



# alliances

November 2009 University of Michigan

No.2

Member of the University of Michigan International Institute

## ASC Launch Conference a Great Success

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM FEATURES SCHOLARS, DIGNITARIES

**A**midst much good cheer and palpable excitement, the African Studies Center marked its academic debut with an international symposium featuring an impressive array of national and international scholars and dignitaries. The March 12-14, 2009 event, "Engaging Africa/



Advancing African Studies," fulfilled its dual objectives of honoring the first anniversary of U-M President Mary Sue Coleman's trip to Africa, and advancing the intellectual agenda for Africa initiatives at the U-M. These initiatives represent the 'Michigan Difference' by spanning health, science, humanities, engineering, public policy, law, the arts, and more—the full gamut of the university.

Following remarks by Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Lester Monts, International Institute Director Mark Tessler, and ASC Director Kelly Askew, the symposium began with a keynote address on "Peace Without Justice" by João Honwana, Director of the Africa I Division/UN Department of Political Affairs. Honwana is a leading figure in African conflict resolution who fought in the Mozambican struggle for independence. He directed the Conventional Arms Branch of the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs and led peace-building efforts in Guinea-Bissau and Sudan before being appointed to his current position.

Honwana explored cases where peace was achieved at the expense of justice, and queried how sustainable such peace is. He focused the first half of his remarks on Mozambique, where families were divided by split loyalties during the war, yet where

peace continues to consolidate with each passing year—even as victims' rights are ignored. He argued that the need for peace and reconciliation within families evolved outward from the grassroots level to the country as a whole. He then turned to Kenya, where a fragile peace has set in following the election violence of January 2008, and argued for improved coordination among international actors assisting with



João Honwana, UN Africa I Division Director



Amos Sawyer, former President of Liberia

conflict resolution. A lively panel discussion followed, featuring Rahma Bourqia, President of Université Hassan II, Morocco; David Wiley, Professor of Sociology, MSU; and Amos Sawyer, former President of Liberia.

Continued, p. 2



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

In this second issue of *Alliances*, we explore activities from the African Studies Center's first full year and the trajectories guiding our current efforts. Let me begin by affirming that our accomplishments thus far would not have been possible without the dedicated team that animate the ASC: Devon Adjei (Key Administrator), Sandie Schulze (Program Coordinator), and Thaya Rowe (Secretary). To give but one example, the successful launch of the U–M African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) program derives largely from their meticulous organization, warm hospitality, and ability to make ASC a home–away–from–home for our UMAPS scholars. The heartfelt statements made by UMAPS scholars at the farewell dinner in August (see story p. 6) highlighted this, and I join them in thanking Devon, Sandie, and Thaya for their talents and thoughtfulness. I also extend a welcome to **Derek Peterson**, the new ASC Associate Director. Derek is an associate professor in the Department of History and CAAS, and joins us from Cambridge University (UK) where he served as Director of its African Studies Centre. We feel very fortunate to have him on our team.

We also welcome to campus new professors **Anne Pitcher** (CAAS/Political Science), **Martin Murray** (Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning/CAAS), **Frank Nunoo-Quarcoo** (School of Art and Design), **Nyambura Mpesha** (CAAS), and **Yazier Henry** (Ford School of Public Policy/CAAS), all of whom bring Africanist expertise.

We introduce with this issue the new ASC logo, developed by Michigan Marketing & Design; and we anticipate that our new website will soon go live. Another achievement is our new African Languages program, launched this semester with Dr. Mpesha teaching Swahili, plus instruction in Akan, Bambara, Wolof, and Zulu offered via videoconferencing from Indiana University. Many thanks to Loyd Mbabu, our Africana librarian, who tested the waters by offering a pilot Swahili course in 2008–09. It was such a success that we were able to make the case for introducing a full program this year.

Previously in *Alliances*, we detailed three presidential initiatives administered through the ASC: UMAPS, African Heritage, and African Social Research (see updates pp. 10–11). It is my great pleasure to announce a fourth initiative: **STEM–Africa**, which will support U–M faculty in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with

Africa–related projects and collaborations. Launched with generous funding from the Office of the President; Office of the Vice President for Research; College of Engineering; the schools of Information, Education, and Natural Resources and the Environment; Graham Environmental Sustainability Institute; and the International Institute, STEM–Africa will connect faculty and students from Africa with the U–M to facilitate development of creative solutions to some of the most critical global issues, from waste management and water access to bioinformatics and cybersecurity.

We welcomed several distinguished guests to campus this past summer. These included Ambassador **Amina Salum Ali** of the African Union (AU); Commissioner **Jean–Pierre Ezin** from the AU Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology; and University of Liberia President **Emmet Dennis**. All three engaged us in discussions on how the U–M might play a role in invigorating and supporting higher education in Africa.

I write this letter from Tanzania, a country with limited higher–ed opportunities. The government's goal after independence was to promote literacy, focusing efforts on universal primary education and supplementing it with adult education. But inadequate resources led to a period of decline at the two universities that until recently were the only higher–ed options in this country of 38 million people. Faculty were poorly paid; many left for more lucrative careers elsewhere. Infrastructure was not maintained, and new technologies lay beyond reach—yet demand for a college education kept rising.

Higher education is in a state of crisis all across Africa, leading the AU to declare 2006–2015 a “Second Decade of Education for Africa.” With our proven excellence across disciplines, institutional commitment to internationalization, and longstanding collaborations in Africa, the U–M is poised to be a significant partner in the AU's efforts. Our faculty and students benefit in untold ways by acquiring new perspectives and encouraging innovation in conditions at a significant remove from the bounty of our campus. U–M's growing engagement with Africa has the potential to reap both immediate and hidden rewards for all involved, enhancing our status as a global university. It is an exciting time for African Studies, and I thank every one of you for the role you play in making it so.

Kelly M. Askew  
October 2009

*Continued from p. 1*

The second day began with an address by Coleman, who reflected on her African trip and her commitment to continued collaboration with African universities. She pointed out that “many African studies centers focus their work on the social sciences and humanities, and that's great. We do this, and more, by also incorporating disciplines like medicine, engineering, and dentistry providing a broader platform for scholars engaged in research, teaching, and service related to Africa.”

Proving her point, four interdisciplinary panels occupied the rest of the day: “Expanding Health Initiatives in Ghana,” “Health and Environment in Urban Africa,” “Dynamics of Science and Technology in Africa,” and “U–M Presidential African Initiatives: Heritage and Social Research.” Each panel was introduced by a U–M dean: the first by James Woolliscroft of the Medical School, the second by Peter Polverini of the School of Dentistry, the third by David Munson of the School of Engineering, and the fourth by Terrence McDonald of LSA. A dazzling assemblage of scholars from U–M and partner institutions in Africa presented on a wide range of topics.

The final day featured a roundtable discussion with directors of centers of African or Africa–related studies—Mamadou Diouf (Columbia), James Pritchett (MSU), Harry Garuba (UCT, S. Africa) and Alcinda Honwana (Open University, UK); and the current president of the African Studies Association, Paul Tiyambe Zeleza. Chaired by Kevin Gaines, Director of CAAS, the roundtable reviewed the current state of African studies and how innovations within the field have transformed disciplines. A compelling discussion highlighted the



**Alcinda Honwana speaking at the conference, with (L to R) Kevin Gaines, Mamadou Diouf and James Pritchett.**

origins of African studies, and emphasized the need for collaborative solutions to challenges faced on both sides of the Atlantic.

Photos by U–M Photo Services



U-M's Ray Silverman reviews a prototype of the website for Techiman's new cultural center with community leaders this last June.

## Professor Ray Silverman: PUSHING THE ENVELOPE IN GHANA

by Stephanie Harrell

Reprinted with permission from the History of Art department newsletter, Spring 2009

Raymond Silverman is a professor of Art History and Afroamerican and African Studies, as well as the director of the Museum Studies Program. Throughout his career he has worked extensively in Ghana and Ethiopia, and has developed a strong interest in the history of museums in Africa as well as the translation of local knowledge in community-based cultural institutions.

In his work and travels in Ghana, Silverman had encountered many "cultural villages." Ghana is a major heritage tourism destination, and Silverman sees these villages as having a common aim of attracting visitors by offering a standard representation of "Ghanaian" indigenous culture.

"People were doing the same thing over and over again," he said, posing the question: "How does one represent the culture of a nation comprising over 20 ethnic groups, each with its own culture?" So when a group of chiefs from Techiman—the community in which Silverman lived in 1979–80 while he conducted research for his PhD dissertation—approached him several years ago for assistance creating a similar cultural village, he feared it would only offer tourists the same kind of experience they could encounter at other, more accessible locations in Ghana. He was also aware—having spoken with community leaders—that they are very concerned about the loss of local customs and beliefs in Techiman in the face of globalization.

Silverman suggested an alternative to the Techiman chiefs: rather than make a

common cultural village whose primary audience was outsiders and tourists, why not create a cultural center that would serve, first and foremost, the people of Techiman?

The chiefs immediately embraced the idea. This type of center would strengthen ties between the culturally diverse people of Techiman (Ghanaians from all over the country live there because it is home to the country's largest agricultural market) by offering a space where all the different cultures could express their traditions. It could also, by being a site where unique local cultural practices are performed, become a major tourist attraction.

This summer, Silverman returned to Ghana, as he has several times since 2005, accompanied by four graduate students, to continue working with the people of Techiman on the Techiman Cultural Center, supported with funding from Arts of Citizenship and the International Institute Experiential Learning Fund. The center, when finished, will include a museum, art gallery, archives, library, artisan workshops, auditorium, restaurant, and more. It will be a social and cultural space where artisans and artists work, where annual festivals and weddings and funerals are performed, where local history is preserved, and where Techiman's diverse communities come together to share their experiences.

Although Silverman has been an instrumental advisor, the project is a thoroughly collaborative endeavor, and one in which the process is seen to be as important as the outcome. In Techiman, the chiefs are learning to concede part of their decision-making authority to promote involvement from the community at large. Here in Ann Arbor, in 2006, Architecture and Urban Planning professor Jim Chaffers dedicated a design studio class to developing plans for the center.

Some of his students traveled to Ghana with Silverman and Chaffers, where they met with Ghanaian students who had done the same thing. They worked together and presented their designs to the Techiman community, which selected one for the cultural center. Although this type of collaboration poses challenges, the extra time and effort is part of an important process that Silverman hopes will result in the community learning new skills. It is a process that will ultimately strengthen civil society in Techiman.

These challenges also bring opportunity. Although this type of public scholarship is often not recognized as legitimate academic work, a project like the Techiman Cultural Center gives Silverman the opportunity to explore a paradigm that emphasizes the importance of engaging and collaborating with local communities in the production of knowledge. "We're pushing the envelope with regard to how universities connect with communities, with the rest of society," he explained, adding that the LSA 2009 Theme Year, "Meaningful Objects: Museums in the Academy" will include a lecture series exploring the ways local knowledge is translated and represented in the context of the museum. This work is a far cry from the more traditional art history Silverman has pursued in the past. This approach, Silverman said, "takes several steps back from the object and considers the social space in which history and tradition are performed and culture evolves."

"One of the marvelous things about this project is that it's been a terrific opportunity for me to engage in fieldwork in Africa that's relevant to what I do here at the University of Michigan, which is primarily in the area of museum studies, and by extension heritage studies," Silverman said.

He will continue to follow the development of the Techiman Cultural Center, even as his responsibilities in Ann Arbor extend to the interim co-management of the University of Michigan Museum of Art during the search for a new museum director.



## STEM-Africa Advances Sci/Tech, Engineering, and Math Collaborations

STEM-Africa is the fourth of the presidential initiatives for Africa. The STEM-Africa Initiative will advance research collaborations and career development in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics between the U-M and partnering institutions in Africa. It will promote and enrich existing STEM initiatives in Africa and support new intellectual engagements that extend scientific knowledge and nurture emerging STEM scholars on the continent.

### U-M COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK IN AFRICA

by Meredith Mecham Smith

Students and faculty from the U-M College of Engineering (CoE) have been working with African institutions for several years. While these collaborations are still in their infancy, they have laid the groundwork for engagement in Africa with faculty exchanges, joint projects, and programs like the ones offered through the Global Intercultural Experience for Undergraduates (GIEU) program.

- Professors Albert Shih and Jun Ni have partnered on several exchange programs with colleagues in South Africa. Shih is working on an NSF-sponsored project on friction spot welding. Ni also has a joint NSF grant and has organized US-South Africa workshops on advanced manufacturing technologies.
- In July 2005, Mechanical Engineering professor Elijah Kannatey-Asibu, Jr., led a team of nine GIEU students to Kumasi, Ghana, to work on a project involving ways to modernize manufacturer Suame Magazine. The team visited job shops to document available equipment and manpower, and made recommendations to show how Ghana's manufacturing sector could be improved through education and modernization.
- Kannatey-Asibu went back to Ghana in 2006 with a GIEU team collaborating with the University of Education Winneba. Twelve



IMAGINE/Africa ground station

U-M students studied the plastics recycling industry in the US and Ghana, developing recommendations for establishing programs and raising awareness of the benefits of plastics recycling. They visited schools, restaurants, and churches in an urban community, and also spent a week in a rural community, building recycling bins using local materials and working with residents to place the bins at strategic collection spots.

- In May 2008, Mechanical Engineering professor Kathleen Sienko led a GIEU student team to Kumasi, Ghana. Their aim



IMAGINE Group

was to develop a program that focused on technological interventions and educational outreach with the goal of reducing maternal mortality. The project partnered the U-M with the University of Ghana, KNUST School of Medical Sciences, and Sene District Hospital. Sienko returned to Ghana in July 2009 with another student team to conduct clinical observations in urban and rural hospitals. The students also taught HIV/AIDS educational outreach modules to high-school students and clinic nursing staff, among other activities.

- Sienko and CoE colleagues have been working on a tool for adult male circumcision in South Africa. Recent studies suggest that circumcision can reduce the risk of contracting the HIV virus by as much as 60 percent; it's estimated that

circumcision could save 3-5 million lives in sub-Saharan Africa alone over the next 15 years. But traditional circumcisions

have come under scrutiny recently, due to deaths resulting from complications. Four mechanical engineering seniors worked with Sienko and U-M, Family Health International, and South African clinicians to design a low-cost tool that is minimally intrusive to traditional ceremonial procedures. The adjustable tool, which could be manufactured for around \$3, has the potential to be used in clinical settings worldwide. Several prototypes have been created and the team is now preparing for initial human subject testing.

- In an Atmospheric, Oceanic and Space Sciences class led by CoE faculty members Thomas Zurbuchen and Darren McKague, students examined how off-the-shelf technology could be used to create low-cost satellite internet ground stations in the developing world. The goal was to increase internet access in Africa, where only 6 percent of the population is currently connected—the lowest penetration in the world. (In comparison, about 74 percent of North Americans have internet access.) The result: IMAGINE (IMplementing A Global Internet Network) Africa, funded by CoE and Google.

The first stations were deployed in Kenya in 2008. Powered by a solar panel and batteries and equipped with a wireless router, the stations don't need grid power or landline communications. Ultimately, the stations will create an "internet café"-style environment for users wherever they are, whether desert, jungle, or savanna.

### CAFI RESEARCH PROJECT EXAMINES ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE MODELS

by Arun Agrawal and Rebecca Hardin, SNRE

The NSF-supported Central Africa Forests Initiative (CAFI) focuses on the critical juncture between environmental governance and logging in forests in Cameroon and the Republic

of the Congo. This innovative project examines how variations in environmental governance make a difference in forested landscapes in these two countries.

Part of the CAFI initiative is to better understand the social and ecological transformations in concession level management that certification processes are producing. The transnational nature of the challenges, linking consumers in world markets with producers in Africa, makes this a critical and timely topic.



CAFI 2009 meeting

The project supports the training, research, and education activities of students through faculty partnerships across campus, including the School of Natural Resources and Environment (SNRE), the Ross School of Business, the departments of Anthropology and Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, the Center for the Study of Complex Systems, and the African Studies Center. And the initiative is building strong collaborative links with researchers and students from the University of Yaounde, Cameroon; the University Marion Gouabi in Brazzaville, Congo; and the French Department of Research on Humans, Nature, and Society in Paris.

CAFI's research strategy will use ethnographic, statistical, remote-sensing, and agent-based modeling techniques. It will show how variations in partnerships among governments, logging companies, and third parties affect the content of concession agreements, their subsequent implementation, and environmental outcomes; and how armed conflict, shifts in trade and currency values, and increased access to data about logging and forest management in concessions, forest cover change, and associated outcomes modify new and evolving governance arrangements.

Photo by Abigail Mechtenberg



## ELECTRIC UGANDA: MEETING ENERGY CRISES

by Abigail Mechtenberg, Assistant Research Scientist, Physics Department (LSA)

**Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental.**

**-W.E.B. Du Bois**

In early 2007, Business Professor John Makanda (Mountains of the Moon University) and I began discussing the many-faceted relationships between electricity and development in Uganda. What happens at hospitals when the grid goes off? How are health clinics affected by lack of access to the electric grid? What about businesses like video halls, computing centers, internet cafés, and bars? What are the consequences to boarders at off-grid schools when they use kerosene lanterns—risking fire and indoor air pollution? Given the constraints, how do we meet these unreliable and unavailable grid energy crises?

We decided to work together as a team through Mountains of the Moon University, St. Joseph's Technical Institute, and the U-M, to empower networking and projects that address these critical electricity and human development issues.

Today, in 2009, the co-created "Physics and Business of Energy" curriculum (empowerdesign.org) has finished building the following devices, all constructed from locally available materials in Fort Portal, Uganda:

- Bicycle generator for off-grid villages. It takes fewer food calories to use a generator to charge a cell phone than it takes for villagers to walk to and from a cell phone charging station. (The generator was also implemented later at Mpala Wildlife Foundation in Kenya.)
- Hand-crank generator for surgical lamp, produced in conjunction with Michigan's M-Heal surgical lamp biomedical engineering student team.
- Merry-go-round generator for schools.

Based on Brigham Young University's empowerplay-grounds.org project, but locally manufactured in Uganda instead of imported.

- Wind generator for villages with high winds.
- Micro-hydroelectric generator for villages near fast-flowing water.

Photo by Abigail Mechtenberg



During our October 2009 trip, we plan to add steam engine electric generators, and will also begin implementing devices at businesses, schools, and hospitals. We're also looking forward to working with Engineering Professor Dr. Moses Musaaazi from Makerere University, Uganda. The recipient of international awards for his work, Musaaazi has extensive experience taking locally manufactured projects to market. He's excited to be joining the team, and we are delighted to welcome him.

## MATH CONFERENCES IN CAMEROON

By Dan Burns, Professor of Mathematics, College of LSA

The Department of Mathematics at the University of Buea, Cameroon, is sponsoring the "International Conferences on the Mathematical Sciences" series, which brings together academics and professionals of diverse backgrounds who share an interest in the mathematical sciences and their applications. The inaugural conference was held in Buea in May 2009, with support provided by the U-M Department of Mathematics and the Comprehensive Studies Program. More than 100 participants attended.

The conferences explore the vital role that math plays in professional research and in society in general, and will nurture understanding and collaboration between global and Cameroonian mathematical scientists and practitioners. Organizers hope the series will become a prominent forum for generating scientific synergies for the advancement of Africa's scientific and technological workforce.

Two U-M mathematics faculty members are participating in the conferences: Nkem Khumbah serves as co-chair of the organizing committee, and Dan Burns serves as a member of the International Advisory Committee.

For more information, see: [www.bueaconference.com](http://www.bueaconference.com).





In a recent August evening, Rackham Assembly Hall was the scene of a celebratory dinner. And there was much to celebrate:

- We honored the 2008–09 inaugural cohort of the UMAPS scholars, who were homeward bound after six months of scholarship on the Michigan campus;
- We welcomed Emmet Dennis, president of the University of Liberia, who spoke about the partnerships the U–M is building with the University of Liberia; and
- We introduced the fourth African presidential initiative, STEM–Africa.

In her opening remarks, ASC Director Kelly Askew thanked President Dennis for attending, and pointed out that as an immunologist and epidemiologist, he is a “STEM–er” himself. She also announced that the second cohort of UMAPS scholars has been selected (see related article page 11).

Other speakers—among them Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Lester Monts and International Institute Director Mark Tessler—spoke about the importance of continuing to strengthen the ties between the University of Michigan and educational institutions on the continent, and how the leadership of President Mary Sue Coleman has been so important.

“We are building a network of connections and friendships” with African universities, said Rackham Graduate School Dean Janet Weiss, which will be “fruitful from a scholarship and educational perspective.

“It was enormously valuable to have the UMAPS group here,” she added.



### EMMET DENNIS: ON A MISSION TO REBUILD

The evening had a decided Liberian *leitmotif*. Provost Monts reminded the audience that his area of expertise in ethnomusicology is Liberian music, which he has been studying for 35 years. Kelly Askew announced that the next cohort of UMAPS participants will include scholars from Liberia. And Emmet Dennis, on leave from Rutgers University and currently president of the University of Liberia (U–L), spoke about



## Celebrating Partnerships: UMAPS, STEM, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA



### EX AFRICA SEMPER ALIQUID NOVI

(“There is always something  
new out of Africa”)

–Pliny the Elder

the state of Liberian academics in the wake of the 1980 civil war.

The 14–year–long conflict, he said, caused problems not only for the infrastructure at the college, but also caused many faculty to leave the country. Ongoing connections with the University of Michigan will “help move things along,” he said, “but much more needs to happen.”

Dennis believes that the UMAPS program is a “timely and unique” addition to the Michigan–Liberia connection, which speaks to the problems of promoting and retaining faculty in country. Of the teachers at his institution, fully 70% were instructors, with only 30% tenure–track professors. A primary focus of his has been to help instructors



UMAP scholar Moses Nii–Dortey and Lester Montes

become future faculty by finding graduate educational opportunities that would allow them to study overseas and return as faculty to Liberia.

“I’m on a mission to rebuild the institution,” Dennis said, “with partners who can benefit from that rebuilding process. Part of my mission is to elicit the partnership of a place like the University of Michigan, which is unique from the standpoint of its international character.

“The international agenda permeates the length and breadth of this institution,” he added. “The sharing of ideas and ideals and philosophies here makes me feel like I’m in a candy store on Christmas!”

Dennis ended his speech with words of praise for both the University of Michigan and its visionary president, Mary Sue Coleman, who has been a constant champion of outreach to Africa.

“The parochialism of the past does not exist,” Dennis said.

“When the roll is called, it will be the University of Michigan that is looked upon as THE global citizen.”



Emmet Dennis, Kelly Askew, and Dean Janet Weiss

### “A BITTERSWEET MOMENT”

In February 2009, ten junior faculty from Ghana and South Africa arrived in Ann Arbor to begin a residency at the University of Michigan. Their first thought? For UMAPS scholar Efua Vandyck of the University of Ghana, it was: “It’s so cold!” Six months later on a sultry summer evening as they prepared to depart for their homes, all agreed that the experience was one they would never forget.

“I was sad when I left home,” said Alexius Amtaika, of the University of KwaZulu–Natal, “because I had to leave my family and my children. But this gave me an opportunity to have a new family that took care of me and gave me all the assistance and support I needed.

“Thank you, Mary Sue Coleman, for your vision,” Amtaika added, ending his remarks with the familiar quotation, “There is always something new out of Africa.”

Sekepe Matjila also had an apt quotation: "I will follow the footprints of wisdom," said to be spoken by Ethiopian Queen Makeda, also known as Sheba, before her journey to Solomon. His time at Michigan was his own journey to wisdom, he said.



Yazier Henry, Public Policy/CAAS with Sekepe Matjila, UMAPS Scholar

"Thank you for honoring us," said Leah Ndanga, of the University of Pretoria, "and thank you for believing in us."

Like many of the other scholars, Moses Nii-Dortey of the University of Ghana felt that "the African Studies Center is the family we had" while at Michigan, and he thanked the Center staff, CAAS, and the UMAPS mentors for their help and support.

"I feel so good about myself," said a smiling Annet Oguttu of the University of South Africa Law School. Her mentor, Reuven Avi-Yonah, was a "kindred spirit" with whom she immediately connected. (Read more about Annet Oguttu and Reuven Avi-Yonah in the following article.) "This is just the beginning," she proclaimed.

"Just the beginning" was a sentiment echoed by Judith Stephens of the University of Ghana, whose memories of Michigan will include the "vast resources of the libraries" and the knowledge gained apart from her own particular research.



Alexis Amtaika

"This is a bittersweet moment," Efua Vandyck said, summing up the feelings of many. Although "the resources here are so rich" and the opportunities for scholarship in many ways so much easier, there's still no place like home.

Photos by Elshafei Dafalla Mohamed



Emmet Dennis with Siobhan Harlow, School of Public Health UMAPS mentor, and UMAPS scholar Efua Vandyck

#### UMAPS 2008-09 SCHOLARS AND THEIR U-M FACULTY MENTORS

- Alexius Amtaika, University of KwaZulu-Natal/Adam Ashforth, CAAS, mentor
- Alexander Kaadyire Duku Frempong, University of Ghana/Ken Kollman, Political Science, mentor
- Sekepe Daniel Matjila, University of South Africa/Keith Taylor, English, mentor
- Carol Jean Mitchell, University of KwaZulu-Natal/Pat King, Education, mentor
- Annet Oguttu, University of South Africa School of Law/ Reuven Avi-Yonah, Law, mentor
- Leah Z.B. Ndanga, University of Pretoria/Ravi Anupindi, Business, mentor
- Moses Narteh Nii-Dortey, University of Ghana/Lester Monts, Music, mentor
- Judith Koryo Stephens, University of Ghana/Mark Wilson, Public Health, mentor
- Mahunele Lawrence Thotse, University of Pretoria/Ray Silverman, History of Art, mentor
- Efua Vandyck, University of Ghana/Sioban Harlow, Public Health, mentor

#### SUPPORT ASC

The African Studies Center is a critical component in the University of Michigan's ongoing work in and on Africa. You can help by making a gift to the Center that will help support our programs, including the Presidential Scholars initiative. For more information, please contact us at [asc-contact@umich.edu](mailto:asc-contact@umich.edu). Or, to make a gift online, visit [www.giving.umich.edu](http://www.giving.umich.edu) and donate through the U-M's secure giving website. Please remember to specify the ASC when making your gift.

The ASC is a member of the University of Michigan International Institute.

## FOCUS ON...

### UMAPS SCHOLAR ANNET OGUTTU

by Meredith Mecham Smith



"I can think of no more important work than joining

hands with you to transform and improve lives through the power and promise of global knowledge."

This remark by U-M President Mary Sue Coleman during her 2008 trip to Africa marked the beginning of the University of Michigan African President Scholars (UMAPS) Program. The first group of scholars ended its tenure in Ann Arbor in August, and the impact of this unique opportunity for visiting faculty from South Africa and Ghana and their mentors is just beginning to emerge.

An "advert" at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 2008 was the beginning of a collaboration and friendship between Annet Oguttu and U-M tax law professor Reuven Avi-Yonah. An associate professor at the University of South Africa's School of Law, Oguttu had just finished a PhD in international tax law when she learned about UMAPS. The program invited promising, early-career faculty members from Ghana and South Africa to the U-M for a six-month residency. (This year's cohort will include scholars from Liberia.) Each scholar was paired with a volunteer U-M faculty mentor during the residency, and had full access to Michigan's resources to further their work on research projects, academic degrees, grant proposals, or other relevant activity. The program seeks to help the next generation of African scholars and their home institutions build increased academic capacity.

"When it comes to international tax issues," Oguttu said, "there isn't really much mentorship [in South Africa]. There are very few experts in my field, and no institutions offer it on an extensive level. I definitely knew I would get the guidance I needed if I came [to Michigan]." Oguttu applied, was accepted, and was paired with Reuven Avi-Yonah, an international tax law professor with a global reputation in the field. Oguttu was delighted to learn that Avi-Yonah, whose work she had quoted in her graduate studies, had agreed to work with her. "You need some kind of guidance, some kind of mentorship—affirmation—to grow in this field," Oguttu said, "so I knew coming here and working hand in hand with Professor Avi-Yonah would give me this opportunity."

Continued, p. 12



## Libraries and Archives IN THE CULTURAL HERITAGE SECTOR

by Margaret Hedstrom  
Associate Professor, School of Information

The First International Conference on African Digital Libraries and Archives (ICADLA-1) was held at the UN Conference Center in Addis Ababa July 1-3. The conference brought together more than 200 delegates from libraries, archives, cultural heritage institutions, universities, and governments across the continent to discuss management, access, control, and preservation of tangible cultural heritage resources. I attended the conference to represent the U-M's African Studies Center, and to establish new contacts with archivists, policymakers, and others working on digitization, preservation, and access to African cultural heritage collections.

Unlike most digital library conferences that emphasize new technological developments, ICADLA-1 stressed needs specific to Africa, including integrating indigenous and local knowledge into development strategies, and asserting local control over cultural heritage resources, while also developing partnerships to ensure cooperation and collaboration at the local, national, regional, and international levels for preservation and promotion of—and access to—national heritage.

There was a pervasive sense at the conference that Africa lags behind other



The ICADLA-1 Conference in Addis Ababa drew more than 200 participants from around the world

regions in developing digital libraries and managing its cultural heritage resources. As a veteran of these conferences, however, I found the discussion on the themes of knowledge management and development and control over indigenous knowledge refreshing and sophisticated.

Digitization was emphasized as a strategy for improving access to historical and cultural collections, but there was considerable discussion of the expense of digitization given limited resources, the tendency for donors and other sponsors to drive the agenda and set priorities regarding which materials are digitized, and the challenges of sustaining digitization projects and collections once donor funds are exhausted.

The themes of the conference resonated with our experience at the University of Fort Hare and the recent U-M sponsored workshop at Rhodes University in South Africa on "Producing, Preserving, and Repatriating Digital Cultural Heritage."

School of Information faculty David Wallace and Margaret Hedstrom, along with SI master's students, have been working off and on since 1997 at Fort Hare to organize the archives of the African National Congress, the Pan African Conference, other liberation movements, and the university's own historical records. Digitization has played a very limited role in these efforts owing to the need for basic organization of the collections prior to digitization, the lack of sufficient resources for digitization of archival collections on a massive scale, concerns over ownership and control of digital collections, and our own emphasis on capacity-building and sustainability of the physical collections.

The conference produced a communiqué with recommendations for future coordination of digital libraries and archives to promote information sharing across Africa. The Conference program, many papers, and the communiqué are available on the conference website at [www.uneca.org/icadla1/index.htm](http://www.uneca.org/icadla1/index.htm).



8



Photo by Jody Lori

## Safe Motherhood in Liberia

by Jody Lori, PhD, CNM, School of Nursing

In Liberia today, less than 50 percent of women give birth in a hospital with a skilled caregiver in attendance. But through the work I have been doing with the

"Safe Motherhood" initiative, I'm hoping to change that statistic.

I've been involved in the initiative in this West African nation since 2006. Safe Motherhood, a global campaign to reduce maternal mortality, was launched some 20 years ago by the World Bank and two UN agencies—the United Nations Family Planning Association and the World Health Organization.

Partnering with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Liberian Ministry of Health, and Africare-Liberia, I introduced a community-based intervention, "Home-Based Life Saving Skills," in Bong, Nimba, and Montserrado counties as part of a larger Improved Community Health Project (ICHP).

After the 14-year civil war that ravaged their country, Liberians were left with a critical need for a community-based means to address their healthcare needs. ICHP was founded as a reproductive health initiative to

improve maternal child health outcomes in post-conflict Liberia; today, the community-based intervention engages women, families and community members in solving such problems as preventing delays in reaching referral facilities (thus reducing the number of maternal and neonatal deaths). Physicians and nurse-midwives at healthcare facilities also receive training to upgrade their skills in preparation for increased referrals from the communities. The program has been so successful that it has expanded to all 15 counties in Liberia.

During the 2009 spring/summer semester, six second-career nursing students traveled with me to Liberia for the clinical portion of their Community Care Nursing course. This global health pilot, funded partially by the International Institute, provided an experiential learning opportunity designed to enrich students' understanding of the healthcare challenges faced by rural communities in Liberia. The program



The International Economic Development Program (IEDP) of the Ford School traveled to Dakar, Senegal in February 2009. While the primary goal of the trip was to gather firsthand knowledge on policy issues facing the country, the group was also able to spend time exploring Senegal's natural beauty and historical significance.

The 25 master's students—including five from outside the Ford School who enrolled in the course—made the trip along with two faculty members. Students met weekly throughout January and February with Ford School Professor Kathy Terrell and a number of visiting speakers from around the world.

Groups within the class researched six policy issues: governance and political corruption; maternal mortality due to malaria; economic development through women's empowerment; climate vulnerabilities; the emigration problem; and the informal sector.

While in Dakar, the group had close to 30 meetings with policymakers and others in government, the private sector, international organizations, NGOs, and agencies of the US and other governments. Since returning, the subgroups have finished their reports and drafted recommendations on the six policy areas, informed by what they learned in these meetings. Each group presented its findings to the U-M campus community in March of 2009.

Both students and faculty enjoyed the trip tremendously. The long days were followed by long evenings of Senegalese

## Senegal Spring Break with Ford School Students

By Alan Deardorff  
Professor of Economics and Public Policy, Ford School of Public Policy



Ford School students pose with their Senegalese colleagues

its people, and their beautiful culture. Furthermore, all have returned to U-M with a greater understanding of the particular challenges that Senegal must face and its many opportunities for a healthy future.



Leaving Monrovia

emphasized the synthesis of concepts, theories, knowledge, and practice from nursing and public health sciences to determine the health status, needs, and assets of communities and their members bounded by the infrastructure challenges

faced in the developing world.

While in Liberia, students assessed the physical, social, and cultural environments of a rural African community. Working with community members, they identified a healthcare need and designed an interactive

intervention to increase awareness of family planning methods and prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission. The purpose of the health intervention project was to incorporate aspects of community assessment; reinforce the role of health teaching in health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance; and provide an opportunity for students to apply the principles of teaching/learning to a specific at-risk population. The intervention, developed by the Michigan students, was presented to more than 200 community members.

Our work in Liberia continues with a return trip scheduled for February 2010. Two graduate midwifery students will accompany me for an in-depth clinical experience and collaborative research project with partners in Liberia to examine women's experience of hospital birth, an essential endeavor if progress toward reducing maternal mortality is to be achieved.

# ASC initiative updates

## ASRI

In beautiful Cape Town, South Africa from July 1–3, 2009, the African Social Research Initiative (ASRI) held its launch conference, an event co-sponsored by the University of Michigan and the University of Cape Town (UCT). The event drew more than 40 participants representing universities and demographic research organizations in South Africa, Ghana, and the U–M.

The ASRI collaboration seeks to capitalize on the numerous centers of social research excellence in Ghana, South Africa, and at U–M, to expand research on select themes, strengthen translation of research into public policy, and nurture career development for social scientists.

The launch conference was held at the Breakwater Lodge at the Cape Town Waterfront. Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UCT, opened the conference with a warm welcome and emphasis on the great need for high-quality social scientific data for the effective evaluation and transformation of public policies in many social sectors. Long-term collaborations in economic, demographic, and health research between South African and Ghanaian institutions and the U–M were lauded, and acknowledged as a firm foundation for ASRI.

Opening remarks were followed by panels addressing: (1) methods for measuring gender change in society; (2) innovative ways to apply mixed methods—quantitative, qualitative, and experimental—in social research; (3) opportunities for expanding comparative research on governance in Africa; and (4) the recent expansion of available surveys on income and poverty dynamics. Dinner on July 2nd was followed by a stimulating and challenging keynote address by Ahmed Bawa, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Hunter College, City University of New York, and former Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research Innovation at University of KwaZulu-Natal. Professor Bawa urged those in attendance to be critical of the potential disengagement from local circumstances engendered by comparative, multi-site research, and to ensure a grounded sensitivity to the contexts in which they worked. The second day of the conference was marked by panels on the opportunities posed by longitudinal, demographic surveillance research in Africa, and the difficulties of fair collaboration and



Photo by Kelly M. Askew

ASRI launch conference participants

data-sharing, given differing goals and unequal resources.

During breakout sessions participants debated and strategized future collaborative research priorities. Working groups addressing gender change, governance, and income/poverty dynamics were identified to receive targeted funding for further activities. The ASRI International Steering Committee plans a second conference in 2010 to highlight research progress on 2009 themes, and allow the addition of new panels on a range of proposed themes, such as the environment, migration, and health outcomes.

## HERITAGE

### OPERA AT UCT

The relationship between UCT (University of Cape Town) and the U–M took another step forward in August when three professors from the School of Music, Theatre & Dance visited the South African College of Music.

Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Voice George Shirley, Associate Professor of Voice Daniel Washington, and Distinguished Professor of Composition Bright Sheng worked with UCT opera students for a week as part of collaboration between the two universities.

“My visit to Cape Town University’s School of Music was inspiring, exhilarating, and profoundly impressive,” said George Shirley. “The students whom I heard perform and with whom I worked possessed voices of a caliber one would expect to hear in the finest training centers of Italy. The

vowel sounds in the Xhosa language are apparently as pure as those in the Italian language, thus optimally positioning the resonances of native speakers in a manner that facilitates singing sounds that are Italianate in quality, ergo perfect for singing operatic literatures. . . . I was repeatedly astounded by the level of accomplishment of these singers.”

“It was indeed a fruitful trip to Cape Town,” added Daniel Washington, who also serves as Dean of Faculty Affairs at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance. “I have never experienced so much vocal talent in one place.”

The visiting U–M professors were introduced to four graduates of the school. One, a baritone, is fulfilling a contract at the Metropolitan Opera; a married couple both sing at a German opera house; and the fourth, a young soprano, just won the Belvedere Competition, one of the most prestigious in the world, and will begin studies in the Young Artists Program at La Scala Opera House in Milan this month.

“This is a relationship I sincerely trust the university and School of Music, Theatre & Dance will cultivate,” Shirley said, “for there are riches that will accrue to both institutions. The students and faculty at the UCT School of Music enthusiastically expressed gratitude for our presence and for the quality of our teaching. I urge our administrators to move forward with equal enthusiasm in securing a reciprocal arrangement that will expand Michigan’s influence on the African continent and provide our students and theirs with opportunities for interactive learning that are truly singular.”



# ASC initiative updates

## "HERITAGE MATTERS" CONFERENCE IN GHANA

**A**ccra, Ghana is the site of the upcoming "Heritage Matters!" conference, to be held December 15-18, 2009. The conference seeks to promote awareness and understanding of the importance of heritage for Ghana and other African societies at the local and national level, as well as in a global context.

Conference participants will examine the importance of promoting heritage awareness among people in government, tourism, and the arts and culture sectors, as well as among the general public, with an emphasis on how heritage can be a source of deepening democracy. Conference attendees will consider how heritage is produced and contested at different levels in African societies, examine the role that heritage plays in creating and sustaining local and global identities, and discuss



UCT Opera School Director Kamal Khan with Washington, Shirley, and UCT voice students

the potential for advancing creativity and strengthening civil society in democratic societies.

"Heritage Matters" will offer a critique of current practices and practice-based strategies for thoughtfully engaging in heritage work.

## "THE MUSIC MAN" OF AFRICA

**O**ne of U-M's recent archiving projects is the Leo Sarkisian African Music Collection. Leo Sarkisian is known in Africa as "The Music Man" for his music programs on Voice of America (VOA) radio, which have aired twice weekly for over 40 years. Comprising thousands of reels, cassettes, and vinyl records, the collection is being digitized by the university, with copies to be housed at the U-M, the VOA, and the National Archives.



Leo Sarkisian

years in Afghanistan and Guinea before being recruited, in 1963, by Edward R. Murrow to work at the newly established Voice of America. Sarkisian moved back to the US in 1969, but continued to travel to Africa to record music. His work has resulted in a one-of-a-kind collection that will be of great interest to ethnomusicologists, historians, and lay music lovers alike.

Sarkisian's collection spans the years from 1958 to 1993, and includes original field recordings made by him as well as by African radio personnel. These rare recordings include both traditional and modern music from Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Tunisia. There are also spoken-word recordings, and photographs sent in by his listeners. The collection includes such gems as the only known recording of Louis Armstrong performing in Tunisia.

Sarkisian started recording African music in 1958, when he traveled to Ghana to gather music for Hollywood movies. He spent several

## UMAPS

**T**he first four members of the 2009-10 UMAPS cohort have arrived on campus.

The UMAPS (U-M African Presidential Scholars) program supports the development of the next generation of African scholars, helping their home institutions build capacity. UMAPS brings early-career faculty members from African universities to the U-M for residencies lasting up to six months. During their stay, each scholar is paired with a faculty mentor, and has full access to U-M's resources to further their work on research projects, academic degrees, and grant proposals.

This year's cohort includes scholars who are researching subjects from archaeology and religious practices to medical rehabilitation.

## MEET THE SCHOLARS

### ANTHONY KOFI OSEI-FOSU

is a lecturer in the Economics department at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), will be in residence at U-M until February 2010. In Osei-Fosu's research project, "The Effective Utilisation of the HIPC Relief Fund for Poverty," he will be assessing the economic impact of the HIPC fund on poverty reduction in Ghana.

### WILLIAM NARTEH GBLEKPOR

comes to Ann Arbor from the University of Ghana, Legon. A lecturer in the department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, Gblerkpor will be studying the cultural and settlement developments of the Krobo of southeastern Ghana, focusing on architectural landscaping, and water management techniques, and burial and indigenous religious practices.

### GIFTY G. NYANTE

is a lecturer in the College of Health Sciences at the University of Ghana, and is also a registered midwife and nurse. Her research will review the direct and indirect economic costs of rehabilitation services among stroke patients.

### CECIL VICTOR MADELL

is from the University of Cape Town, and will be on the U-M campus through October. The Urban and Regional Planning doctoral candidate and lecturer will be focusing his research on developing an understanding of local development and poverty reduction policies in South Africa.

Welcome to all UMAPS scholars, and wishing you a happy and productive residence in Ann Arbor!



The first four UMAPS Scholars arrived in Ann Arbor in September. From left to right: Anthony Kofi Osei-Fosu, William Narteh Gblerkpor, Gifty G. Nyante, Cecil Victor Madell





African Studies Center  
1080 South University Avenue  
Suite 2620  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1106  
ph: 734.615.3027 fax: 734.615.3872  
asc-contact@umich.edu

©2009 REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
Julia Donovan Darlow, Ann Arbor  
Laurence B. Deitch, Bingham Farms  
Denise Ilitch, Bingham Farms  
Olivia P. Maynard, Goodrich  
Andrea Fischer Newman, Ann Arbor  
Andrew C. Richner, Grosse Pointe Park  
S. Martin Taylor, Grosse Pointe Farms  
Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor  
Mary Sue Coleman, *ex officio*

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity, and Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

Design by MM&D

#090319

*Continued from p. 2*

Avi-Yonah's participation grew out of an email from ASC Director Kelly Askew, inviting him to become a UMAPS mentor. "I didn't know anything about this program, and I had no previous involvement with Africa," he said. "But they sent me Annet's CV, and I saw immediately that this was a really good fit. The things that she was writing about were exactly the same things I've been writing about, so I was happy to

**"Even in this day and age when most things are electronic, it's hard when you're overseas to get exposed to the whole range of the U.S. debate and literature."**

volunteer."

Universities throughout Africa face many difficulties. Funding and resources are scarce, and because of the overwhelming need for instructors, many doctoral students are pressured into teaching, before completing their doctoral work; many are also recruited away to universities in other countries. The lack of instructors with PhDs places African universities at risk of losing their international accreditation. U-M is hoping to change that trend by developing partnerships with African universities and providing access to the university's rich academic resources.

"My view has always been that bringing people from developing countries to the U.S. is a much more valuable contribution than having me go over there for a week," Avi-Yonah said. "Even in this day and age when most things are electronic, it's hard when you're overseas to get exposed to the whole range of the U.S. debate and literature."

Annet Oguttu arrived at the U-M with topics in international tax law she hoped to pursue: cracking down on offshore tax shelters, challenges of attributing profits to permanent establishments, and taxation of derivative financial instruments. "Annet came up with interesting projects, and I've been really interested in reading what she's written, in part from the South African perspective, which I have learned from," Avi-Yonah said.

Reuven Avi-Yonah is the Irwin I. Cohn Professor of Law and the director of the International Tax L.L.M. Program. He has served as a consultant to the U.S. Treasury and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and currently chairs the American Bar Association's Tax Section

Committee on Consumption Tax.

Oguttu and Avi-Yonah say that the visiting scholar/mentor relationship does not have to be a perfect fit to work: it just requires openness. And just being here in Ann Arbor, exposing visiting scholars to people in their fields of study, building a network for future collaboration, and taking advantage of the resources the U-M offers is a positive experience for both scholar and mentor.

"I've learned a lot from Annet, and I have a book of my own that I want to give her to read, because I think one of the things missing is the perspective from developing countries, where it's hard to get adequate materials," Avi-Yonah said. "From that perspective it can be a really fruitful collaboration. It's not just a situation where I can give things and she can receive. It goes both ways."

Annet Oguttu returns to UNISA with a renewed desire to expand and improve international tax studies there. "One of the goals of my coming here was to develop an international tax program at our university, and I've been talking to Professor Avi-Yonah about how to come up with a curriculum." She also hopes to become a catalyst in helping junior faculty publish and take advantage of the available resources. Her participation in a "Writing for Publication" workshop at the ASC has inspired her to start similar workshops at the UNISA College of Law to address the challenges facing junior faculty in writing articles for publication. "It would be my pleasure to lift upcoming colleagues," Oguttu said.

She also wants to encourage others to apply to the UMAPS program.

"Come here with an open mind," Oguttu advises prospective scholars, "with the attitude that 'this is a beginning, and I want to grow'. Focus on what you really want to achieve and be ready to work—because there's no one pushing you. The mentor is there to guide you and help you, but you should be able to pace yourself and put in as much as you can." Oguttu's efforts with Avi-Yonah have led to three articles ready for publication. "Open yourself to work hard," she said. People are just so eager to help. I'm really impressed with that, as well."

Avi-Yonah's experience working with Oguttu has provided renewed focus on the correlation between development and the status of women. "Bringing a person like Annet—a woman from a developing country—here multiplies manifold efforts to bridge the gender gap in Africa," Avi-Yonah said. "This is just one individual collaboration, but it has a 'multiplier' effect. So I'm hoping this is a beginning of great things to come."