**Dan’s latest adventures in South Africa**

Hola hola!

So I figured this would be a good email to send considering today and yesterday have been two of the most interesting and intense days at the Treatment Action Campaign, which is my internship. Yesterday I arrived to be reminded that the executive of UNAIDS was speaking in Khayelitsha. This was a huge deal because UNAIDS is a powerful international org. which I thing is based in Geneva and the fact that he was coming to speak in one of the poorest districts in Cape Town first got everyone excited and riled up. Before it started I tried to stay out of the way of the busy people in my office or offer some help. I ended up being asked to highlight some files which was more busy work than anything else.

However, I left early to get into the big tent that had been set up and was surprised to see an extremely well organized set up. TAC is an AIDS activist organization and they have a new set of shirts yearly which they give out at demonstrations or rallies. Around the stage they had set up the old and new shirts and it was interesting to be able to see the issues that had changed from year just by looking at the text on a shirt. I sat in the 2nd row next to a journalist (media was all over the place). Finally, the woman running the speaking introduced everyone and made it clear that it was being run on a tight schedule. However, once a person stood up to speak that the crowd either recognized or appreciated rather than just clap loudly a woman in the crowd would cry out a chant which would immediately get picked up by the surrounding audience. This would then lead to dancing circles throughout the hastily thrown together chairs. Eventually the speaker would settle everyone down by gaining their attention though the typical rally chant which begins with “Viva TAC Viva!” and the crowd replies strongly “Viva!” There’s also a great chant which originated during apartheid protests – The speaker cries “Amanda!” then a powerful response – “Awaytu”. Although the spelling is definitely incorrect, it means “Power!” – “To the people!”. This has to said strongly because if not you’ll be laughed out for saying “Power” in a weak way.

One by one speakers came up. This included the Minister of Health, a man and woman both openly living with HIV, a random guy that hopped on stage with a weird hoodie/doorag mix