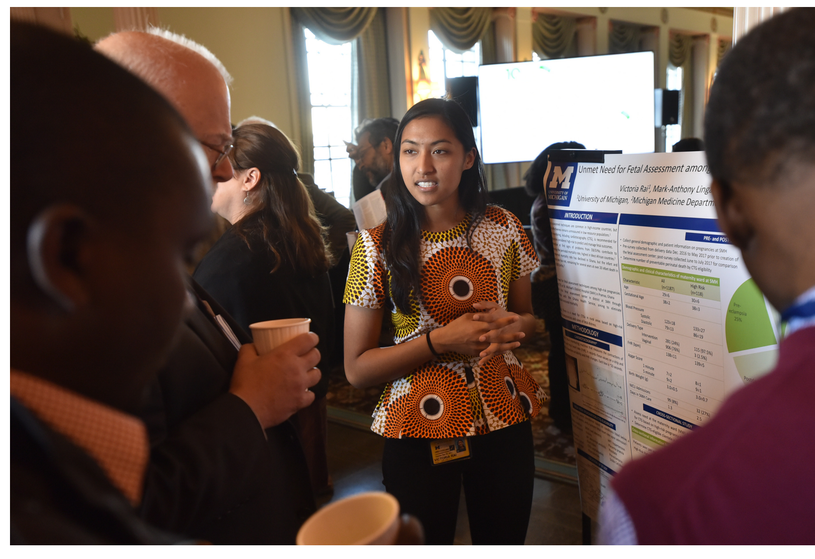
LSA COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER

Enhancing the interdisciplinary and collaborative study of Africa, past and present

The University of Michigan's African Studies Center (ASC) is one of the nation's foremost institutes for interdisciplinary, collaborative research and training on, in, and about Africa. ASC provides guidance and coordination for Africa-related education, research, and programming at the university and promotes collaboration with partners on the continent. ASC funds research sabbaticals that bring talented African faculty to campus through our flagship program—University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS)—which fosters new perspectives delivering value to our students and faculty while also strengthening African universities. The next generation of African scholars build their international academic networks, are empowered to become research leaders in their fields, and work toward solving global challenges and contributing to the continent's growth and continued excellence.

The ASC is committed to building all of its engagements on the values of reciprocity, sustainable partnerships, co-creation of knowledge, and real-world applications. It is this commitment that makes ASC a valuable contributor to the efforts of African countries to build their own capacity and grow their own talent in ways that will help bring more education, health, well-being, economic growth, and development across the continent.

ASC supports initiatives in all disciplines and fields represented at U-M—from law and medicine to the sciences and humanities—for the mutual benefit of the university and our partners on the continent. We enable students and faculty to collaborate on research projects with colleagues at African partner institutions. UMAPS and other ASC initiatives enrich the experience of U-M's students and faculty through the inclusion of African perspectives on campus and ensure that the University of Michigan remains an attractive destination for African Studies.

Funding support provides more opportunities for U-M students to engage first-hand with the African continent through supervised research projects, internships, and specialized courses, and for talented faculty and students at African universities to pursue research sabbaticals and educational opportunities at U-M. Gifts help ensure that faculty based at both U-M and African institutions continue to develop and sustain equitable partnerships in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professional fields. In order to find innovative solutions to shared global problems and formulate new research agendas, ASC leverages our strengths as a premier center for African studies to increase our impact both on campus and on the continent.

AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER STRATEGIC FUND

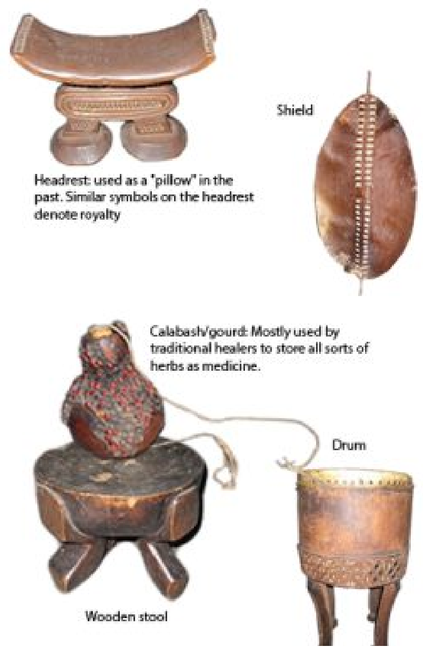
The strategic fund is a vital resource to the ASC. The director uses these funds to meet unexpected needs, provide for technological updates, maintain facilities, and cover costs. Gifts of any size will support the center's greatest priorities, enhancing the study of Africa at U-M and beyond.

ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

ASC is committed to providing a platform for African knowledge producers on the U-M campus and the world stage. Resources are needed to host an annual distinguished lecture that puts the spotlight on a senior Africa-based scholar. By focusing attention on experts and leaders on Africa, ASC helps unsettle the conventional understandings of the continent. An endowed gift of $250,000 or $10,000 annually will provide the funding needed to continue to build long-term equitable engagement with the continent.

AFRICAN LANGUAGES PROGRAM

Language instruction is central to a meaningful and effective understanding of the countries and cultures of Africa. ASC supports the expansion of U-M's African language program by recruiting native speakers of African languages as instructors of courses for students across the university. Annual gifts of $25,000 or $500,000 endowed are needed to support visiting African language faculty and will be used to cover expenses for one visiting language scholar.



Comfort Tamanda Mtotha received funding from ASC for her Ph.D. research and fieldwork. Her research interrogates the history and politics of collecting objects in Southern Africa. Mtotha looks at issues such as how objects were collected by missionaries, and how those objects ended up in Europe, both in museums and private collections, and how these institutions were established. Specifically, she is interested in museums in Malawi and Scotland. This comparison is interesting because Mtotha has found that objects in museum collections in both countries are often similar, but their social histories are quite different.

"During the 1960s and 1970s, new museums were seen as a way to form unity in newly independent countries in Africa; at the same time there was a tension in that many presidents also wanted to use museums for their own gain." Mtotha used the funding from ASC to employ research assistants in Malawi who worked to access and document archival documents. "I interpret the past by understanding the social life of things and how they change meanings between time and space. Understanding the provenance of things has helped me recover exciting stories."

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AFRICA-FOCUSED CURRICULUM

Students have greater opportunities to explore Africa-focused learning through content that is integrated into curricula across the university. ASC provides faculty grants to develop Africa-focused content in a range of courses. Students from all of U-M's schools and colleges benefit from the expanded engagement in Africa-related knowledge and perspectives as they move toward their future careers. Funds are needed to support up to three faculty per year as they bring content related to Africa into course offerings across campus. An endowed commitment of $500,000 or $25,000 annually would provide the requisite funding.

STUDENT RESEARCH AND INTERNSHIP FELLOWSHIPS

First-hand experience in Africa significantly enhances the education of our students as they become globally-engaged citizens, preparing them for careers where regional expertise is needed. ASC welcomes endowed as well as expendable gifts to support merit-based fellowships for study abroad in all African countries. We also need supplemental funds to support African students who are studying at the University of Michigan. An endowed gift of $1M or $50,000 annually would provide $5,000 of funding per student.

ANNUAL AFRICA MICHIGAN COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE

The core of ASC and U-M's engagement with Africa is networks of individuals and the intellectual community they create. Conferences are essential to bring together scholars—from Africa and elsewhere—to share advancements and knowledge with other researchers, policy makers, cultural producers, thought leaders, and business professionals. Topics each year will address issues of global importance in the humanities, social sciences, professional and creative fields, and STEM that leverage the strengths of U-M faculty and Africa-based collaborators to bring in new partners. $2M endowed funding or $100,000 annually is are needed to cover the costs of hosting a large-scale conference, including contributors' travel expenses.

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NAMED AFRICAN FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM OR NAMED INDIVIDUAL SCHOLAR

The University of Michigan has a deep commitment to building and expanding scholarly partnerships with African institutions. The U-M African Presidential Scholars program was established with seed funding from the provost and has transformed the way institutions of higher education collaborate on African studies. With funding for this signature initiative expiring next year, we are seeking new sources of support that will maintain this remarkable program. An endowed gift will support the continued development of talented faculty from African universities through five-month residencies in Ann Arbor. ASC is planning two cohorts of 15 fellows each year.

These fellows enrich our community while also being enriched by the University of Michigan. Each fellow is paired with a faculty collaborator who is a leader in their field and is given access to all the university's resources, including libraries and laboratories. The scholars work toward their research goals and then return to their home universities in Africa with new knowledge, ideas, and networks. A named African faculty fellows program will ensure that the University of Michigan remains a prominent destination for the study of Africa in all its facets. The investment for this prestigious naming opportunity is $15M endowed or $750,000 annually.

We are also offering naming opportunities for individual scholar positions in the UMAPS program, which provides for one highly talented African faculty member to undertake a five-month residency at U-M. Endowed positions in the UMAPS program can be designated for fellows from specific universities or countries, or in specific disciplines, or they can be unrestricted. Funding is needed to cover the costs of the residency, including travel, housing, and a stipend. Individual scholar naming opportunities are available for $500,000 endowed or $25,000 annually.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

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