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AFRICA CENTER STAGE IN PEACE CORPS CELEBRATIONS

In the early hours of Thursday, October 14, 2010, some 1,500 U-M students and faculty gathered on the steps of the Michigan Union to recreate a semblance of the 5,000 that had gathered there that same day, at that same 2 a.m. hour, 50 years earlier to be inspired by presidential candidate Senator John F. Kennedy. In an impromptu

speech, Kennedy threw down a gauntlet before the U-M campus to test whether idealism still flourished and whether youth would be willing to sacrifice a small portion of their lives to improve the lives of others in distant lands. He asked: "How many of you who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana?" The U-M community met JFK's challenge and exceeded it. Students

organized a petition drive that produced a thousand names of those willing to commit to 1-2 years of international service following college. Seeing the impassioned U-M response, Kennedy directed his aides to formulate a policy and a program. Thus was born the Peace Corps, announced two weeks after the U-M visit in one of Kennedy's final campaign speeches, and signed into existence by executive order on March 1, 1961.

Not only did Ghana feature in the seminal speech that gave rise to the Peace Corps, but it was also to Ghana that the very first Peace Corps volunteers went in August 1961. That initial cohort, which included three U-M graduates, also included volunteers bound for Tanganyika (now Tanzania), which would acquire its independence from Britain later that year. The entwining of these histories—

of the Peace Corps and of newly independent African states—was surely not coincidental. The hope, enthusiasm and ideals for a peaceful world held by youth and a youthful president mirrored the widespread hope, enthusiasm and sense of triumph in nations recently liberated from colonial rule. Since 1961, over 200,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in 139 host countries assisting in the realms of education, health, business, technology, environment, agriculture and youth/ community development. Over one-third have served in countries in Africa

A yearlong series of celebrations honoring the 50-year history of the Peace Corps begins and ends in Ann Arbor, its acknowledged birthplace. Later on October 14th, a symposium entitled "Spending Your Days in Ghana" took place (see pg. 15) highlighting current work in Ghana being pursued by U-M faculty. Then on October 15th, a second gathering took place on the steps of the Michigan Union featuring speeches by President Mary Sue Coleman; Marnee Devine, Kennedy's cousin who was in attendance that historic night of October 14, 1960; Jack Hood Vaughn, the second director of the Peace Corps (1966-69); former U.S. Senator Harris Wofford, a Kennedy aide and one of the founders of the Peace Corps, and an advisor to Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy; and Aaron Williams, the current Peace Corps Director.

The event was emceed by Dean and former Provost Paul Courant, whose words were simultaneously translated both in sign language and in Akan drum language. In Ghana, *fontomfrom* drum ensembles mark special events such as the opening of parliament, and are used to communicate important issues through "talking drums". To honor the Peace Corps events, Senior Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs Lester Monts commissioned a full set of *fontomfrom* drums from the master drum carver of the royal Asantehene compound in Kumasi, Ghana.



Fontomfrom drummers with Michigan students on steps of the Union



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings to all in the University of Michigan community and beyond with interests in Africa!



Photograph by Elshafiei Dafalla Mohamed

In this third issue of *Alliances*, we celebrate the start of the third year of the African Studies Center's existence and highlight some of the ways we are building on the progress made in our first two years. I am happy to report

that the ASC continues to establish itself as a national and international leader in African Studies through the strength of its faculty associates and the proven success of longstanding Africa—University of Michigan collaborations. Our ties to Africa are growing ever stronger as has the visibility of African Studies on our campus. Through initiatives such as the African Presidential Scholars Program (UMAPS) and others that bring to our campus a regular presence of African scholars, faculty, students and administrators, the African Studies Center is actively promoting the university's mission to internationalize U-M while simultaneously positioning U-M internationally. Through collaborations with universities and other educational institutions in Africa—especially in Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Cameroon—the University of Michigan is becoming ever more known for its engagement with African partners, resulting in mutual benefit to all involved.

Last year, the ASC engaged in a high level of activity on the local, national, and international arenas. We organized three international conferences (one in South Africa, one in Ghana, and one here at U-M), each of which celebrated the launch of one of our African Presidential Research Initiatives (see the ASC Initiative updates on pages 9-12). We also supported a second delegation of U-M faculty from Music, Women's Studies and the Residential College to Cape Town, South Africa where Profs. George Shirley and Daniel Washington taught master classes in voice, specifically

operatic technique, and Prof. Naomi Andre pursued research on the history of South African opera.

We have a lot to look forward to this year. First off, we welcome to campus five new professors who work in or on Africa: **Omolade Adunbi** (CAAS), who studies the extraction of natural resources in the Niger Delta and the various local, corporate and governmental agents competing for political and economic authority; **Brian Arbic** (Geological Sciences), who taught science and math as a Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia and Ghana and who works on modeling tidal and wind-driven movement in the ocean; **Adam Ashforth** (CAAS), who has long worked in South Africa on spiritual insecurity and now focuses on narratives about HIV/AIDS in Malawi and Botswana; **Zoë McLaren** (Public Health), who examines the impact of HIV/AIDS on unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa; and **Robert Wyrod** (Women's Studies), who works on shifting gender relations within the context of the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in Uganda. In August, we welcomed 14 new African visiting faculty to campus via the UMAPS program spanning disciplines as wide-ranging as film/media studies and biochemistry. Please read about them, their U-M faculty mentors, and their research topics on pages 11 and 12.

We also, in September, welcomed three postdoctoral fellows researching varying aspects of ethnicity in Africa: two Sawyer-Seminar Mellon Foundation fellows, **Robert Blunt** (PhD 2010, U. Chicago, focusing on Kenya) and **Aly Drame** (PhD 2006, U. Illinois at Chicago, focusing on Senegal), and **Lorena Rizzo** (PhD 2009, University of Basel), who is financed by the Swiss National Fund. We showcased the work of an ethnomusicologist and radio broadcaster **Leo Sarkisian** whose extensive recordings of music from the African continent are being digitized and catalogued by staff from the U-M Digital Media Commons and Hatcher Library. Additionally, Sarkisian's collection of rare instruments were donated to the Stearns Music Instrument Collection. In October, the ASC participated in the national celebrations of the launch of the Peace Corps (see p.1); co-sponsored a conference in Cairo on

"Cancer in Africa and the Middle East," organized by ASC faculty associates Sofia Merajver and Amr Soliman (see p. 12); and co-sponsored a conference at MSU and U-M on **"New Critical Approaches to African Literary Production,"** organized by ASC faculty associate Frieda Ekotto and MSU faculty member Kenneth Harrow.

Over the coming months, we look forward to the Mellon Foundation-funded Sawyer Seminar workshops on **"Ethnicity in Africa,"** to be held in December and April in CAAS; the **"Pedagogy of Action"** 10th anniversary celebration also in CAAS in December; the January 2011 **"Islam and the Performing Arts"** symposium organized in conjunction with the Residential College, Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies (CMENAS) and Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS); and the May 2011 **"International Conference on Mathematics"** in Buea, Cameroon, organized by ASC faculty associates Nkem Khumbah and Daniel Burns. Finally, the **Africa Workshop** lecture series organized by CAAS and co-sponsored by the ASC is bringing to campus top-notch scholars throughout the year to speak on topics ranging from violence against refugees to China's expanding role and interests in Africa.

This level of activity would not be possible were it not for the talents and labors of the ASC staff (Devon Adjei, ASC Program Manager; Sandie Schulze, ASC Programming Coordinator; and Thaya Rowe, ASC Secretary), ASC Associate Director Derek Peterson, all the members—past and present—of the ASC Steering Committee, and the African Students Association. Where I work among Swahili-speakers of East Africa, a favorite saying is *Figa moja haliveki chungu* ("A single stone will not support a pot"). Just as it takes multiple stones to support a pot, so too does it take the labors of many minds and many hands to generate the incredible accomplishments of our center.

We invite you to participate in as many of these events as you can and thank you for your continued support of the African Studies Center.

Kelly Askew, Director

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With sponsorship through the King-Chavez-Parks visiting professor program and additional funding from the African Studies Center, four Ghanaian master drummers were brought to U-M to perform on the *fontomfrom* and lead master classes for U-M students in percussion and dance. They were: Kwasi Ampene (Associate Professor of ethnomusicology, U. Colorado-Boulder), Kwame Owusu, Atta Kofi, and Lucas Kumah, all formerly of the Center for National Culture in Kumasi, Ghana. The drums and accompanying Ghanaian costumes will be housed in the Stearns Musical Instrument Collection and maintained by Percussion professor Joe Gramley and students in the School of Music, Theater and Dance.

Fontomfrom drum ensembles are named for the pair of oversized drums that dominate the ensemble and the dance that is performed to its music. *Fontomfrom* means “one who swallows an elephant,” referring to the sound they produce that swallows up all other sounds. The drums commissioned for U-M include: two *fontomfrom*; two *atumpam* “talking drums” (played at an angle in a special wooden stand); two double-headed pressure drums called *donka* (played held under the arm); one *adedenma* single-headed drum and one smaller version called *petia*; plus two or three *dawura* iron cowbells. (For more on the *fontomfrom*, please see Kwabena Nketia’s book *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana*.)

In master classes led by the visiting artists, U-M dance students were taught two *fontomfrom* dances: *Akantam* and *Naaweve*. The main dances performed with *fontomfrom* are: (1) *Atopretia*, a highly serious medium-tempo dance historically played on the way to war; (2) *Akantam* (“oath-swearing”), a medium-tempo dance composed of over 80 Akan proverbs communicated through dance and the talking drums; (3) *Naaweve*, a fast-tempo dance performed for joyous celebration; and (4) *Ekyem* (“shield”), a medium-tempo dance historically performed by shield-bearers entrusted with the protection of the king or chief.

Africa was thus front and center on the steps of the Union with the launch of the Peace Corps celebrations, showcasing the cultural heritage of Ghana and the talents of U-M students, faculty and administrators in embracing it. ✨

CONGOLESE DOCTOR RECEIVES UNIVERSITY'S 20TH WALLEMBERG MEDAL



Dr. Denis Mukwege at Rackham auditorium

Congolese physician Dr. Denis Mukwege was awarded the 20th U-M Wallenberg Medal on November 16, 2010, during a ceremony at Rackham Auditorium. Mukwege is a leader in the movement to highlight the continued problem of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He is the director of Panzi Hospital, in Bukavu in the eastern Congo, where he specializes in the treatment of women who are victims of the sexual violence that since the 1990s has been part of the catastrophic civil wars in the Congo and Rwanda. He is one of the world’s leading experts on how to repair the internal physical damage caused by rape.

The 12-year war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, centered mainly in eastern Congo, is the widest interstate war in modern African history. It has directly affected the lives of 50 million Congolese people. More people have died in the eastern Congo and adjacent regions than in Iraq, Afghanistan and Darfur combined. “The conflict has become a war against women,” according to a 2007 CNN report, “and the weapon used to destroy them, their families and whole communities, is rape.”

Panzi Hospital is the frontline of this war. Hundreds of thousands of women have been raped in the last 12 years, and Mukwege has treated 21,000 of them, many more than once. He performs up to 10 surgeries a day during his 18-hour workdays. He says that his patients often arrive at the hospital

naked, bleeding and with severely damaged reproductive organs. “You know, they’re in deep pain. But it’s not just physical pain. It’s psychological pain that you can see. Here at the hospital, we’ve seen women who’ve stopped living,” Mukwege told CNN’s Anderson Cooper. Many of the women he treats are blamed for what happened to them and then shunned because of fears they’ve contracted HIV or because their rapes were so violent they can no longer control their bodily functions.

Mukwege recently has been the recipient of several major awards, including the first African of the Year Prize and the UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights. In 2009 he received the Swedish Olaf Palme Prize for being “an admirable example of what courage, persistency and enduring hope may accomplish for human rights and dignity in times when these values seem the most distant.” The Wallenberg Medal honors Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, a 1935 graduate of the U-M College of Architecture, who saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews near the end of World War II.

Even as he was garlanded with honors and medals, Mukwege took the time to talk extensively with students and faculty. During his three-day visit to Ann Arbor, Mukwege gave an informal seminar for nursing students at the School of Nursing, conducted Grand Rounds with colleagues at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and offered a seminar at the Center of Afroamerican and African Studies. “Women have tremendous ability,” he told his audience at the School of Nursing, “and what we’re trying to do is turn their unbearable pain into their power.” ✨

FOCUS ON... ALY DROME

In 2009 the University of Michigan was awarded a large grant from the Mellon Foundation to support a program of seminars and conferences on "Ethnicity in Africa" (see pp. 13-14). Dr. Aly Drome is one of two post-doctoral fellows who are funded by the program. He introduces himself here.

I am joining the University of Michigan from the Dominican University of Illinois, where I teach African history, the Islamic world, world history, and immigration. My research focuses on the previously overlooked role of marriage alliances, Islamic education, and military jihad in changing the spiritual geography of the Casamance region of Senegal from African religion to Islam. My chronological focus stretches from the first half of the seventeenth century when the original Muslim settlements were founded, to the mid-nineteenth century when the balance of religious power was shifting dramatically at the expense of African religion.

During the fall and spring semesters I will participate in the African History and Anthropology Workshop. In fact, in the opening session of AHAW I presented a pre-circulated paper entitled "Marriage and Identity Change: the Bainunk Landowners in the Casamance." I enjoyed my exchanges with the colleagues and graduate students who attended this presentation. I will be involved in two scholarly conferences on "Ethnicity in Africa" scheduled between December 2010 and April 2011. I am hopeful that these conferences will provide an opportunity for scholars to examine the place of ethnicity and related matters in the numerous challenges still facing the reconstruction of the post-colonial states in sub-Saharan Africa some fifty years after the end of colonial rule.

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Every two or three weeks I will make short trips to the Africana Library at Northwestern University and the Newberry Library in Chicago. Before the end of the school year my goal is to finish my book manuscript. This book is entitled *Whiteboards and Blackboards: Islamic Education in Africa* and will be edited by Robert Launay (Northwestern University). My office is located in Haven Hall, and I leave my door open to all colleagues and students who would like to exchange ideas with me during my stay in Ann Arbor. ✨

SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING IN NORTHEASTERN GHANA

by Elisha Renne

Since the early 1990s, small-scale gold-mining has been carried out in the Talensi-Nabdam District, in northeastern Ghana. This work is labor-intensive—it involves extracting trace amounts of gold from rock which is first pounded and ground into a fine powder. There are considerable hazards both for the environment and for people's health, as mercury is used to separate gold from the powdered rock. However, until recently, little was known about the effects of mercury on miners'

specific environmental and work situations that they faced. Since mercury ingested from fish by pregnant women can cross into the placenta, it can affect fetal neural development and may also lead to miscarriage. Hair and urine samples were therefore taken from 88 women (ages 15-54) in the mining concession known as Kejetia. Air, soil, water and fish samples were also taken to determine environmental mercury levels. In addition, students interviewed women about their pregnancy and birth histories, about their work in the mining



Ghanaian miners

Photograph by E.P. Renne

health. During the summers of 2009 and 2010, University of Michigan students worked with U-M faculty, as well as with faculty from the University of Ghana and the University of Development Studies-Navrongo, to investigate the effects of small-scale gold-mining on community health and on the environment in two mining concessions.

In 2009, five U-M undergraduate students collected hair and urine samples from 120 men and women working in three mining concessions; samples were subsequently sent back to U-M School of Public Health where they were tested for mercury. A small number of individuals had levels of mercury that exceeded WHO guidelines. The second phase of the study, in summer 2010, involved eight U-M undergraduate students and two graduate students. It built upon the 2009 study by focusing on the effects of mercury on the health of women and children and the

community, and about the sources and amounts of fish consumed. Women who were involved in sifting the powdered rock (known as "shanking") were given face masks to reduce rock dust inhalation, while pregnant women were given mosquito nets. Students also studied the social life of the mining camps. Many mining community women are involved in prepared food sales, the production and sale of local beer (pito), and shea nut butter kernel processing at the Kejetia site. They work in the midst of a welter of mining site materials and structures—there are deep mine shafts with large hoses used for draining excess water that extend for several yards, sheds with grinding equipment, and open spaces in households where small rocks are crushed by hand, powdered rock is "shanked," and the gold extraction process takes place. The sifted rock powder is rinsed with water, then a few drops of mercury are added. The resulting gold-



"Shanking"

mercury amalgam is heated, often using a small blow torch, which results in a tiny pellet of gold.

The 2010 project included two outreach activities. Among the estimated 2000 inhabitants of the Kejetia mining concession, there are approximately 200 children between the ages of 5-13 who attend a local private primary school. Two U-M undergraduate students worked on a drawing project with students in order to promote mercury awareness among young children. U-M students were also engaged in outreach health care. Donations of health materials were made to the district health clinic in Tongo and to the Presbyterian Health Clinic in Namolgo. An arrangement was made with the organization, Presbyterian Primary Health Care, to provide transportation, a small stipend, and medical materials for a midwife and a nurse to visit the gold-mining community twice every month for antenatal and primary health care for children, with funds provided by a seed grant from the African Studies Center.

While miners may be aware of the health dangers of mercury use and the possibilities of alternative amalgamation/burning methods, pressures to process one's gold findings quickly and without loss of quantity or quality have led miners to continue with trusted practices. Furthermore, the high prices paid for gold, along with a lack of employment opportunities in other sectors have encouraged small-scale gold-mining. However, miners are amenable to change.

One possible solution would be the production of locally made retorts that could be cheaply and easily replaced. In the meantime, miners working with amalgam burning and with powdered rock may use face masks to protect themselves from mercury vapor and dust. Aside from mercury contamination, small-scale gold-mining in Talensi-Nabdam District has contributed to serious environmental problems, which include deep abandoned mine shafts, contaminated water run-off, and intermittent piles and pits where processed rock has been discarded and where pools of standing water, which contribute to mosquito breeding, have accumulated. One solution to funding environmental reclamation might

be the organization of harvesting, processing shea nut butter from trees in the area as well as planting of shea nut trees, the "butter" of which commands a high price in international markets.

It is important to continue to pursue improvements in gold-processing, to raise levels of awareness of health and environmental hazards of mercury use, and to develop alternate income sources in the



U-M students (l-r: Douglas Manigault, Aisha Sajjad, and Mozhgong Rajaee) and researcher Sowah Komey interviewing women at the Kejetia mining concession

area. Future research by faculty and students from the University of Michigan, the University of Ghana, and the University of Development Studies-Navrongo will continue to address these concerns. ✨

A VIEW FROM A DEATH IN THE MORNING: TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY IN KENYA

by Rebecca Hardin



Prof. Jesse Njoka from the University of Nairobi accompanied students to see black and white rhinos at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy near Nanyuki

In summer 2010 Michigan's Graham Institute pioneered a new course on sustainability in Africa, located in Kenya. It put students and faculty into the midst of powerful, politically charged situations that are important to understand, viscerally and intellectually. The course sought to teach about challenges with respect to technologies such as water storage and solar panels, but also with respect to governance and institutional challenges involving land tenure, gender, racialized social inequality, and community. The trip was also an opportunity for preliminary research toward more longitudinal studies with Kenyan partners, to address the strengths and needs of this

region for water management, health, ecosystem services, and poverty alleviation.

The U-M destination in Kenya—the Mpala Research Center within the Laikipia Valley—is a unique living laboratory for such questions. Because of low-intensity grazing by generations of African pastoralists, combined with the conservancy efforts of a wide range of postcolonial landowners and contemporary pastoralist communities, the region boasts high densities of both wildlife and domesticated animals. It is a site for interactions across species boundaries, but also for human interaction across racial, subsistence and ethnolinguistic boundaries such as white and black farmers, herders and tour operators. In experiencing and educating ourselves about such interactions, we learned that teachable moments sometimes come from tragic circumstances.

However, circumstances of violence and anxiety can also give way to hope.

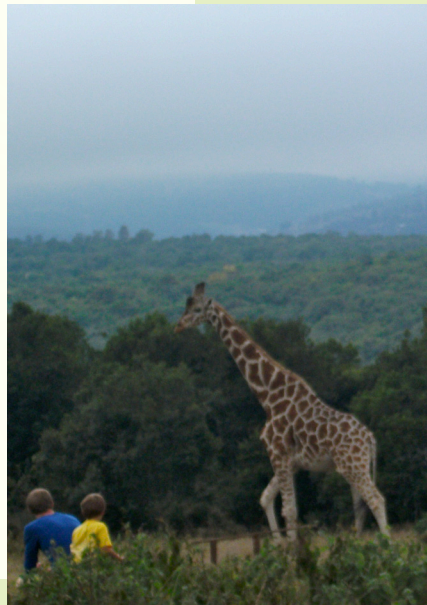
In the lead-up to our departure last August my colleague Johannes Foufopolous (ecologist, SNRE) and I were having even more sleepless nights than usual. We had committed to taking our young children and spouses along with a group of 15 undergraduates to the Mpala. We knew that within Laikipia, Mpala was a spectacular location, once owned by the sons of a wealthy Canadian family and now managed as a trust among several institutions including Kenyan Wildlife Service, Smithsonian Institution and Princeton University, the National Museums of Kenya, and the Mpala Wildlife Foundation. We knew it was sheltered from many of the challenges confronted by urban Kenyans; a place where we could comfortably teach students just discovering African contexts the fundamental concepts and methods from social and natural science. Only days after we had purchased our tickets to arrive in Kenya on August 5th, however, Kenya announced an August 4th national referendum on a new constitution.

Given the violence that had erupted in the wake of that country's last presidential election in 2008, there was reason for concern about the risk of violence in Nairobi and some rural regions during or after the referendum. We sent multiple waivers to be signed by the families of participating students, fully expecting to see high attrition given the stern language about possible physical and emotional harm to travelers. To our delight, every single one of the students and families involved sided with us in seeing a trip to Africa, even during tumultuous times, as first and foremost an important opportunity, well worth some risk and most likely to result in enrichment of our lives. Go Blue!

6 Early on August 5th we checked European news broadcasts transmitting the results of the referendum in Amsterdam, a first stop on the way to Nairobi. We learned that Kenyans had peacefully and decisively ratified their rewritten constitution. Crowds poured into the streets to celebrate, not to protest, and we all breathed sighs of relief. After an overnight at a historic hotel in Nairobi we traveled north by road to the Laikipia valley. If we worried on the front end of the trip about risks to ourselves and our students, and responsibilities to their families and the wider U-M community, by the end of the course we had woven a new fabric of accountability, concern and gratitude. Our students hailed from disciplines as diverse as engineering and history, and from places as diverse as Monterrey, Mexico and

Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Their hopes and expectations varied widely but all found personnel from the Mpala Research Center intimately and expertly involved in every aspect of life there. Staff ensured that our food and water were tasty and pure; they helped us arrange travel beyond the center's perimeters to explore neighboring ranches, flower farms and national parks; they patiently sat for various kinds of interviews about their work history at Mpala. Some of them—trained Askaris (or game guides) with rifles and sharp eyes—shadowed us on every walk or field ecology exercise in plant sampling or animal observations, to ensure that we were steering well clear of any dangerous wildlife.

This latter task was not easy. One morning I sat with a small group of students under the bougainvillea blossoms adorning the terrace



U-M students marvel at the proximity to wildlife that Kenya's private conservancies afford

of the ranch house, one of the oldest structures on the property, overlooking the Mpala lands from a tranquil hillside. We were meeting with Mike Littlewood, the manager of the Ranch and Conservancy operations that still unfold alongside research and training activities on Mpala land. Mike is a white Kenyan who raised his children in this house. He has known no other home than the arid expanse of Laikipia, and was offering us his memories of land ownership and management in the area over several generations. Suddenly, as we sat listening to him, we heard screaming from outside the house, on the hillsides. Mike rose, saying in his Kenyan-inflected British accent, "You'll have to excuse me."

A few moments later the Research Center Director, Margaret Kinnaird, arrived in a cloud

of dust from the urgently racing engine of her Land Cruiser pickup truck. After studying ecology and evolutionary biology as a Masters student at U-M, Margaret has worked for the Wildlife Conservation Society and other environmental organizations worldwide, studying ecology, training others to do the same, and publishing on issues from bird life to plant responses to climate variation. That morning at the ranch house, however, Margaret did not seem scientifically detached. She pushed a lock of blond hair from her face and allowed a ragged sigh to escape her as Mike approached her from the back of the ranch house at a brisk pace, his face drawn and pinched with sadness. "I told you we should not have women and children in these sites," she said quickly, barely biting back her anger and regret. Mike looked at her, and then at the group of us who had gathered in a knot, worrying and wondering. He released his own resigned sigh, and then explained with almost exaggerated diction: "What has happened is that a buffalo has gored a woman from the village of ranch workers; she is dead. This is the fourth time this year someone has been injured or killed this way in this area. Buffalo must be avoided. There must have been some kind of mistake or accident; normally she would stay near the group of women who had gone to cut grasses for roofing materials. She is leaving behind children and a husband. I..." His words failed him.

I told Mike I would finish the morning's class, as he and Margaret walked side by side up the hill to conduct a more thorough investigation and then alert the relevant Kenyan national authorities. The students, who had been among the first to hear and express concern about the cries, were struggling to fully realize what had just occurred. They suddenly understood with terribly clarity why, even when we went up to the cliffs with a crate of soda to watch the sunset of an evening, we had teams of expert Askaris with rifles walking the perimeter of our group so that we could sit happily chattering.

A flood of questions ensued: would the woman be buried? What were ways that these communities handle grieving and care of survivors? How could something like this happen that frequently? How could the Kenyan state not allow hunting of such dangerous animals? What forms of compensation under Kenyan law were likely to be offered by the state to her family? What sorts of training and knowledge made neighboring ranch communities able to avoid such risks as they herd their animals and live in relatively small, makeshift

structures? All of these, I assured them, were sustainability questions. They reflect competing values of charismatic wildlife species for research and tourism, and as a kind of national and international patrimony that deeply shapes the risks and possibilities for rural livelihoods in this part of Kenya. They also reveal the intractable challenges to policy and protective practice for an operation like the Mpala Center.

A few nights later, in a raging thunderstorm, Mike stopped by the ranch house on his way to his own home further up the hill. He cracked open a bottle of sparkling water and sat, dejected. He had just called for help from a friend, a rancher from a neighboring parcel, to tow the rented taxi van filled with the deceased woman's family out of the mud where they had gotten stuck on their way toward home after the funeral. As he sat waiting for them to arrive, he seemed vexed by the new rules and regulations at Mpala that prevented the family from traveling in one of the center's more powerful and better maintained vehicles. The rules were set to discourage families and dependants from settling on the property under such dangerous circumstances. Yet they forced him to rely upon his neighbors to help the families of his workers.

"We used to take care of our people, the people who worked our ranches," he noted ruefully. "We used to provide our vehicles to take them around in these situations..." "I think that is called patronage," I noted wryly. Then, thinking the better of my implicit critique, I added: "It is also called intimacy; even if you and they were not economic equals, there were intimate bonds between you in the old ways of doing things." "You are right," he acknowledged. "Those are the old ways..." "What," I asked, "do you think the new ways should look like?" In the thoughtful pause that followed my question, I continued: "Can you imagine more Kenyan educators, and researchers, and land managers or local experts here, as equal partners with you and Margaret? What about with students from other African countries, or Asia, and North America? Could it be professional partnerships instead of patronage? Is that possible?" He shot back: "Do YOU think it is possible?" There was another long uncomfortable silence. "Will you people from University of Michigan be back here next year?" he continued. I did not hesitate. "Yes," I answered. "Yes we will."

Mike was not the only person we met who sought, probingly, to understand the depth of our institutional commitment to helping Laikipians in their struggles to ensure continued

biodiversity while improving livelihoods. Nicholas, an elected secretary serving on the governance committee of the neighboring community ranch Il Moteok, was also an advocate for sustained partnerships as the key component of "sustainability." He lectured to our students and introduced us to his community. As the inhabitants of Il Moteok hauled buckets of river water to boil for tea, they guided us through both their homes and their hopes to finish the infrastructure to welcome tourists and educational groups in huts situated around a centuries-old fig tree through which flitted and fed more species than we could count, from baboons to birds. They shared their stories of surviving the worst drought on record only the previous year, with a great deal of help from Mike, Tuni, Margaret and the rest of the Mpala staff who dedicated trucks to haul water for them



Photograph by Jody Schechter

Mpala students at a fig tree in Ilmotiok

and allowed their cattle to graze on Mpala land. We thus learned that resource scarcity makes not only conflict, but closer neighbors. Il Moteok residents also shared with us stories from a long history of hunting and gathering in the region, marked by a more recent transition to animal husbandry and even newer and more delicate partnerships with national and international agencies for diverse economic development options. It was clear that they were anything but mired in myopic tradition, as some more provincial white ranchers we had met suggested in chatting about the region's development. On the contrary, Nicholas and his neighbors were well aware of the new constitution; many had taken pains to vote, and asked us acute questions about gender, political power, and social change in the U.S. They had hopes for a better future basis for their development

than the land allocations of colonial and independence eras. But they faced major obstacles in their efforts toward adaptive development.

As a final writing exercise, the students in this year's course have assumed the mantle of either ranch manager (Mike's role), research center director (Margaret's role), or elected communal ranch leader (Nicholas's role) to author programs or policies for leading institutions toward sustainability in the Laikipia Valley. They have drawn from historical, ethnographic, ecological, epidemiological and engineering concepts to do so, marshaling what they learned from the sometimes tragic, sometimes truly spectacular experiences on the ground there. In offering verbal presentations at the end of our field course to an audience of us instructors and some Mpala staff, some students were forceful and eloquent in advancing agendas for positive change. Others were moved to tears by the scope and serious stakes involved in the learning they did during their travels.

The view after that death in the morning is not simple. But if earnest engagement is any measure of the human possibility to define, together, new ways forward beyond rapacious resource extraction, serious risks for the impoverished, and rapid species extinction, then there is much to feel hopeful about from this first U-M summer at Mpala. Professor Jesse Njoka at the University of Nairobi has long been leading a charge to integrate wildlife and rangeland management paradigms and create intercultural collaboration on African drylands. He attended the STEM-Africa meetings in Ann Arbor last May (see pages 9-10), along with Margaret Kinnaird. He took the time to join us at Mpala to teach and work, and returned to Ann Arbor in October to craft funding proposals for collaborative longitudinal research and training at Mpala. On the heels of a trip to Kenya in November by Graham Institute Director Don Scavia and U-M Provost Phil Hanlon, the University is supporting continued engagement from faculty and students at Mpala in coming years. Such a "Michigan difference" can foster connections despite fraught colonial histories, enriching the lives of many students who will be future leaders. It can forge a bold vision of sustainability that emerges across humanistic and scientific traditions. And it can anchor that vision in collaboration with those who incur terrible costs and create real change from within cosmopolitan rural communities. ✨

ACCRA CONFERENCE SPARKS DEBATE ON POLITICS OF HERITAGE

With the flourish of drums and a swirl of kente cloth, over one hundred delegates convened in Accra in December 2009 to discuss the politics and production of heritage in Africa. The three-day conference was organized by Michigan's African Studies Center, the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, and the International African Institute. In his opening lecture Prof. Kwesi Yankah,



Prof. Kodzo Gavua addresses the Accra conference

Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, highlighted the stakes involved in heritage work. Yankah quoted the proverb "If you forget the melody of your horn on the durbar grounds, you lose your bearings in the thick crowd." For Yankah, an accomplished linguist, heritage work is also a means of building a more democratic global culture, a means of preserving indigenous cultures from the threat of extinction. Dr. Kodzo Gavua, one of the organizers of the conference, argued that Ghanaians generally have a poor understanding of their history. "There is a need to deepen public understanding and

appreciation of heritage as a first step toward mainstreaming heritage in national development," he explained. Ghanaians' disinterest in their history stands in sharp contrast with other parts of Africa, where historians, archaeologists, museum directors and archivists serve a wide audience and benefit from the support of government. Dr. Kelly Askew, who directs the African Studies Center at the University of Michigan, explained that "immediately upon receiving independence, most African countries set to the task of recovering and rediscovering heritage they'd been told they did not have." Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's president, thought the Ministry of Culture to be the "most important ministry" in his government. But Ghana was slow to take account of its history: the Ministry for Chieftaincy and Culture wasn't created until 2006. "Ghana has only scarcely begun to realize the profits to the nation

psychologically, economically and socially by investing in heritage management," Askew said.

The December conference brought together scholars from South Africa, Michigan and Ghana to discuss their work. The keynote address, offered by the Kenyan archaeologist George Abungu, was a tour through the work of identifying, constituting and popularizing "world heritage sites". Panel presentations covered a great deal of ground. One paper discussed the neo-traditional architecture of contemporary Ghana, where public

buildings are constructed to mimic the stool, a traditional symbol of authority. Another paper discussed the administrative work that the chiefs of the Asante state must do to finance their regimes. There was some dissonance among the presenters. Ghana's scholars were quick to identify "heritage" with "chiefs," and most papers from Ghanaian scholars considered some aspect of the institution of the chieftaincy. The South African delegates, by contrast, were generally interested in the democratization of museum collections and in the creation of populist forms of heritage.

While these scholarly differences inspired useful debate, everyone agreed that the highlight of the conference came on the third day, when a series of workshops joined scholars with a range of activists, students and officials involved in the heritage sector. Before large audiences presenters discussed the practical mechanics of heritage work. Michigan scholar Tom Bray, for example, offered a tutorial for archivists interested in digitizing their collections, while Prof. Ray Silverman and Nana Baffour Asare Twi Brempong II together discussed the work they had done to document, preserve and popularize the material culture of the chieftaincy of Techiman in central Ghana.

The Accra conference is the first of three conferences to be organized by the African Studies Center's African Heritage initiative. Plans for a second conference, to be held in Johannesburg in July 2011, are described elsewhere in this newsletter (see page 11). ❀



Accra conference attendees

UPDATES FROM AFRICAN STUDIES INITIATIVES

Science, Technology, and Medicine in Africa (STEM-Africa)

May 2010 saw the kickoff of the STEM-Africa Initiative on campus. Housed in the African Studies Center, STEM-Africa provides a focus for scholars and students working in the scientific, technological, engineering and mathematical sciences. The initiative will promote and enrich existing collaborations with African universities, and support new intellectual engagements that extend scientific knowledge and nurture emerging STEM scholars on the African continent.

STEM's kickoff conference—titled “**Science Environments in Africa**”—was held on May 6-9, 2010. It featured scholars from South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Kenya, Liberia, and other African countries. It was planned to coincide with the annual meeting of the NSF-funded Central African Forests Initiative, or CAFI, a research project focused on the conjuncture between environmental governance and logging in forest concessions in Cameroon and the Republic of Congo. CAFI advisory committee member Elinor Ostrom (a recent Nobel Prize winner in economics) delivered a keynote speech on ways to break down silos between social and natural science for improved environmental governance. The other keynote was offered by Prof. Moses Musaaizi of Makerere University (Uganda) on “Appropriate Technologies for Africa.” All the panels fed into informal working groups in hopes of catalyzing collaborative work and future grant writing.

A small panel discussed issues of **development of scientific infrastructure and research cooperation**. Dr. Nkem-Amin Khumbah (Michigan) started with a description of his U-M-based work in support of mathematics in Cameroon, including a new series of bi-annual meetings at the University of Buea on mathematical sciences and their applications. Dr. Herb Clemens (Ohio State University) offered suggestions for how to approach both the US National Science Foundation through its international office and the International Mathematical Union, which has programs for developing countries. Dr. Adaremi Kuku (Grambling State University) spoke about continent-wide

support for mathematics involving the African Mathematical Union, the disciplinary society of the continent. Dr. Kofi Ampenyin Allotey (Director, African Institute of Mathematical Sciences) finished by discussing the role of the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences in Cape Town, which hopes to build a network of institutes for accelerating the development of African students in the mathematical and physical sciences. Dr. Allotey's presentation led to an intense debate over the proper role of American and European universities in promoting science and mathematical education in Africa.

The **panels on environment** ranged widely. One on environmental justice and environmental governance featured Chimere Diaw (African Model Forest Initiative), who

research on oil and citizenship in Nigeria. Jesse T. Njoka (University of Nairobi) picked up on the theme of intellectual and disciplinary silos from Elinor Ostrom's keynote address. He deplored the silos that offer separate management and knowledge elements for wildlife versus rangeland ecosystems. Jerome Nriagu (Michigan) presented his recent work summarizing “Directions in Research on Water Pollution Issues,” and Abdon Awono (Center for International Forestry Research, Cameroon) spoke about the transborder commerce between Nigeria and Cameroon in nontimber forest products. Finally Morlee Mendes Cole (UMAPS scholar from the University of Liberia) presented elements of emerging “Integrated Pest Management and African Agriculture.”



Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom addresses a plenary session

delivered a talk linking forestry reform and emerging environmental governance to kinship and indigenous knowledge structures. Lauren Persha (Michigan) offered an introduction to her work on trends and theories in the evolution of Tanzanian Forest commons. Margaret Kinnaird (Director of the Mpala Ranch and Research Center in Laikipia, Kenya) offered a compelling and urgent presentation on water scarcity and governance challenges in Kenya's ranches and wildlands (see pp. 5-7). Finally, Emmanuel Danquah (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology) discussed transboundary governance of wildlife in a West African context.

The panel on **Sustainable Economic Growth and Environmental Justice in Africa**, chaired by Rebecca Hardin, featured Omolade Adunbi (Michigan), who presented the fruit of his

A panel on **climate and geology** featured Gail Ashley (Rutgers University); Samuel Ayonghe (Environmental Geology, Geophysics and Hydrogeology, University of Buea); and Salif Diop (United Nations Environment Program, Kenya). An interesting element of the discussion was the shared conviction that, perhaps especially in Africa, environmental scientists need better tools and skills for conveying their results and consulting with communities on the ways that research agendas are framed and research projects designed and carried out. This may mean greater incorporation of film and video (especially in nonliterate communities) and nonspecialist writing and presentation of results. These questions dovetailed with discussions held during the sessions on **information technology and communication**, under the leadership



of Paul Edwards (Michigan). That panel included Angelo Barbosa (Vice-President for IT, Universidade Cabo Verde), who offered an overview of Cape Verde's technological environment; Stephanie Squires (U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation), who spoke on "Resolving Knowledge Isolation: A New Approach to African Journal Access"; and Nii Narku Quaynor (Computer Science, University of Cape Coast), who addressed "How the Internet Reached Africa".

Sofia Merajver (Director, Center for Global Health, Michigan) chaired a panel on "**Human Environments of Health and Disease.**" That panel featured Salah Abdel-Hadi (Director, National Cancer Institute, Cairo University); Joe Harford (Director of International Affairs, U.S. National Cancer Institute) who spoke on "Cancer in Africa: The Need for Contextual Approaches"; Alexander Kwadwo Nyarko (Pharmacology and Toxicology, University of Ghana), who delivered thoughts on "Pathways to Sustainable Health Sciences Research in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa"; and Amr Soliman (Michigan), who spoke about "Cancer Teams in Africa: A Paradigm for Global Health Translational Research in Chronic Disease."

The final panel, **Engineering Solutions in Africa**, was chaired by Elijah Kannatey-Asibu (Michigan). It featured Henk de Jager (Dean of Engineering, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University), who spoke on "Challenges facing Engineering Education in Africa: A Case Study of South Africa"; Emmanuel Ramde (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology), who spoke on "Solar Thermal Power Plants in West Africa: Resource Assessment and Site Selection"; Elsie Effah Kaufmann (Biomedical Engineering, University of Ghana), who addressed "Engineering Solutions to Healthcare Challenges in Ghana"; and Moses Musaaazi (Makerere University, Uganda), who spoke on "Using Appropriate Technologies to Solve Local Problems And Develop Skills." Several issues were addressed during the breakout session. Participants agreed that engineering curricula needed to be re-examined. Too many courses are lecture-based, leaving students little scope for hands-on learning. And too few engineering programs in Africa offer training in entrepreneurship. Conferees agreed that young engineers needed to be taught how to market their work, and protect their intellectual property rights under their law.

Participants in the engineering panel

concluded by arguing that scientific problems are best addressed by multi-disciplinary research teams, by design groups that work between and among different academic institutions. They agreed that STEM-Africa could potentially serve as a platform through which collaborations linking Michigan with a number of African universities could be advanced. Through such collaborations new knowledge will be generated, new ideas incubated, and new and socially consequential technologies will be developed. ❀



Prof. Emmet Dennis, President of the University of Liberia, with UMAPS scholars at STEM conference

African Social Research Initiative (ASRI)

"**Access, Accountability and Equality**" is the organizing theme for the Second International Meeting of the African Social Research Initiative (ASRI), to be held July 22-23, 2011 in Accra. The conference will be hosted by ISSER, the Institute for Social Science and Economics Research, a leading demographic and economics thinktank at the University of Ghana, Legon. Commissioned papers will address ongoing ASRI research themes of poverty, gender, and governance, and 40-50 delegates are expected from South African and Ghanaian universities and the University of Michigan.

July 2011 will also see the launch of a new two-week course on **social science data analysis** at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana, offering training on the analysis of national data resources in the region. Large national surveys on income, employment, health, or public opinion are routinely exploited for policy and planning in the USA and other countries with strong academic sectors in the social sciences. While similar surveys are collected in poorer countries, they are often under-utilized due to lack of local capacity in statistical analysis. The new

course is designed to strengthen local capacity on such analysis, and is expected to draw students from across West African universities and government ministries. The course is modeled on a two-week course hosted each January by SALDRU (the South African Labor and Development Research Unit) at the University of Cape Town, which has included U-M instructors from the Population Studies Center and the Ford School of Public Policy and been running for over a decade. ASRI is supporting the extension of the Cape Town course into Cape Coast, Ghana, and SALDRU and U-M faculty will share some of the teaching this inaugural year.

A symposium at U-M in April 2010 celebrated the work of **ASRI Seed Grant Awardees** of 2009 and announced awardees for 2010. Those supported by ASRI seed grants of 2009 included Lori Hill (School of Education) for work on the challenges of

transforming South African schools to redress racial inequalities in the Western Cape, and the emerging professionalization of the education field in South Africa. Arun Agrawal (Natural Resources and Environment) presented his work mobilizing an East African network for research on Forestry and Livelihoods. Elisha Renne (Anthropology/CAAS) shared her ethnographic data on the informal mining sector in northern Ghana (see pp. 4-5). Cheryl Moyer (Medical School) sent slides on her study of health beliefs regarding stillbirths and neonatal death, also from northern Ghana. 2010 Seed Grant Awardees include Rebecca Thornton (Economics) for her pilot project "Sugar Daddies and Empowered Women: The Relationship Between Money and Sex." Thornton is using her pilot funds to test sensitive survey questions on sex and money in Cameroon, where she collaborates with the demographic research group IFORD. Mark Wilson (Epidemiology) received funds for his project on "Urbanization and Environmental Impacts on Malaria in Malawi"; Sofia Merajver and Amr Soliman received funds to support colleagues from East Africa to visit U-M to learn more about the design of cancer registries, which are lacking throughout much of Africa. Carol Boyd (Inst. for Research on Women and Gender) and Jody Lori (Nursing) received support for pilot research with

Phebe Hospital in Liberia on social correlates of stillbirth and neonatal asphyxia. Finally, Nil Basu and Dave Cantonwine (Environmental Health Sciences) received funds for a study on blood lead levels at coastal and mining sites in Ghana. The Basu and Cantonwine project builds on the 2009 ASRI project of Elisha Renne (see pp. 4-5). In the course of describing local mining technologies, Renne identified potentially high rates of lead exposure; Basu and Cantonwine will document the extent and hazards of such exposure. ❀

African Heritage Initiative (AHI)

The AHI's **second international conference** will take place on 8 and 9 July 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Hosted by colleagues at the University of Witwatersrand, the conference will explore the "Politics of Heritage," gathering a multi-disciplinary group of scholars based at institutions in Michigan, Ghana and South Africa to illuminate the domains in which heritage is being made in Africa today. The conference will be organized in four streams. "Tradition, Agency and Art" will consider the ways in which African artists represent and reconfigure "tradition"; "History and Solidarity" will study the politics of writing about African pasts; "Language Politics" will illuminate the variety of agencies and actors involved in the standardization and remaking of African languages; and "Archives and Democracy" will study the non-official archives that dissidents, intellectuals and other actors create.

In April 2010 three Michigan scholars who had been funded by the Heritage Initiative presented the fruits of their research at a **well-attended symposium**. The linguist Marlyse Baptista presented research on "Dialectal Variation in Cape Verdean Creole: Some Preliminary Findings"; Adam Ashforth (CAAS) discussed his ongoing work with the Malawi Journals Project, which tracks popular perceptions of the AIDS epidemic; and David Wallace (School of Information) presented his new work on "Archiving Cultural Continuity in Post-Genocidal Rwanda." In 2010 the AHI awarded two seed grants to Michigan faculty: Jeff Heath (Linguistics) was awarded funding to create a lexicon-based encyclopedia of Malian languages; and Frieda Ekotto (Comparative Literature) was given a grant for her project on women filmmakers in Nollywood, the Nigerian video-film industry.

The initiative has awarded funding to support



ASC Associate Director Derek Peterson's ongoing efforts to preserve, organize and digitize government archives in Uganda. Uganda possesses a rich collection of archival materials, but in the absence of an organized national archives service, the condition of these collections is very poor. District archives are uncared for, generally stored in attics or sub-basements together with old typewriters, sinks, tires, and other detritus of government bureaucracy. The National Archives is kept in a sub-basement below the National Agricultural Research Organization's offices, and the vast majority of its impressive collection remains uncatalogued. It is with this situation in view that the AHI—working with the Cooperative African Microfilms Project and several Ugandan institutions—has organized two projects. In the first project, a team of archivists from Michigan together with colleagues from Uganda will create a systematic catalogue for the National Archives, a preliminary step toward the goal of moving the collection to new quarters. In the second project, archivists at Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal will, with the help of Michigan archivists, preserve, organize and digitize the 250-box Kabarole District Archive, a collection of great importance for historians of western Uganda. A report on these activities will be given in a future issue of this newsletter. ❀

African Presidential Scholars

The University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) program provides an opportunity for university academics based in Ghana, South Africa or Liberia to spend anywhere from two to six months in Ann Arbor. The program, funded by the Office of the President, is a means by which Michigan is helping support young and enterprising African scholars produce meaningful, critical research in their field.

The scholars for 2010-2011 arrived on campus in August 2010. They are:

- Jonathon Ayitey**, from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana), a land economist whose work concerns the financing of housing in Ghana;
- Janet Chisaka**, from Rhodes University (South Africa), a sociologist whose is studying health care in South Africa;
- Patrick Feglo**, from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana), a microbiologist whose research concerns bacteria in a teaching hospital in Kumasi;
- Stephen Jubwe**, from the University of Liberia, a sociologist who is studying the reform of land policy in Liberia;
- David Kenkpen**, also from the University of Liberia, a biologist who studies the chemistry of cassava;
- Ingrid Lynch**, from the University of Pretoria, a psychologist whose work studies South African bisexual women's construction of their sexuality;

Cecil Madell (Moody Fellow), from the University of Cape Town, an urban planning scholar working on “Local Economic Development and Poverty Reduction within a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework Case Study”;

Sopelekae Maithufi, from University of Pretoria, a literature scholar studying the politics of short stories from South Africa;

Ruth Mampane, from the University of Pretoria, an educational psychologist who studies the relationship between students and their educational environment;

Litheko Modisane, from the University of Cape Town, a literature and language scholar who will study the politics of black films in South Africa;

Henry Ogoe, from the University of Ghana, a biomedical engineer working to develop monitoring systems for hospital patients;

Nongo Phiri, from the University of Venda, a social worker studying the problem of homelessness in South Africa;

Adam Rahman, from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana), a communications scholar working to design a template for open education resources in medicine; and

T. Debey Sayndee, from the University of Liberia, a scholar of forestry working on peacemaking in post-war Liberia.

All fourteen scholars will participate in a weekly practicum organized by the African Studies Center, and all will present their work at seminars or conferences in Ann Arbor. Please join us in welcoming this exciting group to the University of Michigan. ❁

STUDYING YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

by David Lam

University of Michigan researchers have been collaborating with researchers from the University of Cape Town to study the changing lives of young people in South Africa. The Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS) is a collaborative project that follows the lives of 4,800 respondents who were aged 14 to 22 in 2002. CAPS collects information on a wide range of outcomes, including schooling, employment, health, sexual behavior and childbearing. The U-M director of CAPS is David Lam, Professor of Economics and Research Professor in the Population Studies Center. Lam began collaborating with UCT researchers in 1996. His interest in the intergenerational transmission of inequality intersected with the interests of several researchers at UCT, and eventually led to the design of CAPS as a way to study the emergence of economic inequality during the transition from school into the labor force. Working with UCT

communities with high security to informal shack neighborhoods without house numbers or street names. In spite of these challenges, the project has been very successful in following young people. The 2006 wave of the survey added 2,000 elderly respondents, and a second five-year NICHD grant (with additional funding from the NIH Office of AIDS Research, the National Institute on Aging, the Mellon Foundation and the Hewlett Foundation) has allowed CAPS to go well beyond the original target.

Research from the project has produced a number of important findings about South African young people’s sexual lives, working habits, and experiences in school. By following progress of students through secondary school, CAPS has documented an extremely high rate of grade repetition in predominantly black schools. This indicates that black schools are struggling to evaluate students



David Lam (left), UCT economist and CAPS co-director Murray Leibbrandt (rear), and members of the CAPS team search for CAPS households in the Cape Town township of Khayelitsha.

researchers Murray Leibbrandt, Jeremy Seekings, and Francis Wilson, Lam was awarded a five-year grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, to design and implement the first wave of the survey in 2002.

South Africa has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world, and Cape Town typifies this extreme inequality. This inequality creates interesting challenges for conducting an in-person household survey, since housing ranges from luxurious gated

effectively. Because CAPS looks at many dimensions of young people’s lives, the CAPS team has been able to study the links between this grade repetition and other outcomes. One important finding is that the wide range of ages among students—one of the consequences of grade repetition—has negative consequences for students. For example, girls who move faster through school tend to become sexually active at a younger age and have older initial sex partners, a surprising result that appears to be caused by the presence of students as old as 20 or 21 in many high school classes.

CAPS has also documented a number of positive trends in the lives of young people in South Africa. There has been a substantial narrowing of the racial gap in schooling attainment, although large gaps persist in post-secondary schooling. CAPS is one of the first studies to document an increase in condom use and a decline in multiple sexual partners among young people, important indicators of progress in reducing South Africa's high rate of HIV infection. CAPS has also documented that education is having an important payoff in the labor market for young people, even though youth unemployment remains extremely high.

The CAPS data can be downloaded for free by any researcher from the CAPS web site, and to date over 500 researchers from many different countries have used this facility. Details about CAPS, including links to papers and access to the data, can be found on the CAPS web site, www.caps.uct.ac.za.

CAPS is part of a larger series of research and training collaborations between U-M and UCT. There have been numerous faculty and student exchanges in both directions in the 14 years since the collaborations began. David Lam spent two years as a visiting professor at UCT in 2004-2006, many UCT students and faculty have participated in the Institute for Social Research summer training programs, and several UCT students have entered U-M's economics Ph.D. program. One of the indicators of success of these activities is that UCT was chosen to run South Africa's new National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS), the first national longitudinal survey in the country. NIDS is directed by Murray Leibbrandt, director of the UCT's Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, and co-director of CAPS. U-M faculty Bob Schoeni and David Lam serve on NIDS advisory committees. Information about NIDS, including access to the data, is available at www.nids.uct.za. ✨

NEWS & EVENTS IN AFRICAN STUDIES

Training Program for Ghanaian Medical Researchers is Funded

The Ghana-Michigan Post-doctoral And Research Trainee NETwork (PARTNER) Program was recently awarded a one year (October 2010-September 2011) \$400,000 grant funded by the Fogarty International Center in the US NIH. The Program Directors are Thomas Robins in U-M School of Public Health and Cheryl Moyer in U-M Medical School. The overall objective is the strengthening of interdisciplinary research capacity in Ghana to address global health challenges faced by low- and middle-income countries. Strategies for achieving the goal of strengthening of research capacity focus on: a) the long-term, comprehensive training of post-doctoral scientists who will become future leaders of interdisciplinary global health research in Ghana; b) the building of institutional capacity through a combination of strengthening of mentoring skills of faculty of the lead academic institutions, and development and dissemination of research training materials using state-of-the-art distance learning methodologies; and c) strengthening an alliance of academic institutions with governmental organizations responsible for evidence-based policy implementation. Specific methods to achieve these objectives include: a) bringing a cadre of 12 post-doctoral fellows organized into interdisciplinary teams for a four-month intensive program of study in research methods at the University of Michigan; b) bringing two post-doctoral fellows to the University of Michigan for a full academic year for an intensive program to increase research and mentoring skills; c) directly supporting two University of Michigan faculty from complementary disciplines to spend four months in Ghana to provide ongoing mentorship for the post-doctoral students who have returned home, as well as serve as visiting faculty to teach at the University of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology to collaborate with the Ministry of Health's Ghana Health Service research division.

Fourteen post-doctoral fellows have now been appointed and will shortly arrive in Ann Arbor. They will specialize in a variety of different fields: four will pursue an epidemiological study of breast cancer;

one will study pediatric facial deformity; and four will study the intersection of gender and health. ✨

Mellon Foundation Funds Workshops on "Ethnicity in Africa"

The Mellon Foundation recently awarded a Sawyer Seminar grant to a group of Michigan faculty pursuing research on "Ethnicity in Africa: Historical, Comparative and Contemporary Investigations." When combined with matching funding from the African Studies Center and the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, the grant will allow the research group to organize a series of three workshops, appoint several post-doctoral fellows, and support two Michigan doctoral students.

The project aims to open up an interdisciplinary dialogue about the history and politics of identity in Africa. The matter could hardly be more pressing. Recent events in Kenya and elsewhere have tragically highlighted the importance of ethnicity, but also the poverty of the frameworks we use to delineate and explain it. The study of ethnicity in Africa (and beyond) is trapped in disciplinary dead-ends and lacking in conceptual clarity. In economics and political science, scholars have rightly moved beyond ethnicity as a kind of primordial identification to see ethnic groups as networks for the distribution of patronage. But few have examined internal struggles over meaning within ethnic communities. Specialists in these disciplines rarely research in vernacular languages, and they therefore often see ethnic groups as undifferentiated blocs. Ethnic groups are, in this view, patron-client networks that allow their members to derive material and political benefits within the context of nation-states. Anthropologists have generated the most sophisticated theoretical understandings of embodied practice, and have produced rich empirical data on internal dynamics of ethnic groups. Yet most scholars have withdrawn from the discussion. A rejection of the embarrassing context of the discipline's birth has produced a near total retreat from the study of people groups. From the mainstream of American anthropology, the study of ethnic communities has been branded as retrograde.

What is needed are forums for crosscutting debates and rigorous definitional discussions of what scholars mean by ethnicity. As a first step, the research group—which is composed of ten scholars, working in disciplines ranging from History to Anthropology to Economics to Urban Planning—convened a conference on “Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity in Africa” in December 2010. The conference featured several important scholars in the field: political scientist Bruce Berman (Queen’s University); historian John Thornton (Boston University); political scientist Dan Posner (UCLA), economist Nathan Nunn (Harvard) and others. In April 2011 the group will convene a conference on “Religion and the Making of the Yoruba,” featuring University of London anthropologist John Peel, Birmingham literature scholar Karin Barber, UCLA anthropologist Andrew Apter and others. A third workshop, planned for December 2011, will concern “Ethnicity and Conflict in Africa.” Two post-doctoral scholars have been appointed: historian Aly Drame (see p. 4) and anthropologist Robert Blunt, who studies the politics of Kikuyu neo-traditionalism in Kenya. A third post-doctoral scholar, funded by the Swiss National Fund, is Dr. Lorena Rizzo (history, Zurich), who will work with the group on her research concerning the history of photography in southern Africa. ❀

Workshop in Cairo on Breast and Cervical Cancer

Funded in part by the African Studies Center, the Center for Global Health (U-M) and Cairo University organized an international workshop on “Downstaging Breast and Cervical Cancer in Africa and the Middle East.” The workshop gathered 78 attendees from 16 countries to Cairo on October 5-8, 2010. The program for the sessions comprised the following general topics: “Downstaging Breast Cancer,” “Downstaging Cervical Cancer,” “Cancer Registries in Africa and the Middle East,” “Epidemiologic Research in Africa and the Middle East,” and “Building Global Cancer Teams-Opportunities for Multidisciplinary Collaborations.” The conference was directed by Sofia Merajver (Internal Medicine) and Amr Soliman (Epidemiology).

The discussions covered a great deal of ground. One panel concerned the personal, social and health system determinants of early detection and early presentation of breast and cervical cancer. Here discussion

centered on the reasons for late diagnosis, on illiteracy, fear and other factors that cause women to disengage from medical institutions. Another panel deliberated over cost effectiveness and quality control; here the discussion centered around plans to conduct a standard evaluation of new therapies in Egyptian localities. Further panels discussed how to organize large longitudinal comprehensive cohort studies to monitor the effectiveness of medical interventions. Finally, one panel considered new epidemiological data about the molecular profile of different phenotypic cancers.

With funding from the Center for Global Health, Cairo University and other organizations, the conferees plan to launch several pilot studies on these and other issues, aiming to develop a larger collaborative research program involving medical scientists in Michigan, Egypt and other institutions. The CGH will act as a clearing house in this process, and will help to develop evaluation tools to help measure the effects of the pilot studies. ❀

Male Circumcision Project Awarded Gates GCE Grant and Conference Honor

The Safe Male Circumcision Project, led by Mechanical Engineering Assistant Professor Kathleen Sienko, has received recognition for its efforts towards improving the safe outcomes of traditional adult male circumcision and lowering HIV transmission in sub-Saharan African communities.

Adult male circumcision has been shown to significantly reduce HIV acquisition and is safe when done by trained clinicians. However, in traditional ceremonial circumcisions in African countries, there is often a high rate of complications including bleeding, infection, excessive pain, lacerations of the penis and even death. The objective of the project is the design and development of a low-cost, adjustable, culturally appropriate adult male circumcision tool for use in traditional circumcision ceremonies.

As part of its Grand Challenges in Global Health initiative, the Gates Foundation has selected the male circumcision project to receive a Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) grant. This initiative focuses on overcoming scientific and technological barriers that impede progress in global health. GCE grants are intended to encourage

researchers in the early stages of ideas that have the potential to break through these barriers and significantly improve healthcare in the developing world. The Safe Male Circumcision Project was featured on the Gates Foundation’s website in the announcement of GCE grant recipients.

The GCE grant will be used to 1) further develop and evaluate a prototype created during winter 2009 by one of Sienko’s ME 450 capstone design and manufacturing design teams, 2) conduct field work to gain a better understanding of the cultural suitability of the device for sub-Saharan Africa, and 3) demonstrate a path to low-cost mass production and distribution.

In July, Sienko, Associate Professor of Surgery Dr. Jim Geiger, and research engineer Amir Sabet will travel to Uganda to meet with individuals representing four ethnicities in the area, such as clan leaders, cutters, assistant cutters, adult male circumcision candidates and families of current or recent adult male circumcision candidates. In addition to those traveling to Uganda next month, Dr. David Sokal of Family Health International and Moses Lee of the Center for Entrepreneurship (CFE) serve as team members for the Gates Foundation project, and Katy Olesnavage contributes as a CFE social entrepreneurship summer intern.

The project was further recognized in April at the 2010 Design of Medical Devices Conference held in Minneapolis. Sienko and ME student Tom Van Wingen attended the conference and participated in the Three-in-Five Competition, an event at which the top ten abstracts submitted for peer review to the ASME Medical Devices Journal are asked to give a five-minute presentation to a panel of experts. Sienko and Van Wingen won the top presenter award at the competition for presenting the paper “Adult Male Circumcision Tool for Use in Traditional Ceremonies.” The conference paper was co-authored by ME 450 winter 2009 student design team members Van Wingen, Kyle Lemmermen, Phil Scott and Craig Spencer. ❀

“Spending Your Days in Ghana” Honors Michigan’s Dr. Timothy Johnson

On October 14, 2010 as part of the 50th Anniversary of the JFK Peace Corps speech on the steps of the Michigan Union (see p. 1) a symposium entitled “Spending Your Days in Ghana: Responding to JFK’s Challenge” was held at the Michigan Union. The Pendleton Room was packed with students, former Peace Corps volunteers, faculty and many from the Ann Arbor community. Personal narratives were given by various University of Michigan faculty who have spent extensive time on the ground in Ghana. Speakers and topics included Kathleen Sienko (School of Engineering), who spoke about her work in developing technologies for health in Ghana; Rockefeller Oteng (Department of Emergency Medicine), who discussed the development of trauma care and emergency medical training in Ghana; Lisa Newman (Department of Surgery), who described her breast cancer genetics research in Ghana; Ray Silverman (Director, Museum Studies Program), who discussed museum studies and culture preservation in Ghana; and Jody Lori (School of Nursing), who discussed her work to improve reproductive health and reduce maternal mortality by midwives and nurses in Ghana.

During the symposium, Timothy R. B. Johnson, Bates Professor and Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, received a Certificate of Recognition and a beautiful Ghanaian painting of a mother and child for his “Commitment to maternal health and his dedication to strengthening education collaboration in Ghana over the last two decades.” The certificate and painting were presented by Dr. James Woolliscroft, Dean, and Dr. Joseph Kolars, Associate Dean for Education and Global Initiatives, University of Michigan Medical School. ❀

Michigan Students Win Fulbright Awards for Study in Africa

Five Michigan students have won Fulbright fellowships to pursue research in Africa. In all, 31 Michigan students were awarded Fulbrights, more than any other university. Fulbright Fellows undertake self-designed programs in disciplines ranging from the social sciences, business, communication, and performing arts to physical sciences, engineering, and education. The program

currently awards approximately 1,500 grants annually in all fields of study and operates in more than 155 countries worldwide.

The five Michigan Fulbrighters studying Africa are Anna Clark, studying for a Masters in Fine Arts, who will pursue research in Kenya; Tara Diener, a doctoral candidate in Anthropology and History, who will conduct research on “An Ethnographic History of Maternity in Freetown” in Sierra Leone; Patrice McShane, a doctoral candidate in Linguistic Anthropology, who will work on “The Ethnic Insult as Conflict Prevention in Burkina Faso”; David Pappano, a doctoral candidate in Biological Anthropology, who will pursue research on “Cooperation, Conflict, and Reproductive Strategies of Male Geladas” in Ethiopia; and Beatriz Zengotitabengoa, a doctoral candidate in the History of Art, who will travel to Benin to work on “Contemporary Royal Art Display in the Bariba Kingdom of Nikki.”

“Michigan’s success can be attributed to the talented, creative and tenacious applicants, and the overwhelming support and guidance provided by faculty throughout the university,” said Amy Kehoe, Fulbright program adviser. Since the establishment of the program in 1946, more than 46,000 students from the United States and 150,000 students from other countries have benefited from the Fulbright experience. ❀

Conference on Elections Held in Accra

A meeting titled “Supporting Election Studies in Africa” was held in Accra, Ghana on September 27-28, 2010. Scholars, survey researchers and election officials from Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa were in attendance, along with representatives from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project. The goals of the meeting were to assess interest in Africa in conducting survey-based election studies, identify related challenges and opportunities, and promote collaboration. The event was jointly coordinated by the CSES project (www.cses.org) and the Accra-based Center for Democratic Development (www.cddghana.org), with sponsorship from the American National Science Foundation and the University of Michigan.

Participants in the University of Michigan’s African Social Research Initiative (ASRI)

played significant roles in the proceedings. ASRI member Rod Alence (University of the Witwatersrand) led a discussion on the use of quantitative tools and training needs. Alex Frempong (University of Ghana) participated in the conference opening and provided an overview of the status of election studies in Ghana. David Howell (University of Michigan) acted as the conference facilitator and made a presentation about the CSES project. Bob Mattes (University of Cape Town) updated the group on the status of election studies in South Africa, and provided valuable insights into the conduct of surveys in Africa more generally.

A number of follow-up items were generated at the meeting. The group expressed interest in taking advantage of online collaboration and communication tools to share expertise and methods. The need for quantitative training for local organizations was clear, and ideas presented about how to achieve that, including participating in existing efforts by the Afrobarometer project (www.afrobarometer.org). There was some interest in increasing participation in international networks and comparative efforts, ideas about how to leverage and supplement those efforts to produce additional scientific benefits for local countries, and discussion about coordinating on specific funding efforts. For more information about the meeting, please visit the event’s page on the CSES website at www.cses.org/plancom/2010Accra/2010Accra.htm ❀

SUPPORT THE AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER

Please consider **making a contribution** to the African Studies Center. Your help will enable us to expand our outreach capacity and activities, offer funds for faculty and student research and training, and enhance area study and language training at the U-M. There are four areas in which we seek financial backing:

First, the **African Presidential Scholars Program** (UMAPS) brings early career faculty members from Ghana, South Africa, Liberia and Uganda to the University of Michigan for residencies lasting up to six months. The program addresses head-on what the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has identified as the current "crisis" in African higher education: chronically under-funded universities with a shortage of PhD-holding faculty who are unable, for lack of resources, to train new cohorts of PhD scholars. The program goals are twofold: (1) to help integrate the next generation of African scholars into international academic networks and support the attainment of their doctoral degrees, thereby helping their home institutions build capacity, and (2) to promote greater internationalization of U-M by bringing talented Africa-based faculty to our campus to collaborate in research, scholarship and teaching. The UMAPS program aims to help retain and strengthen faculty in African institutions of higher education while simultaneously enriching U-M through the inclusion of African perspectives—a win-win scenario.

Second, the **African Heritage Initiative** (AHI) advances the critical study of heritage work in Africa. At the intersection of business, politics, and history, "African heritage" is being reconfigured and marshaled as a resource to be celebrated, commoditized, and deployed by corporations, by governments, and by commoners eager to gain revenue and political leverage. The African Heritage Initiative brings together scholars from Ghana, South Africa and U-M to query the many assumptions circulating about "heritage" and uses to which it is put. A long-term goal is to build a graduate program triangulated between U-M and our South African and Ghanaian partners (with the future option to expand into other regions of Africa), and to deepen our intellectual engagement with the vast domain of African heritage through research projects with African colleagues already deeply engaged in these issues.

Third, the **African Social Research Initiative** (ASRI) works to expand African social scientists' capacity to utilize quantitative data. African

researchers and policy-makers are trapped: they must reluctantly depend on international consultants and institutions to (1) collect statistical data on demographic, governance, health, education, social and economic concerns, (2) analyze this data, and (3) issue policy recommendations on how to address and overcome problems. African policy-makers cannot be expected to create sustainable programs without accurately knowing whom they seek to benefit and how those benefits can best be realized. The ASRI initiative seeks to expand the famed U-M Institute for Social Research training programs in survey data collection and analysis to Africa. Following on the success of a 12-year-long short course in statistical analysis in Cape Town, South Africa, U-M and South African faculty will pilot a second short course in Cape Coast, Ghana beginning in 2011. The chief object of the African Social Research Initiative is making knowledge accessible in order to enable better, more informed decisions.

And fourth, the **STEM-Africa Initiative** is unique in its engagement of science as a trans-Atlantic affair. When academics and policy makers think of "African studies," the default position is often to focus exclusively on African history, culture, language and arts. The natural or "hard" sciences are thought to lie beyond the mandate of African studies. Yet science thrives in Africa. In a continent unparalleled in its biodiversity, featuring more endemic species of flora and fauna than any other, and where the stakes of human/wildlife interactions are critical due to large predator populations, science is a life-and-death reality. Understanding particle physics, harnessing solar and wind power, engineering solutions to persistent water scarcity, and developing mathematical models for averting health crises are all concerns that drive African STEM scholars in their pursuit of innovation. STEM-Africa seeks to nurture emerging scholars on the continent and advance research collaborations in STEM disciplines between the U-M and partnering institutions in Africa.

The ASC seeks support for the continuation of the U-M African Presidential Scholars Program, as well as funding to advance the exciting collaborations of our African Heritage, African Social Research, and STEM-Africa initiatives. We hope that you will contribute generously to our effort by sending your pledge or gift today. Please return your check to: African Studies Center, The University of Michigan, 1080 South University Ave., Suite 3603, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1106. You can also make donations directly through the "Giving" section of our website, at www.ii.umich.edu/asc. All donations to ASC are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Thank you for your support. ✨

Photograph by Raymond Silverman

Priest entering the church of Bet Giyorgis, Lalibela, Ethiopia. November 17, 2001



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