

2008-2009

## HIGHLIGHTS ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Academic year 2008-2009 has been busy but exciting as we continue our efforts to revitalize the Center's academic programs and curriculum. We are delighted to announce some of our recent accomplishments in this area:

### A Joint MA Degree in African Studies and MS in Library and Information Science

The proposal to establish this degree has been approved and will be effective from fall 2009.

### A Graduate Minor in African Studies

This minor has been approved and will also be effective from fall 2009. It is designed to provide U of I graduate students both at the master and doctoral levels in any discipline training in African studies.

### AFST 515: "Practicum in African Studies"

This course was developed for our MA students and mainly centered on the organization of an annual student conference combined with student's participation in Center outreach activities. It has now grown into a course where students can still do these activities, but are also given the option to work on individual projects that highlight their own interests and individual expertise. Over the last two years, in addition to participating in conferences and Center outreach activities, our MA students have taken a leading role in student recruitment both on and off

*continued on page 3*

## Conference Focuses on Sustainable Biofuels & Human Security in Brazil and Southern Africa

The Center for African Studies worked with the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program and many cosponsors to examine social and sustainability dimensions of biofuel production in Brazil and southern Africa through the Sustainable Biofuels and Human Security Conference at the University of Illinois in April. Speakers stressed regional and global contexts and identified the need for more case studies.

Brazil has been a leading producer of ethanol for over three decades. In the last few years, Brazil and many other countries have expressed concerns about climate change, which have resulted in a rapid expansion of biofuels production. Volatility of oil and food prices and concern about land use, however, has dampened enthusiasm about these alternatives. Still, new land is going into production around the world, including many projects in southern Africa.

Carlos Azzoni from the University of Sao Paulo discussed how the situation in Brazil differed from other areas. Werner Baer, U of I, and Edmund Amman, Manchester, examined the history of energy production in the country. The recent expansion in Brazil, they pointed out, has not increased local food prices and has had little impact on income distribution.

Anna Locke from Mozambique noted that despite a rush since 2006 to increase biofuels production in the country, the government and growers have become more cautious. The current administration's main goal for land use is food production; however, jatropha for biodiesel pro-

duction is expanding. Carol Thompson, Northern Arizona University, asked where women and small-holder farmers are in the policy discussions about biofuels. Saliem Fakir, World Wildlife Fund, observed that South Africa has only small biofuel projects; an early project with maize in the late 1990s ended as concerns about the

impact on food prices grew. He noted that projects were increasing in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Swaziland. Factors other than biofuels are hurting food prices, including growing consumption of meat, collusion among large companies, and weakening exchange rates. Participants also brought up the role

of speculation in price volatility.

Several speakers addressed small-scale production of biofuels as potentially beneficial for poor producers. Anil Hira, Simon Fraser University, drew on examples from Paraguay. Jurgen Scheffran, U of I, discussed the FAO's report on small-scale production. In the wrap-up discussion, Jurgen, Merle Bowen, and I stressed that studies need to use a variety of methods and examine how local projects fit into a global analysis of the social and sustainability impacts of biofuels. More work is needed on the links to food security and intrahousehold allocation. The impacts on the poor should be central to the studies.

—Gale Summerfield, *Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program*





Merle Bowen

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Center for African Studies' programs, outreach activities, and curriculum development projects over the past year are a testament to the strength and vibrancy of African studies on this campus and the Africanist community. There is no scarcity of stories and accomplishments to report.

One of our most innovative projects was the development of institutional linkages with cultural and educational institutions in Ethiopia, including Merkuria Theatre, the National Theatre, and Addis Ababa University. In November, I accompanied three faculty members—Brant Pope (head of the theatre department), Kathy Perkins (head of theatrical lighting) and Ruth Nicole Brown (gender and women's studies/educational policy studies)—and four theatre graduate students, along with a videographer to participate in the Fifth East African Theatre Institute Festival in Addis Ababa. In addition to conducting technical theatre workshops and staging multiple performances, we established official institutional relationships. The University of Illinois and Addis Ababa University signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding that we hope will provide opportunities for student and faculty exchanges.

Our annual thematic events, focusing on aid, trade, and development in Africa, were a success with their curricular, outreach, and programmatic dimensions. Visits from African academics and practitioners in fall 2008 and a biofuels conference in spring 2009 helped us bring these important topics to the campus and local communities. Throughout the academic year, we organized a sequence of activities that included public lectures, classroom visits to local K-12 schools, community presentations at churches, and a screening of a documentary on development aid in Africa that included a panel discussion with the directors, faculty, and visiting

scholars. The Center worked with the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program and many cosponsors to organize a conference on human security and sustainability dimensions of biofuel production in Brazil, Mozambique, and South Africa.

The Center also sponsored numerous lectures, forums, and symposia on African culture, politics, and society, fostering collaborations on and off campus. In conjunction with the Department of Theatre, Gender and Women's Studies, and Educational Policy Studies, we co-sponsored original performances by and about Black women, as part of the Lincoln Bicentennial. Another highlight was the Project 500 Commemoration Event, recognizing the 500 African American students admitted to the U of I in 1968. Given the historical victory of President Barack Obama, the Center partnered with the Africa Initiative of Syracuse University to convene a symposium with the purpose of inspiring new research and policy priorities for the U.S. in Africa. The Center was pleased to cosponsor the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on African Linguistics—the most prestigious international conference in the field, which was launched by the U of I Department of Linguistics in 1969. As in previous years, we supported the African Student Organization's annual forum and will be publishing their speaker's presentations as Working Papers. The African Cultural Association, the undergraduate student organization, took the initiative to organize the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Midwest African Student Organization Conference that the Center enthusiastically supported. In addition, we sponsored a wide selection of events through our regular programming, including the Center's Wednesday noon seminar, the International Careers in Business Workshop, and the Joint Area Studies Centers Symposium.

Last summer we hosted the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) for the second and final time before its move to Michigan State University. SCALI 2008 was a huge success: instruction in 11 languages was offered to more than 90 students, representing 23 institutions. Besides the language institute, the Center organized two summer teaching institutes, as part of our outreach activities: the Illinois Summer Institute and the Africa Institute for Educators. Both institutes targeted pre-collegiate teachers. The African Studies Outreach program also played a leadership role in coordinating a teacher's workshop at the African Studies Association's 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting last fall.

In addition to programming and outreach activities, we were busy revitalizing the Center's curriculum and strengthening both our undergraduate and graduate programs. Faculty members offered

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## CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES NEWS

new Center-funded courses on “Islam and Globalization,” “Islam in East Africa,” and “Curriculum Issues in South Africa and the United States.” We also offered again, after several years, AFRST 222: “Introduction to Modern Africa,” the Center’s most popular core undergraduate course. We will provide a stipend to create a new course on African feminism in summer 2009. As part of our efforts to expand on academic programs, we designed a graduate minor in African studies and developed a joint degree program with the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences. Our courses continue to draw record enrollments and our African studies faculty and graduate students appear regularly on the list of “Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Their Students.”

We bid farewell to six students—Megan Bronson, Yaa Cuguano, Steve Disanto, Anna Rivara, Hapsatou Wane, and Sherri Williams—who have completed their degrees and are moving on to exciting new careers, master programs in professional schools, and doctoral studies. Congratulations and best wishes to you all! We look forward to welcoming our five new students in the fall to our growing MA program.

There are also several staff and faculty changes to report. Most notably, Sue Swisher, who worked for more than 20 years at the U of I, mostly at the Center for African Studies, retired in January 2009. Sue’s contributions to the Center are too numerous to mention, the most recent being the successful preparatory organization of SCALI in 2007 and 2008. She also took the lead in orchestrating our new website—a product of much work, careful thought, and coordination. We wish her the very best as she begins the next phase in her life.

We are pleased to welcome Anne Price, our new office manager, who transferred from the College of Education. Anne brings energy, good cheer, and professional experience to the Center and we are delighted to have her join our team. We also welcomed new faculty to the University and the Center including Teresa Barnes, James Brennan, Barry Pittendrigh, Allyson Purpura, and Jesse Ribot.

This summer, in common with the other National Resource Centers on campus and across the country, we are gearing up for the next Department of Education Title VI competition. Over the next few months, I look forward to working with the Center staff, faculty and graduate students in preparing our Title VI application and laying the groundwork for another four dynamic years of Africa-centered outreach, teaching, and research at the University of Illinois.

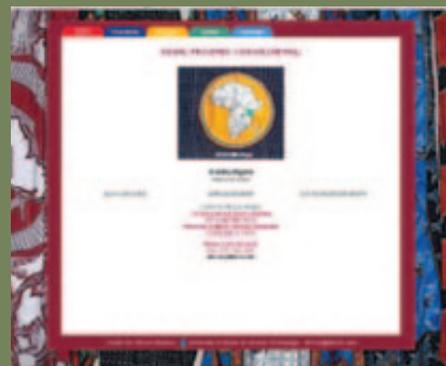
*Highlights on Academic Programming, continued from cover*

campus, mainly to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, while others have played a major part in the publication of our Center newsletters and in updating Africa theses and dissertations for our Africana Library. Other examples of practicum projects include students teaching West African dance to students on campus and to the community, as well as participating in weekly community radio programs to discuss current issues on Africa. This course is now also open to other graduate students on campus. The most recent practicum project undertaken by a student outside of the Center is a documentary on Kenya’s human wildlife conflict around the Masai Mara Game reserve.

### **AFST 222: “Introduction to Modern Africa”**

This course serves both as the campus’ gateway course in African studies and the Center’s largest African studies undergraduate core course. Over the last two years, the Center’s staff has expanded and undergone some reorganization to meet its growing and changing needs, making it possible for the Center to entirely administer, control, and teach AFST 222. This course had not been taught since fall 1998. We started teaching it again in fall 2008, and hope to offer it annually. Besides the fact that it was a formal staple in the liberal arts undergraduate program and served to fulfill the college’s mission to internationalize the undergraduate curriculum of U of I, this course is crucial for expanding African studies training and for pipelining students into relevant area concentrations—minors and majors. Moreover, it is an absolute priority course in our current Title VI grant and its renovation will have a critical impact on our ability to attract future federal funding. We also plan to introduce AFST 222 as an online course and make it accessible to a wider pool of students and teachers both on and off campus.

—**Maimouna Barro**, *Center for African Studies*



The Center for African Studies is proud to announce the launch of our new Swahili Proverbs website. To view the site, visit <http://swahiliproverbs.afirst.uic.edu>. We appreciate any feedback you might have about the site.

## UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS DELEGATION ATTENDS EASTERN AFRICA THEATRE INSTITUTE IN ETHIOPIA

*“The trip was more than I could have dreamed and my impression of Africa is what others told me it would be—an amazing and life-changing one.... I believe the most amazing moment of the whole trip was the parade. As an artist and as an American sharing this experience with other African countries with the goal of opening a festival of free theatrical performances for all who can attend was a great beginning.” —Jennifer Bradford (MFA acting)*

Nine U of I faculty/staff and students traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to participate in the Eastern Africa Theatre Institute (EATI) Festival from November 19-27, 2008. The EATI festival is held bi-annually, rotating amongst member countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Ethiopia. The EATI mission is to provide opportunities for East Africans to share theatre experiences, while at the same time creating a forum for practitioners from other parts of the world to share their knowledge, ideas, and skills. Thanks to a generous travel grant from the Ford Foundation, I traveled with four graduate design and production students from the Department of Theatre: Elina Kotlyar, Jennifer Bradford, Andy Krumeich, and Carson Gross, in addition to WILL-TV staff member Henry Radcliffe, who recorded the event. The main purpose of our visit was to conduct technical and management workshops in lighting, audio, stage management, and video—areas of expertise that are lacking in this region of Africa.

We were joined by Brant Pope, chair of the Department of Theatre; Merle Bowen, director of the Center for African Studies; and Ruth Nicole Brown from Gender and Women's Studies and Educational Policy Studies. Brown,

who also is a playwright with a focus on social issues theatre, presented an excerpt from her original work, *Endangered Black Girls*. Realizing the importance of this event, my colleagues felt their presence could assist with developing relationships with individual participants, and strengthening ties with critical cultural and educational institutions including Mekuria Theatre, the National Theatre, and Addis Ababa



U of I delegation at the Eastern Africa Theatre Institute festival sporting Obama T-shirts at the parade.

University (AAU).

The trip was an incredible experience for all members of our group. The highlight of our trip was the opening ceremony that Saturday morning, where all the participants paraded for nearly three miles through the city of Addis Ababa from the Hagar Fikir (which is recognized as the “oldest” theatre in Africa) to the National Theatre, with groups organized by country. Each group was asked to wear the traditional costume of the home country. Given the diversity of our group, it was difficult to agree on what was a traditional American costume. But given the excitement throughout Africa about Obama winning the presidency, we decided to wear Obama T-shirts, which proved to be a tremendous hit. We were greeted along the parade route with great excitement and enthusiasm.

Another high point of our visit was Ruth Nicole Brown's play, *Endangered Black Girls*, providing for a wonderful exchange and conversation after the production. Student

Bradford performed with Professor Brown with the other students assisting with the technical aspects. We introduced some of the theatre staff members to new technology and different production methods, using our portable projection/computer equipment.

While my students and I were engaged in workshops, Merle Bowen had a busy schedule meeting with a variety of key administrators at the university, including Dr. Wudu Kassu, chair of the History Department, who received his doctorate from U of I. Later she met with Dr. Tekalign Wolde Mariam, the academic vice president, with the goal of developing a formal affiliation with U of I. Professor Bowen also met with Dr. Mohammed Hassen, director of the Center for African Studies. They discussed establishing linkages between the two centers

and support in the development of Addis's interdisciplinary MA program. Professor Brown met with Dr. Fekadu Mulugeta, the associate vice president for Continuing and Distance Education.

Overall, the trip was an astounding success. My colleagues and I are enthusiastic about the possibility of collaborating and developing long-term, formal relationships with AAU and the Mekuria Theatre Studio and Entertainment. With excellent guidance from Merle Bowen, African studies, the Department of Theatre, and Educational Policy Studies have already exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with AAU, with the goal of providing opportunities for student and faculty exchanges. This will entail conducting joint research projects, extending invitations for guest artists and scholars to visit U of I, securing much-



Ethiopia Eastern Africa Theatre Institute parade participants.

needed equipment for African theatres, and providing technical training. The most significant undertaking of this workgroup will be to seek, apply, and garner a significant grant to fund these activities.

In addition to the MOU, we have taken action in other areas:

- At the festival we met Ugandan director artist Centurio Balikoowa and his talented group of young performers. We were fortunate to have Mr. Balikoowa come to U of I and present a workshop on Theatre for Development in Uganda in February.
- Ruth Nicole Brown returned to AAU to lecture on her research related to theatre and education and to provide a mini-course in qualitative methodology for doctoral students.
- While I am not new to the East African region, I reconnected with design/technical colleagues from Uganda and Tanzania. With a Fulbright Senior Specialist grant, I returned to Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda to conduct workshops in

lighting with the faculty of music, dance, and drama for two weeks during March. I also had an opportunity to visit Centurio Balikoowa at his school outside of Kampala and see the extraordinary work produced by his young students.

The most significant outcome of the trip to Addis Ababa was the impact on the students and colleagues, which are reflected in the following sentiments:

“I loved the performances that involved song, dance and storytelling. It was absolutely captivating. It was interesting to watch the ‘straight’ plays from the social issues theatre viewpoint, and difficult due to lack of certain technical aspects, such as minimal lighting, long transitions, and tech people going from house to backstage or onstage through the stage in the middle of performance.” —Elina Kotlyar (MFA stage management)

“Attending festivals like this one and continued exchange opportunities will probably be good steps toward developing stronger relationships with the universities and other

theatres in Africa.” —Henry Radcliffe (WILL-TV staff)

“The parade was amazing. I will never forget it. The combination of all of the people with the first chance getting to walk through town and see all of the storefronts was absolutely amazing.” —Andy Krumeich (MFA audio)

“I’ve gained a greater understanding and appreciation for what I do and what I have. Seeing all the people at this festival for which theatre was a second, nonpaying job demonstrated a lot of love for craft that I think is sometimes lacking in American theatre, especially academia. Theatre has a tendency to become a job and not a labor of love. I think I’ve gained a certain level of perspective on the issue.” —Carson Gross (MFA lighting)

—Kathy A. Perkins, Department of Theatre



Andy Krumeich in Sound Workshop.

## COLLABORATING WITH INSTITUTIONS BASED IN AFRICA

It is always a great pleasure, at the end of the academic year, to sit back and report on some of the Center's accomplishments and initiatives. Just like previous years, this academic year has been busy and extremely productive. In addition to our regular center programs and activities, some of our Center staff and faculty traveled to several African countries. During these visits, we rekindled our commitment to either establish or renew linkages with institutions based in Africa.

I feel quite honored to have represented the Center for African Studies at the 12th General Assembly of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, December 7-11, 2008. I presented a paper at the meeting on the topic "Transnationalizing the African Public Sphere: What Role for Transborder Languages," under the general theme of the general assembly "Governing the African Public Sphere." The intellectual exchanges were very fruitful and stimulating, and it was a great pleasure for me to meet with many Africanist scholars based on the continent and beyond. In addition to attending special lectures and panel discussions, I participated in various meetings as well as attended film screenings, book exhibits, and various cultural events. CODESRIA presented a great opportunity for networking with scholars and organizations, as well as civil society groups. My participation in this general assembly was extremely worthwhile, and I look forward to much stronger linkages between the Center and CODESRIA, in addition to other various research institutions in Africa.

Another destination this year was Senegal, following the submission of a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad (GPA) to organize a short-term curriculum development seminar for K-12 teachers under the theme "Enriching Teachers' Knowledge of Muslim Societies." This project was part of the Center's mission to internationalize the curriculum and enhance teachers' understanding of Islam in Africa in general and in Senegal in particular. Although our proposal was not successful in this year's competition, we are extremely satisfied with what has already been accomplished, especially



Dr. Maimouna Barro and Tsitsi Dangaremba at the CODESRIA meeting in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

with respect to collaboration with institutions of higher education and research institutes in Senegal.

While in Senegal, I visited Université Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis, my alma mater, and proposed an institutional partnership for the GPA project. Although Gaston Berger served as our main institutional base, much of the preparatory work was done in Dakar where I visited several institutions, namely, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, the West African Research Center, CODESRIA, and the *Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire* (IFAN). We will continue to maintain collaborations with our contacts at these institutions, as we hope to refine our proposal and resubmit for a future Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad to Senegal for teachers. As evidenced by the number of applications we received from teachers across the U.S., there is growing interest in the topic of Islam and diversity in Africa, and we look forward to the realization of this project in the near future.

—Maimouna Barro, *Center for African Studies*

## LENTZ DESCRIBES FUNERALS AND ELITES, LAND AND PROPERTY IN WEST AFRICA

Funerals are expensive affairs, in West Africa as elsewhere, especially for elite group members. These elaborate ceremonies are about religion, but importantly, as Carola Lentz explained in her lecture on February 24, also consummate social events ("National Aspirations, Local Commitments: The History of a Ghanaian Elite"). Hundreds of people come, in lavish cases, to pay their respect and display their relationship to the deceased, the surviving organizers, or the community to which they belong. According to Professor Lentz, in northern Ghana funerals of prominent people become occasions to re-evaluate the "home ties" of the person who just perished. The person celebrated may have spent a good part

of his or her life in other places, for education, national service, or politics; may have settled down in the capital or another city, where family and new social ties grew around an existence quite unlike the one shared back home. The immediate survivors, therefore, have to renegotiate their links to rural kin, as the performance simultaneously confirms elite status vis-à-vis both the folks of the hometown and the friends, acquaintances, and rivals of other privileged groups in the nation.

The presentation, illustrated with personal slides, was given to a packed room in the Illini Union, including faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students. This paper launches a new project, which grew from many years of field research in northern Ghana pursuing other thematic interests, which have produced a prolific record of academic publications, including five authored books, seven edited or co-edited books, and a large number of journal articles and book chapters.

On February 25, Professor Lentz made a second presentation based on a book she just completed, *Land and Belonging: The Politics of Property in West Africa*, in the geography seminar room at Davenport Hall. Professor Thomas Bassett served as discussant. The paper presented three contemporary cases of conflict over land from her research in southern Burkina Faso and northern Ghana.

During her visit Professor Lentz was interviewed by Nicole Tami for Illinois International TV (available at [www.ilint.illinois.edu/tv/ilint\\_tv.php](http://www.ilint.illinois.edu/tv/ilint_tv.php)).

Carola Lentz is professor at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz and was spending a sabbatical semester in the U.S. affiliated with the W.E.B. DuBois Institute for African & African American Research at Harvard University. Most recently she has spearheaded a network and collective project to study the 50<sup>th</sup> year jubilees of African independences (beginning with Sudan in 1956, Ghana in 1957, and Guinea in 1958). Professor Lentz's visit was sponsored, in addition to the Center for African Studies, by the Department of Anthropology, the Department of Geography's Social Dimension of Environmental Policy Initiative, and the Department of Sociology.

—Mahir Saul, *Department of Anthropology*

## LEAD AFRICA LINGUISTS RETURN TO ILLINOIS FOR THE FIFTH TIME

The 40th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL) was held at the University of Illinois from April 9-11, 2009. The conference, which was inaugurated on this campus in 1970, traditionally returns to Illinois every 10 years. This meeting represented the 5th time that Illinois has hosted ACAL.

The 40th ACAL was a great success in every important respect. The conference, held at the Illini Union, was well attended by visitors from various parts of the world: institu-



African Studies graduate students and African Students' Organization members at the Annual Conference on African Linguistics.

tions throughout North America (including our own academic community at Illinois), South America, Australia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia. The 40th ACAL saw the presentation of 97 papers in almost all areas of linguistics, five plenary addresses, and an overall attendance estimated at 160-175 participants that included students, academic staff, and the general public. Featured speakers included Ayo Bamgbose, Professor Emeritus, University of Ibadan; Brent Henderson, University of Florida, Gainesville; Charles Kisseberth, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois and Tel Aviv University; Lioba Moshi, University of Georgia at Athens; and Fallou Ngom, Boston University. Invited thematic panel presentations included topics such as, "Globalization, Urbanization, and Language in Africa," "Mutual Cross-fertilization between African Languages and English," "Empower-

ing African Languages," and "Consequences of African Language Policies." Reports of grant-funded research groups studying endangered African languages like Dogon, Ghulfan, investigation of Moro, and research on Bantu syntax at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands, were also presented. The result was an intellectually stimulating event that provided attendees unparalleled access to the best current research on African linguistics.

This year's ACAL was marked at its con-

clusion by a successful banquet and cultural celebration held at the Hilton Gardens Inn, Champaign. The event included the conference's final plenary address by Lioba Moshi, as well as a number of home-grown entertainments highlighting African language studies at Illinois and the University's close relationship with the Congolese community in Champaign

County. An elaborate skit

depicting visiting prospective students and their parents at the University of Illinois was presented by our Elementary Swahili students, while our Zulu students performed a stir-



ACAL closed with a cultural celebration, including dancing to Congolese music.



Professor Emeritus Ayo Bamgbose speaks at the 40th ACAL.

ring musical number, including a saxophone accompaniment. These were followed by an African fashion show exuberantly presented by our friends from the local Congolese community. The evening ended in dancing and celebration.

The 40th ACAL was organized by the Department of Linguistics and the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics in collaboration with: the Center for Advanced Study, Center for African Studies, Department of African-American Studies, Center for Global Studies, Center for International Business Education and Research, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and the 32nd ACAL at UC-Berkeley. The organizing committee at Illinois was chaired by Professor Eyamba Bokamba (linguistics) and composed of other members from the linguistics department: Bezza Ayalew, Tim Mahrt, Tholani Hlongwa, Dr. Peter Ojiambo, Professor Ryan Shosted, and Dr. Abdurrahmane Zouhir. Numerous student volunteers from the Department of Linguistics and the Center for African Studies also contributed to the success of the event.

—**Ryan Shosted**, *Department of Linguistics*

## PERFORMANCE PIECE, PRESENTATION EXPLORE 'BLACK WOMEN AND THE PURSUIT OF FREEDOM: RECONSIDERING LINCOLN'



As part of the Lincoln Bicentennial celebration, 'Our Mothers, Our Daughters, Ourselves: Black Women in the Age of Lincoln and Beyond' premiered at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

Sponsored by "Lincoln Then, Lincoln Now," a commemoration of the Lincoln Bicentennial by the Office of the Chancellor and coordinated by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Public Engagement, "Black Women and the Pursuit of Freedom: Reconsidering Lincoln" represented a creative collaboration between the Center for African Studies, the Department of Theatre, Educational Policy Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Key collaborators for the \$20,000 grant were faculty members Ruth Nicole Brown, Merle Bowen, and Kathy Perkins, as well as graduate students Amira Davis, and Adeyinka Alasade.

The program enlarged and constructed Black women's relation to the Lincoln Bicentennial, adding a critical dimension to public understanding of the historical context of current race and gender issues, by presenting original theatrical events and a public presentation by a distinguished scholar. Our objective was to reconfigure the public imagination of the role of Lincoln during the final period of slavery generally, and in the lives of Black women in particular.

The first event was an original performance piece titled *Our Mothers, Our Daughters, Ourselves: Black Women in the Age of Lincoln and Beyond*. This show premiered September 6-7, 2008, at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Amira Davis, Adeyinka Alasade, and Ruth Nicole Brown developed *Our Daughters* to address the Lincoln Bicentennial as it related to the continuities between past and present, U.S. and the African Diaspora, and return to what the specificity of

birth entails in a political, social, and economic context of slavery, the end of the slave trade, the end of slavery, and the persistent effects of racism and slavery.

Act 1 featured the creative genius of Amira Davis whose performance "Emancipatory Acts" addressed the historical experiences of Black women as mothers, the disruption of the Black family, and unkept promise of freedom posed by Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation." Act 2, "Orations on Resistance," featured the poetry of Adeyinka Alasade. Alasade's performances have been reviewed in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Reader*, *Chicago Magazine*, and a number of other journals and newspapers. The *Chicago Tribune* has called her "Chicago's High Priestess of Dub Poetry." Act 3, "The Rhythm, The Rhyme, and The Reason," was co-written by Ruth Nicole Brown and graduate students Claudine Taaffe, and Chamara J. Kwakye. It detailed the effects of Lincoln's legacy on the lives of African American girls and women living and going to school in central Illinois.

Dr. Wilma King, Arvarh E. Strickland Distinguished Professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia, was the featured speaker for the spring 2009 event. Her talk, "African American Women and the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln: The Significance and Legacy" was held at the Levis Faculty Center at the U of I on March 4, 2009.

—Ruth Nicole Brown, *Educational Policy Studies/Gender and Women's Studies*

# ILLINOIS BIDS FAREWELL TO SCALI

During the summer of 2008, the Center for African Studies, in cooperation with the Department of Linguistics, hosted the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) for the second time since its inception in 1993. SCALI is an annual collaborative program of Title VI National Resource Centers and FLAS granting institutions in the United States. SCALI offers African language instruction to current undergraduate and graduate students and is open to professionals and non-students as well. As a nationwide program, its organization requires careful and considerable planning unlike that which characterizes single institution-based intensive summer language programs.

Pre-planning involved various tasks performed by U of I staff, faculty, and graduate students. Drawing

on our 2007 experience, careful pre-SCALI planning enabled us to attract 91 students to SCALI. Participants at the 2008 SCALI came from various colleges and universities across the nation, with graduate students outnumbering their undergraduate counterparts. We were also able to attract one novice and a group of 25 highly experienced faculty members from seven different universities in the U.S.

A three-day teachers' workshop was the first activity, focusing mainly on IT in a soft immersion teaching method. Professor Alwaiya S. Omar, coordinator of the Program in African Languages (PAL) in the Department of Linguistics and the African Studies Program at Indiana University-Bloomington, conducted the workshop which focused on the topic of "Achieving the goals of language instruction by integrating the 5 Cs and the use of IT" under the immersion approach.

A comprehensive general orientation for the students and instructors followed the workshop on the Sunday preceding the commencement of classes. It included a lecture delivered by

Professor Elabbas Benmamoun (head of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Illinois) on the importance of teaching and learning African languages in the U.S. His lecture emphasized not only the intellectual and potential job opportunities that can result from learning and acquiring an African language or more, but also the challenges that PALs face in tertiary public institutions during periods of budgetary constraints.

Classes began on June 9, with placement examinations at all levels. An emphasis was placed on intermediate and upper level courses in order to screen students and allow them to move to appropriate higher levels if necessary and feasible.

Eleven languages were offered (Akan/Twi, Arabic, Bamana, Hausa, Igbo, iSizulu, Kikongo, Kiswahili, Pulaar, Wolof, and Yoruba) in 26 sections arranged to accommodate beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels as well as the participating students' academic interests.

The "Language Showcase" program held in the seventh week of the institute displayed the results of the immersion instruction. At the showcase, different language classes performed skits of various sorts that they wrote themselves.

The intention of SCALI 2008 was to provide the learners with language skills and cultural exposure to their respective languages. A very ambitious series of extracurricular activities were organized for SCALI students that included excursions to Chicago organized by faculty members to allow students to interact with native speakers. Other activities included live music performances on campus, the showing and discussion of selected films representing the different African regions and respective languages and cultures,

weekly research forums at which faculty and graduate students presented and discussed papers, and community-wide cooking lessons on selected African

recipes, an African Arts show, and a weekly West African dance class taught by Master Djibril Camara. These activities enabled students and instructors to release some pressure from the intensive language classes, and to enrich their experiences through immersion into the culturally-filled extracurricular activities of their choice and offered yet another intellectual dimension from an interdisciplinary perspective.

To provide an additional forum for SCALI students to meet and interact with local Africanists, a picnic was organized by CAS and the African Students' Organization. Additionally, a cookout for the instructors was held at the home of Eyamba and Moling Bokamba where different African cuisines were enjoyed over a selection of Congolese and other African music.

SCALI 2008 was a great success from all perspectives. Serious beginning- and intermediate-level students developed impressive language skills, while their advanced-level colleagues considerably enhanced their conversational abilities so much so as to be able to discuss and debate issues in African cultures, politics, and economic developments. Students who had not traveled to Africa and who participated in the different extracurricular activities gained useful insights about this complex continent.

The success of last summer's SCALI program would not have been possible without the dedicated and generous support of the cooperating NRC and FLAS centers and the local units and personnel of the University of Illinois. We are, therefore, deeply indebted to all these participants.

SCALI 2009 is being held at Michigan State University.

—Eyamba Bokamba, Department of Linguistics



The SCALI 2008 instructors are introduced.



Professor Eyamba Bokamba welcomes SCALI participants.

## GUEST-IN-RESIDENCE AT I-UNITE 2008: NONTOMBI NAOMI TUTU

The U of I was honored to have Ms. Nontombi Naomi Tutu as a Guest-in-Residence at the Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Hall, in collaboration with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Inclusive Illinois, and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, as part of the I-Unite events celebrating diversity on campus, September 22-25, 2008.



Nontombi Naomi Tutu (third from right) with LAS faculty held roundtable discussions about reconciliation on campus.

Growing up in apartheid-South Africa, Ms. Tutu shared her experiences with the campus community as an activist for human rights, and the ways in which she had shaped her career. As the daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, she learned early about the critical importance of advocacy and diligence in her work.

Ms. Tutu was the keynote at a diversity roundtable on "Truth and Reconciliation: Africa and Illinois," held at the Illini Union on September 23. She shared her life experiences with the audience, as well as accounts of truth and reconciliation efforts in South Africa. In addition, the program featured roundtable discussions, facilitated by CAS faculty Teresa Barnes, Merle Bowen, and Bekisizwe Ndimande, engaging audience members on a more personal level. Discussions touched upon what reconciliation would look like at Illinois on topics regarding Chief Illiniwek, harassment, and discrimination. Each facilitator shared key points about their discussions with the audience at-large, and Ms. Tutu gave closing remarks. Later that evening, she presented, "From Apartheid South Africa to Global Human Rights," on issues about the intersection of identity, at Global Crossroads. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session and then dinner.

The following day, Ms. Tutu assisted a Lunch 'n Learn at the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center, and shared her lived experiences in the U.S. and the relationships she

observed between Africans and African Americans. Later, she facilitated a Housing Students/ Staff Workshop at the Illini Union for students, RAs, MAs, and program directors. Attendees learned about ways to engage in "courageous conversations" about the issues of diversity, and

how to facilitate programs that both welcomed and challenged students.

The next day, Ms. Tutu participated in a Student Affairs Staff Training at the Illini Union that offered similar emphasis on staff roles, and how to increase engagement with each other and with students to initiate and maintain these conversations. In the evening, Chancellor Herman gave a reception in her honor, appreciative of the important contributions she had made throughout her stay. Ms. Tutu also attended a dinner that Student Affairs hosted, in recognition of her participation in the various events sponsored by I-Unite.

—**Monique Rivera-Rogers**, *Office of Equal Opportunity and Access*

## AFRICAN STUDENTS' ORGANIZATION FORUM DISCUSSES COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICA

When we say we are seeking new collaboration opportunities in Africa, what do we mean?

This is the question that guided the planning committee of the African Students' Organization (ASO) 2009 Annual Academic Forum. Steered under the leadership of vice president John Oyelakin, the committee explored ideas on how to define the kinds of relationships Africa needs to pursue in order to exploit her vast potential in untapped human and natural

resources. This approach is aimed at encouraging Africans on the continent and the diaspora to look for their strengths within, and then seek opportunities to collaborate with others with the aim of learning and sharing at a partnership level.

Collaboration calls for joining together energies for a better good. It is the pursuit of positive relationships that encourage mutual growth while recognizing the contribution of each partner as a strategic stakeholder. The committee sought to encourage positive thinking and a higher level of belief that Africa has what it takes to actively participate in the globalized world. Faced with the question of where to get this strength and higher optimism, the forum sought to engage Africans in a reflective dialogue of their strengths as a people, and stimulate strategic thinking on how the continent's resources could be used for the benefit of its people.

Discussion and presentations were made on the various opportunities that are available in Africa and multidisciplinary approaches were proposed on how to chart the way forward. These approaches were categorized into three broad themes: development, education, and health.

**Development**—What kind of technologies do we need to compete in the globalized world? Can youth entrepreneurship development salvage the continent from its current state? What lesson can we learn from other successful actors in the global economy?

**Education**—What role should education play in facilitating this change? What educational reforms should be undertaken? What role should language play in facilitating cultural identity and national development?

**Health**—How can life expectancy and health of the continent's population be improved? How can we promote a culture of professional development and lifelong learning especially among our health professionals and what lessons can we learn from more developed societies?

The forum presentations will be submitted to the Center for African Studies where they will be published as Working Papers.

—**Kevin W. Gitonga**, *President, African Student Organization*

## SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIANS VISIT U OF I LIBRARY'S MORTENSON CENTER

Nine South African university librarians kicked off a three-month program in the U.S. with three weeks at the U of I Library's Mortenson Center for International Library Programs in March 2009. They were here as part of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to their universities (University of Cape Town, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and University of the Witwatersrand) to develop new methods of library support for research in South Africa. The project has three phases: a Web-based library research portal, a research commons in each library, and a human resource development component intended to equip selected librarians to provide high quality research support.

The Mortenson Center component was called "Setting the Context: A Program for Learning about Library Research Support in the United States" and served as an introduction to the culture, practices, and diversity of American universities and academic libraries. In their first week, the librarians visited the African Studies collection at the Main Library, met with the Africana librarian and enjoyed a reception at the African Studies Center.

Each day was carefully planned with presenters and speakers addressing different aspects of the program's theme. Many of the speakers were U of I librarians. Paula Kaufman, the University librarian, spoke with the group on library administration and management. They also attended sessions on project management, copyright and research rights, developing presentations, and a Digital Humanities Symposium. During their short stay with the Center, the South Africans visited three nearby universities: Purdue, Northwestern, and Loyola.



South African librarians learned about library research support this spring at U of I.

On their last day at the Mortenson Center, the South African librarians met with Director Barbara Ford and Associate Director Susan Schnuer. One of the librarians called the experience "an enlightening and entertaining program." They all appreciated the one-on-one time they had with faculty and librarians at lunches and other social events. The Project Management sessions and library visits were also spoken of highly.

The South Africans left Illinois in March for the Association of College and Research Libraries conference in Seattle. From there they traveled individually to their host universities to spend the next six weeks. The host universities were Arizona State, Texas A&M, University of Washington, Yale University, North Carolina State University, Duke University, Purdue University, and University of Texas at Austin. In May, they met together in San Francisco for a program wrap-up.

—Sara Thompson, *Mortenson Center*

## U OF I COMMEMORATES 'PROJECT 500'

In fall 2008, the U of I commemorated 40 years of Project 500. The history of Project 500 is rooted in student and community protests in 1968 that pushed for the enrollment of students traditionally underrepresented on campus. Students from various parts of the country—especially the Central Illinois area, New York, Philadelphia, East St. Louis, and Mississippi—joined in protest to change the face of the campus forever. Consequently, 565 African American and Latino students were admitted to the U of I in 1968.

Project 500 was a catalyst for the development of many campus multicultural programs and support for minority students. These include the Afro-American Cultural Center, Special Educational Opportunities Program, African-American Cultural Program, African-American Studies Program, the La Casa Cultural Latin, and the Center for African Studies.

The Project 500 commemoration was among many events scheduled for the Black Alumni Reunion week that took place from November 2-8, 2008. The Center for African Studies, in collaboration with the Department of Linguistics and African student organizations, planned a program with the thematic focus on "Global Africa: A Celebration of Culture, Academics and Alumni Accomplishments." The Center also launched the Victor C. Uchendu Fund, named in honor of its founding director. Proceeds from the fund will support study and research in Africa by U of I students working on graduate degrees in African Studies.

For the visiting alumni, the African Students Association and the Congolese community prepared and served African food while the African Cultural Association

featured a collage of past events and distributed flyers of upcoming activities. Professor Phillip Yampolsky, Director of the Center for World



African student organizations displayed artwork, traditional garments, and books.

Music performed with Visiting Artist and Master Drummer of Mande music, Moussa Bolokada Conde from Guinea, West Africa. In addition, Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo, Department of Linguistics, had some of his Swahili-speaking students engage with Black alumni. For learning Swahili, the alumni received a T-shirt. The Center of African Studies had a great turnout for the 40th anniversary of Project 500, with plentiful food, music, and black alumni in attendance.

—Yaa Cuguano, *Center for African Studies*

## PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH 2008-09

## Center Organizes Two Pre-Collegiate Teachers' Institutes

During summer 2008, the Center organized two pre-collegiate teachers' institutes: the Illinois Summer Institute (ISI) and the Africa Institute for Educators (AIE).

The ISI theme was "Multiple Perspectives on Teaching World History," and was jointly organized with the European Union Center, and co-sponsored by all U of I area studies units along with the Department of History. This annual program, which took place from June 22-27, brought together local faculty with educators from K-12 institutions and community colleges.

Participants addressed effective ways of incorporating non-Western histories as well as Western history in teaching of world histories and cultures. It was organized on a daily thematic focus covering pre-modern encounters, empire and colonialism, culture, trade and science, and war and conflict. Case studies,

Imperialism in the Middle East"; Professor William Munro (Illinois Wesleyan University) on "Global Food Supply Trade"; and Abdulai Iddrisu on "Islam in Africa." References to Africa also figured prominently in two other presentations by Professor Antoinette Burton on "Reverberations: Eventfulness in World History" and Professor Craig Koslofsky on "World Music, Country Music, and Urbanization."

The second institute, AIE, held from June 29-July 2, aimed to enhance teachers' understanding of the history and current issues facing those interested in African studies and to provide teachers with resources and techniques for incorporating this new knowledge into their curriculum. The institute served 23 educators from K-12 and post-secondary institutions from across the country—from Pennsylvania, New Jersey,



Center for African Studies MA students Sherri Williams, Anna Henry, and Nathaniel Moore at Global Fest 2009.

Presentations included the following: Professor Eyamba G. Bokamba, linguistics and Program in African Languages, "Appreciating African Languages and Societies Today"; Professor Bekisizwe Ndimande, curriculum and instruction, "Integrating Africa into the U.S. Curriculum"; Professor Wail Hassan, comparative and world literature, "African Literature"; Professor Dana Rush, art history, "African Art: From the Continent to the Museum"; Prof. Valerie Hoffman, Religious Studies, "Islam in Africa"; Abdulai Iddrisu, PhD candidate, history, "Growth of National Consciousness in West Africa in the 20th Century"; Professor Mahir Saul, anthropology, "African Film & Society"; Professor Maggie Flinn, French and cinema studies, "Teaching with African Film"; Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo, linguistics, "Swahili in the K-12 Classroom"; Jamie McGowan, PhD candidate, geography, "Teaching with African Maps" and; Tony Perman, PhD candidate, music, "African Music and Culture."

Faculty contributed to the development of a reader and CD for all the educators. The



Mande music concert at Krannert Center performed before a packed audience.

presentations, and lesson-plan development focused on Africa, East Asia, European Union, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Russia, Middle East and South Asia, and the incorporation of the United States in these histories.

The 20 attendees came from New Jersey, Arizona, Illinois, and the larger Midwest area. The Africanist presenters included Professor Ken Cuno on "Western Imperialism and neo-

Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. Jamie McGowan and Tage Biswalo developed and organized the AIE, a new 2008 outreach program, and the first multi-day institute that the Center has hosted.

The institute began with a performance by Djibril Camara and the Mara-Giri Dance and Drum Ensemble. During the four-day institute, educators were exposed to guest lectures, presentations, discussions, and film screenings.



'Hands Around the World' performance by Djibril Camara and his students at a Lincoln Trail Elementary School in Mahomet.



NESEI student leaders and their teachers in Yey-Sudan.

Center coordinated with the College of Education to develop and administer an evaluation of the AIE. The overarching feedback from the teachers was that they would have liked more time with the presenters and on campus!

—**Jamie McGowan**, *Center for African Studies*

## Center Co-Chairs Teachers' Workshop at the African Studies Association 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting

The Center for African Studies' outreach program staff played a leadership role, serving as co-chairs of the teachers' workshop for the K-12 teachers, librarians, and community college instructors, at the African Studies Association (ASA) 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in Chicago last fall. As members of the Local Arrangements Committee and the ASA Outreach Council, Center outreach staff attended meetings in Chicago from the summer of 2008 throughout the fall to plan this national event. More than 80 educators attended the daylong African-centered professional development workshop. The panel topics covered history, health, music, art, philosophy, geography, African aesthetics, popular culture, and contemporary politics. Scholars, artists, and community

activists facilitated panels, workshops, and discussions tailored especially to educators.

Overall there were 13 presentations and two cultural performances. The goal of the workshop was to make educators aware of Africa's rich history as well as the social, economic, and geographical issues facing the continent. Workshop participants had a day pass to the ASA conference, including entry to the exhibit area where they had an opportunity to purchase African-related materials. They also received the book, *Africa: a Biography of the Continent* and the popular "How Big is Africa" poster. More importantly, workshop attendees received six Continuing Professional Development Units.

During the daylong workshop, there were two featured performances: the *Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago*, which dedicated a libation dance to the African Ancestors; and the *First Wave* spoken word artists that linked ancestral spirits to education in the modern era. As in previous years, the ASA Outreach Council held its annual Children's Africana Book Awards (CABA), selecting five award-winning books. The books selected for this year's honors were *Aya* (Marguerite Abouet and Clement Oubrerie) for older readers and *Ikenna Goes to Nigeria* (Ifeoma Onyefulu) for young readers. Other CABA award-winning books were *A Long Way Gone* (Ishmael Beah); *Rise of the*

*Golden Cobra* (Henry T. Aubin); and *Wiil Waal: A Somali Folktale* (Kathleen Moriarty and Amin Amir, illus). For more information on the CABA award-winning books go to [www.africaaccessreview.org/aar/awards.html](http://www.africaaccessreview.org/aar/awards.html).

Finally, the workshop participants had the privilege of hearing Congressman Danny Davis (D-IL) deliver the keynote address. Congressman Davis, who has worked tirelessly over the years to bring awareness to important issues in developing countries, especially those in Africa and Latin America, talked passionately about the importance of education, urging educators in the United States to continue their engagement with those less fortunate around the world.

In addition to Title VI support, the U of I was a major sponsor, contributing more than \$9,000 to the ASA annual meeting. Until next time, peace!

—**Tage Biswalo**, *Educational Policy Studies*

## PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH 2008-09

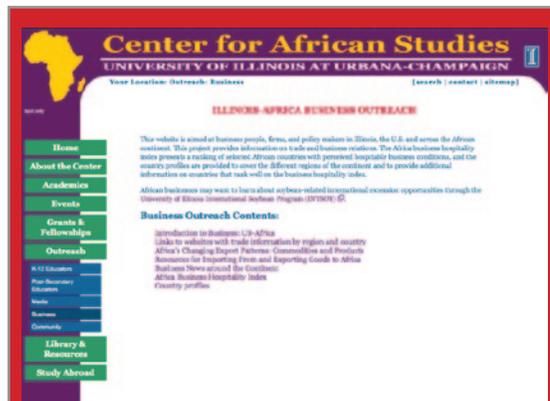
## Illinois-Africa Business Outreach Website Gets Update

The Illinois-Africa Business Outreach website is an information-rich website of the U of I Center for African Studies. Our goal is to provide useful information to promote mutually beneficial interaction between business people, firms, and policymakers in Illinois and the U.S. and their counterparts across the African continent.

Much of the knowledge of Africa is based on poorly informed stereotypes, movies, and media focus on negative news like famine, drought, civil war, and extreme poverty. All of this suggests more of a role for emergency relief than mutually beneficial business partnerships. However, while some parts of Africa are plagued by crises, there are also regions and countries with political stability and economic growth. Indeed, there exist many opportunities for productive collaboration with businesses in much of Africa. Furthermore, most people know very little about the African continent, particularly about business and investment opportunities there. Consequently, this website aims to provide information on key economic activities including trade and business relations for various African countries.

This past semester several changes were made to the website to increase the ease of its use as well as to provide additional and up-to-date information for users. For individu-

als interested in exploring various economic ventures on the continent, the Africa business hospitality index presents a ranking of selected African countries with perceived hospitable business conditions. This feature has been



Our website is easier to use and provides more up-to-date information.

expanded! We now have the business index for all African countries with the most recent data on the various sub-indices. We have also provided different viewing options to ease your exploratory experience.

We have updated the existing country profiles and also expanded the number of countries for which country profiles exist. These country profiles provide more in-depth information about the history, culture, and business environment of various countries. The countries represented now better reflect the continents diversity in terms of history,

geography, and culture which no doubt affect the business climate, options, and procedures. We have also updated the resources for importing/exporting to African countries, adding some information on the major exports and imports of various countries and their current major trading partners. We have created a page with links to websites with trade information starting generally with continent-wide chambers of commerce, then regionally and then for trade/investment sites for specific countries.

We also thought you might like to hear different perspectives on what's going on in different countries. Thus we have provided links to various news sources for various countries. These include both foreign and locally managed news sources, particularly focusing on business issues.

Ultimately, the efficiency and relevance of this website can only be judged by you, the users. Thus we encourage you to check out the website at [www.afrst.illinois.edu/outreach/business.html](http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/outreach/business.html) and let us know what you think. Let us know what other information you would be interested in seeing and what ways you feel the ease of navigation could be improved...after all, we are here to satisfy your Africa business information appetite!

—Lenis Saweda Liverpool, *Agricultural and Consumer Economics*

## ALUMNI PROFILES

## Kwame Essien

An alumnus from African Studies (2006), Kwame Essien is currently enrolled in the PhD program in history at the University of Texas–Austin. Since leaving the U of I, he has had many accomplishments. He published a book with Dr. Toyin Falola entitled *Culture and Customs of Sudan* in 2009. He has also received the Gondwe Fellowship at Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania, the West African Research Association Pre-Dissertation Summer Research Fellowship for 2009, and the Patrice Lumumba Dissertation Research Fellowship from the University of Texas–Austin.

Kwame is currently in Ghana to do archival research and will present the findings at the Association for the Study of Worldwide African Diaspora conference in Accra, Ghana, in August 2009. His paper is entitled “Ripples in a Brazilian Pond: The History of Disputes over Land, Inheritance and Sites of Memory in Tabom Communities in Ghana.” In fall 2009, Kwame will teach a course on pre-colonial African history at Gettysburg College.

## Jason Shultz

Jason Shultz graduated from the University of Illinois with an MS in library science and an MA in African studies, and was an FLAS award recipient for the study of Bamana. Since graduation, he has worked as the African studies librarian at the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern University (2002-2003) and the communication librarian at Georgia State University in Atlanta (2004-2007).

Jason is currently the librarian for Africana collections and the African American studies liaison at the University of California–Berkeley. Since arriving in 2008, he has helped build Berkeley's collection of Africana materials and instructed students and faculty to use library resources for Africana and African American-related research.

Jason is active in the Africana Librarians Council of the African Studies Association and currently serves as its secretary. He has also chaired the Council's Book Donations Committee, helping support donations of materials from the U.S. to libraries in Africa. Jason is married and lives in Oakland, Calif.

## NEW FACES IN AFRICAN STUDIES



### **Teresa Barnes**

**Appointment:** Associate Professor, Department of History and Gender and Women's Studies

**Education:** PhD, history, University of Zimbabwe

**Research:** Teresa's research is distinguished for its embeddedness in oral histories, its determination to situate African women's lives in their modern urban contexts, and its critically informed analyses of indigenous/tribal community pasts and practices.



### **James R. Brennan**

**Appointment:** Assistant Professor, Department of History

**Education:** PhD, African history, Northwestern University

**Research:** East Africa and the Indian Ocean world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in particular on the themes of urbanization, nationalism, political thought, and media.



### **Brian Dill**

**Appointment:** Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology

**Education:** PhD, sociology, University of Minnesota

**Research:** For his dissertation research, Brian investigated the developmental and democratic impacts of community-based organizations in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. His current research focuses more broadly on urbanization and ongoing shifts in state-society relations and responsibilities.



### **Mohammad Khalil**

**Appointment:** Assistant Professor, Department of Religion

**Education:** D.Phil, Islamic studies, University of Michigan

**Research:** Islamic thought—including Islamic soteriology; Western analyses of Islamic

theology; conversion out of Islam; the hadith authenticity debates; the intersection of Islamic historiography, exegesis, and law; ethics (and bioethics); and the significance of the veil.



### **Peter Otiato Ojiambo**

**Appointment:** Lecturer in Swahili, Department of Linguistics

**Education:** PhD, educational studies, Ohio University

**Research:** African language teaching (Swahili), teaching theories, critical, historical and relational theory in education, school and society, comparative education and educational biographies.



### **Barry R. Pittendrigh**

**Appointment:** The C.W. Kearns, C.L. Metcalf and W.P. Flint Endowed Chair in Insect Toxicology, Professor, Department of Entomology

**Education:** PhD, entomology, University of Wisconsin—Madison

**Research:** Molecular basis of resistance to xenobiotics. He has made significant accomplishments in three areas of insect toxicology: metabolic resistance to insecticides, resistance-management in agricultural-production systems in underdeveloped countries, and the relatively new field of insect toxicogenomics.



### **Allyson Purpura**

**Appointment:** African Curator, Krannert Art Museum

**Education:** PhD, cultural anthropology, CUNY Graduate School and a

Certificate in Museum Studies from George Washington University

**Research:** History and politics of exhibiting Africa, the ethnography of contemporary art practices, the anthropology of knowledge, theories of value, and Zanzibar and the western Indian Ocean.



### **Jesse Ribot**

**Appointment:** Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Beckman Institute Affiliate

**Education:** PhD, energy and resources group, University of California, Berkeley

**Research:** Environmental policy, local government, rural representation, distributional equity, social vulnerability; decentralization and democratic local government; natural resource tenure and access; distribution along natural resource commodity chains; and household vulnerability in the face of climate and environmental change.



### **Ryan Shosted**

**Appointment:** Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics

**Education:** PhD, linguistics, University of California—Berkeley

**Research:** Ryan is a phonetician and experimental phonologist whose research focuses on the ways that phonetic principles shape phonological, typological, and diachronic outcomes in language. He specializes in the aerodynamics of speech with interests in a variety of languages spoken in Lusophone Africa, including the Southern Bantu languages of Mozambique, Cape Verdean Creole, and African varieties of Portuguese. He spent a year in Mozambique studying Tshwa, Ronga, Changana, and their mutual influence on Mozambican Portuguese. In summer 2008 he studied the phonetics of Crioulo on the Cape Verdean island of São Vicente. His current research project is on nasal harmony in Kikongo.

## FACULTY NEWS



The obsidian survey team in the Mt. Eburu Forest Preserve, in the central Rift Valley of Kenya, summer 2008. From left to right: Stanley Ambrose (U of I), Phillip Slater (U of I), John Munyiri (National Museums of Kenya), Magen Coleman (U. Missouri), and Scott Blumenthal (U of I).

**Paul Adams** (GSLIS) will accompany faculty and students to São Tomé, West Africa where he has coordinated several projects. Undergraduate students from international studies, urban and regional planning and political science secured internships with the One Laptop Per Child program. This is an internationally known initiative deploying small inexpensive laptops to children across the globe. This year begins the first large-scale deployment to Africa.

**Richard Akresh** (economics) published "Flexibility of Household Structure: Child Fostering Decisions in Burkina Faso," *Journal of Human Resources*, 44 (4) and "Health and Civil War in Rural Burundi," (with Tom Bundervoet and Philip Verwimp), *Journal of Human Resources*, 44 (2), spring 2009.

**Stanley H. Ambrose** (anthropology) will be conducting the second year of a program of field research in Kenya on the origin of trade

and exchange during the evolution of modern humans in the Middle Stone Age in Africa. This research involves collecting geological sources of obsidian, which is a volcanic glass that makes very sharp stone tools, and analyzing their chemical composition. Each source has a distinctive chemical "fingerprint." Obsidian artifacts from archaeological sites are being fingerprinted to identify the sources from which they came. Some artifacts were made on sources up to 300 km from the sites in which they were found. We have found that long-distance exchange networks were established more than 130,000 years ago. This research is being conducted in collaboration with Drs. Jeffrey Ferguson and Michael Glascock, geochemists at the University of Missouri Nuclear Research Reactor facility, with support from the National Science Foundation.

**Elabbas Benmamoun** (linguistics) presented a paper at the Linguistic Society of America's Annual Meeting in January 2009 and

was invited to deliver a talk at the University of Nantes, France, in February 2009. He also presented a paper at Arabic Linguistic Society's annual meeting in April 2009 and a talk at the University of Southern California in May 2009. In February 2009, Benmamoun conducted collaborative research at the Kuwait University during a weeklong visit. He was also awarded a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study (U of I) for AY 2009-2010.

**Ruth Nicole Brown** (educational policy studies and women's studies) published a new book, *Black Girlhood Celebration: Toward a Hip-Hop Feminist Pedagogy*, in 2008. Her research "The Rhythm, The Rhyme, and the Reason" co-written with Chamara J. Kwakye and Claudine Taaffe, comprised the third act of a sold-out theater production that premiered at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts last fall. In March 2009, she lectured to over 100 theatre students and faculty at Addis Ababa University (AAU) on "African American Girlhood: Theatre

# TEACHERS RANKED AS EXCELLENT

**African studies faculty and affiliates ranked as excellent by their students during the spring, summer, and fall semesters, 2008.**

Education and Arts for Community Development.” She returned to AAU with Claudine Taaffe in May and they co-presented a paper on “Embodied Memories and Diasporic Black Girlhood” at the International Conference Educational Research for Development in Ethiopia at the College of Education.

**Eyamba G. Bokamba** (linguistics) published several book chapters, including: “The Lives of Local and Regional Congolese Languages in Globalized Linguistic Markets,” in Cecile B. Vigouroux and Salikoko S. Mufwene, eds., *Globalization and Language Vitality: Perspectives from Africa*; and “The Spread of Lingala as a Lingua Franca in the Congo Basin,” in Fiona McLaughlin, ed., *Languages of Urban Africa*. He also served as the director of SCALI 2008 and organized the 40<sup>th</sup> ACAL at U of I. Most notably he received a Fulbright Award to spend fall 2009 at the Musée Royal de L’Afrique Central, Tervuren, to conduct research on the survey and analysis of the dialects of Lingala.

**Brian Dill** (sociology) presented his work at the European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) in Leipzig, Germany, on June 4-7, 2009. Dill has two journal publications in 2009: “The Paradoxes of Community-Based Participation in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania” in *Development and Change* and “Public-Public Partnerships in Urban Water Provision: The Case of Dar es Salaam,” *Journal of International Development*.

**Alma Gottlieb** (anthropology) published “From Pollution to Love Magic: The New Anthropology of Menstruation,” reprinted in *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (5th ed.), 2009. She also presented papers at two conferences: “Are (Can) Babies (Be) Civilized? Beng vs. Western Notions of Culture, Spirituality, and the Human Life Cycle,” at the ASA on November 23, 2008, and “Mothering (in) the Field,” at the 107th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association on November 20, 2008.

## NAME

## COURSES

Albirini Abdulkafi	LING 404
Richard Akresh	ECON 450
Abdulkafi Albirini	LING 201, 404
Maimouna Barro	AFST 522
Manisah Basu	ENG 285
Jan Brooks	HCD 206, 208
Leon Dash	JOUR 415
Brian Dill	SOC 122, 226, 364
Hadi Esfahani	ECON 103, 568
Karen Flynn	AFRO AM 410
Alain Fresco	FR 419, 421, 501
Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi	HIS 172
Alma Gottlieb	ANTH 411, 414, 511
Alan Hansen	AESB 464
Wail Hassan	COMP LIT 582
Valerie Hoffman	RLST 408
Al Kagan	LIB & INF SCI 530
Ezekiel Kallipeni	GEO 455
Mohammad Khalili	RLST 214, 223
Erik McDuffie	GWS 298, 390
Adlai Murdoch	FR 179
Peter Ojiambo	LING 201, 202
Cynthia Oliver	DANCE 100
Carl Parsons	AN SCI 404
Kathy Perkins	THEATRE 399
Marc Perry	AFRO AM 261
D. Fairchild Ruggles	LARCH 505
Dana Rush	ART 510
Gabriel Solis	MUSIC 417
Alex Winter Nelson	ACE 254, 454, 551, 594
Assata Zerai	SOC 496, 590

## TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Noha Elsakka	LING 201, 202, 403
Tholani Hlongwa	LING 201
Charles Lawarre	LING 100
Esther Lisanza	LING 200, 403
Wemba Lombela	AFRST 413
Leonard Muaka	LING 400
Eman Saadah	LING 201, 202
Awa Sarr	FR 106, 208
Esther Some-Guiebre	AFRST 403
Abderrahmane Zouhir	LING 201, 202

## FACULTY NEWS

**Alan C. Hansen** (agricultural and biological engineering) received the Karl E. Gardner Outstanding Undergraduate Adviser Award in 2009.

**Valerie Hoffman** (religious studies) has been selected as a 2009 Carnegie Scholar. Hoffman, an authority on Islam, was selected as one of 21 well-established and promising young thinkers, analysts, and writers who will receive two-year grants. Her project, "Islamic Sectarianism Reconsidered: Ibadi Islam in the Modern Age," explores the impact of globalization on Ibadism, a marginalized strand of Islam, distinct from the two dominant branches, Sunni and Shiite.

**Alfred Kagan** (library) published "An Alternative View on IFLA, Human Rights, and the Social Responsibility of International Librarianship" in *IFLA Journal* 34, 3 (2008) and "Report on the 'Workshop on the Politics of Digital Initiatives Concerning Africa.'" in *Africana Libraries Newsletter*, no. 123 (2008). He will be on sabbatical AY 2009-10 researching a book on progressive library organizations around the world.

**Ezekiel Kalipeni** (geography) and Karen Flynn (women and gender/African American studies) edited a book, *Strong Women, Dangerous Times: Gender and HIV/AIDS in Africa* in 2009. This collection of essays were initially presented at the Center for African Studies sponsored symposium on "Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa," held at the U of I, September 13-14, 2007.

**Bekisizwe S. Ndimande** (education) will travel to South Africa in July 2009 to begin his new research project on black immigrant children, education and xenophobia in South Africa. Ndimande presented two papers at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting: "Critical Theory as Social Justice Pedagogy," and "Persistent Exclusions in Post-Apartheid Education: Experiences of Black Parents." He also presented another paper, in collaboration with Dr. Beth Blue Swadener of Arizona State University, "Children's Rights and Cultural Complexities in South Africa," at the

International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in May 2009. In addition, Dr. Ndimande published two articles in 2008: "Pedagogy of the township: A letter to Paulo Freire," in an edited collection, *Dear Paulo: Letters from those who Dare Teach* and "Contradictions and tensions in the place of teachers in educational reform: Reflections on teacher preparation in the USA and Namibia" in *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Volume 14, (4).

**Jesse Ribot** (geography and Beckman Institute) was the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation grant for a film project in Senegal. He published "Access over Authority: Recentralizing Benefits in Senegal's Forestry Decentralization," *Development and Change*, Volume 40, No. 1 which was reprinted in an edited collection, *Politics of Possession: Property, Authority, and Access to Natural Resources* (Thomas Sikor and Christian Lund, eds.).

**Ryan Shosted** (linguistics) presented two papers in 2009: "Vowel Syncope in São Vicente Creole Portuguese: Implications for an Aerodynamic Model of Speech Production," at the 40th Annual Conference on African Linguistics at the U of I and "Devoicing or Reduction? Vowel loss in São Vicente Creole Portuguese," at the Linguistic Society of America in San Francisco.

**Alex Winter Nelson** (ACES) co-authored two articles: one with Karl Rich, "Mad Cows and Sick Birds: What international Response to Animal Disease in Developing Countries?" *Development Policy Review*, Volume 28 (2008); and another with Robyn Stevens, "Consumer Acceptance of Biofortified Maize in Mozambique," *Food Policy*, 2008. He also received the ACES Faculty Award for Global Impact.

## STUDENT NEWS

**Megan Bronson** (African studies, 2009) has been accepted to the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services for a Masters of Public Health in Global Health and a Certificate in HIV/AIDS Studies. She will participate in a new Overseas Community-Oriented Learning program in Kenya in spring 2010.

**Timothy Landry** (anthropology) presented a paper "The Slave Route: Touring the Inaccurate and Experiencing the Authentic in Benin, West Africa," at the Collaborative for Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices spring conference on "Pseudo-science, Erasure and Exclusion: Why the Past is Important in the Present," on April 10, 2009, at Levis Faculty Center, U of I.

**Lance Larkin** (anthropology) presented the paper "Artistic Vision, Absent Voices: Excluding Zimbabwean Sculptors from Global Art Markets" at the Collaborative for Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices (CHAMP) spring conference on "Pseudo-science, Erasure and Exclusion: Why the Past is Important in the Present," on April 10, 2009, at Levis Faculty Center, U of I. He will study Swahili at the 2009 Summer Institute for the Languages of the Muslim World at U of I.

**Nathaniel Moore** (African studies) was awarded a GPA in KwaZulu Natal for summer 2009 to study advanced Zulu. He also presented a paper, "Ilungelo lokukhuluma izilimi zethu or Multilingual Equality in South Africa's Language Policy," at the 40th Annual Conference on African Linguistics in April 2009.

**Anna Rivara** (African studies, 2009) participated in SCALI 2008 at U of I and she hopes to utilize her Swahili speaking skills in East Africa in the near future. Anna will be attending the University of South Florida in Tampa in fall 2009 to work on a doctoral degree in anthropology. She will continue to focus her studies on issues of health and health promoting behaviors with an emphasis on their impact in/on human history in East Africa.

**Hapsatou Wane** (African studies, 2009) will begin a doctoral program in Comparative World Literature at the U of I in fall 2009.

## STUDENT PAPER PRIZES

**Jenna Frydman** (major in linguistics) won the best undergraduate paper prize for her essay, "A Critical Analysis of Namibia's English-Only Language Policy," a well-written, balanced presentation and critique of Namibia's language policy. The author has command over the sociopolitical aspects of language use in Namibia and supports her conclusions with comprehensive knowledge on the topic.

**Tyrone Tallie, Jr.**, (history) won the best graduate paper prize for his essay, "Impermissible Authority: Examining White Masculinity in South African Anti-Racist Novels." This essay provided a vista of historical trends in South Africa as mirrored in three works of literature. The analysis in this paper was excellent, the prose was readable, and the author knowledgeable on the subject.

Both students received a certificate and monetary awards for their essays. Congratulations to them both!

### ALUMNI NEWS



**Nicole Hawkes** has been at the University of Southern California for almost three years, where she manages programs in the provost's Academic Affairs office. Nicole and her husband, Adrian, welcomed their first child, daughter Natalie Averill Vasquez on November 19, 2008.

**Aimee Johansen** is an "enseignant-chercheur" ("teacher-researcher" or assistant professor) at Télécom Bretagne, an engineering school in Brittany, France, where she teaches English. Aimee is embarking on a new line of research, having to do with the acquisition of phonetics and phonology by second-language learners of English. Aimee plans to deposit her dissertation in February and graduate in May 2010.

**Michelle C. Johnson** presented a paper, "If I Return Home, They'll Circumcise Me': Reflections on the Partnership Between Anthropology and Transnational Law" at the 69th Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Santa Fe, March 17-21, 2009. Michelle was also recently promoted to an associate professor at Bucknell University.

**Isidore Lobnibe** has recently published "Between Aspirations and Realities: Northern Ghanaian migrant Women and the Dilemma of Household (Re)Production in Southern Ghana," *Africa Today*, Volume 55 (2009), and "Legitimizing a Contested Boundary: Northern Ghanaian immigrants and the historicity of Land Conflict in Ahiayem," *Ghana Studies*, Volume 9 (2009). In addition, Isidore presented the "Neoliberal Environmental Crisis Narratives and Local Production in Ghana's Ecological Transition Zone" at a University of Washington-Law School symposium on April 18, 2009. In September 2009, he will present a talk titled "From Unfree Labor to Commercial Farm Operators: A Paradox of Postcolonial Agrarian Decline Among Ghanaian Migrants," at The Wilberforce Institute of the study of Slavery and Forced Migration, University of Hull, UK. Also, with Professor Dr. Carola Lentz he co-organized the ASA panel: Ghana@50: Celebrating the Nation, held at Chicago in November 2008. Isidore has been awarded the Western Oregon University faculty

development grant to conduct field research in Ghana on manual labor in Ghanaian settlement camp prisons during Summer 2009.

**Maxim Matusевич** has been promoted to associate professor with tenure at Seton Hall University and is the recipient of the 2009-2010 Fulbright Fellowship for his research project on perceptions of blackness in Soviet popular culture. Maxim published the following during the last year: "Black in the USSR: Africans, African-Americans, and the Soviet Society," *Transitions*, no. 100 (February 2009), "Journeys of Hope: African Diaspora and the Soviet Society," *Journal of African Diaspora*, Volume 1, (2008), "An Exotic Subversive: Africa, Africans, and the Soviet Everyday," *Race and Class*, Volume 49, (April 2008) and "Reparation and Repair: Reform Movements in the Atlantic World," in Toyin Falola and Kevin Roberts, eds., *The Atlantic World, 1450-2000*, Indiana University Press, (2008). He works as an assistant professor at Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

**Ahmed Ali Salem** is delighted to announce the release of his new book, *International Relations Theories and Organizations: Realism, Constructivism, and Collective Security in the League of Arab States*. The book, which is largely based on Ahmed's PhD dissertation, is published by the German-based VDM Verlag Dr. Muller.

## 2009 DISSERTATIONS ON AFRICA

The following list represents many of the dissertations written on Africa by U of I students in the past year. Congratulations to everyone!

**Leonard Muaka**, PhD,  
linguistics

*The Dynamics of Language Use among Rural and Urban Kenyan Youths*

**Abdulai Iddrisu**, PhD, history

*Contesting Islam: Homegrown Wahhabism, Education and Muslim Identity in northern Ghana, 1920-2005*

**Jaqueline W. Gitonga**, PhD, education—human resource education  
*Physicians' Perceptions of Transfer of Learning from Continuing Medical Education (CME) Programs into Practice: A Case Study*

**Margaret Njeru**, PhD, Education, curriculum and instruction  
*Raising Immigrant Kenyan Children in America: How Families Negotiate Academic and Cultural Issues*

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