



March 2012

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

Over the past month, Tostan celebrated the profound impact women can have on our lives, our communities and throughout the world. In particular, I would like to share with you [the story of one empowered woman who continues to inspire me: the late Ayda Njaay](#).

Since Ayda first participated in one of Tostan's early nonformal education programs 23 years ago, her ensuing commitment to empowering others as a Tostan facilitator and educator helped mobilize and transform countless communities in Senegal. As a community leader, her infectious enthusiasm and dedication to her work earned the respect of many. More importantly, as a woman, the recognition and success of her work helped pave the way for other Senegalese women to take the lead on their own development initiatives. In her moving [International Women's Day tribute to Ayda](#), Tostan Founder and Executive Director Molly Melching wrote that Ayda was "a living example of our mission to empower African communities, a figure of inspiration and hope to everyone with whom she worked." ([Click here to read the tribute to Ayda Njaay's life and work by Molly Melching](#).)



Tostan Facilitator and Educator Ayda Njaay

Although we grieve her passing, we too are inspired to work tirelessly so that her legacy can continue to live on and grow.

Thank you for your support and read on to learn about the positive impression Tostan team members made at *Newsweek* and The Daily Beast's Women in the World Summit in New York City earlier this month.

Warm wishes,



Gannon Gillespie

Director of Strategic Development

### **Molly Melching Interviewed Live on MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports**



On March 7, Tostan Founder and Executive Director Molly Melching joined Andrea Mitchell, host of [Andrea Mitchell Reports](#), on the MSNBC stage for a live discussion on Tostan's

work within the [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) abandonment movement in Africa. [The recording and transcript of the interview is available here.](#) Both Molly and Andrea were also named by *Newsweek* and The Daily Beast as two of the "[150 Fearless Women in the World](#)," an honor reserved for women creating lasting, positive change worldwide.

[Click here for the recording and transcript of the MSNBC interview.](#)

**Tostan Mobilizes Community Members to Donate Blood in Thiès, Senegal**

### **Abdoulie Sidibeh Lends Male Voice to 2012 Women in the World Summit**



Earlier this month, 20-year-old Gambian activist and Tostan CEP participant, Abdoulie Sidibeh, spoke by special invitation at the [2012 Women in the World Summit](#) in New York

City. Representing the next generation of passionate activists dedicated to empowering others, Abdoulie spoke on the critical role men play in supporting the abandonment of [child/forced marriage](#) and [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) alongside Molly Melching and fellow Tostan Activist Imam Demba Diawara.

[Click here to learn how Abdoulie came to attend Women in the World](#), and stay tuned for a follow-up on his incredible story.

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In Senegal, only .25% of the population regularly donates blood compared to the average 2% of donors in other countries. To help mobilize donors, Tostan hosted a much-needed blood

drive at Tostan's Training Center for Sustainable Development in Thiès, Senegal. Many first-time and repeat donors came to support the drive knowing how important it was for hospitals and clinics to be able to provide life-saving blood transfusions.

[View the photo essay of the blood drive on our blog](#) or on [our Facebook page](#).

Support Tostan programming every time you need to find information on the Internet. [GoodSearch](#), a Yahoo-powered search engine will donate 50% of its revenue (about a penny per search) to listed charities designated by its users.

*Here is the step-by-step guide of how you can support Tostan just by merely searching the web:*

1. Start your search at [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com)
2. Under the search box, choose your cause by entering "Tostan" then clicking on "Verify."
3. Use GoodSearch as your default search engine. GoodSearch will make a small donation every time you search.
4. Sit back, relax and enjoy raising funds for Tostan!

**DONATE NOW**



Click on the icons above to donate and stay connected with Tostan.

To find out more about upcoming events and ongoing projects, please visit our [website](#).  
Tostan is a US 501(c)(3) nongovernmental organization based in Senegal, West Africa.

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