school and college. Today, he is Founder and Executive Director of the Peace Center for Forgiveness and Reconciliation. He is married, and has adopted two Rwandan teenage children, who were both survivors of the Genocide against the Tutsi as well. He lives in Indianapolis, IN, where he was interviewed on July 24, 2010.