



UNIVERSITY OF
MICHIGAN

alliances

AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER • NEWSLETTER 2023



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How does your gift help the center?

Gifts to ASC are used to support initiatives that enhance the study of Africa at U-M and beyond, e.g., the UMAPS program; students' research/internships in/on Africa; advancement of African studies; faculty research; and multilateral partnerships between U-M and African partners.

OMOLADE ADUNBI

Director, African Studies Center
Professor, Anthropology and
Afroamerican and African
Studies



Dear members of the ASC family,

The 2022/2023 academic year has been productive for the African Studies Center (ASC). We, once again, served as host to the 15th cohort of the University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) program, organized many events, collaborated with partners across campus from different departments, schools, and colleges, and witnessed the outstanding work of our students, associates, affiliates and staff that continue to contribute into making ASC as one of the strongest African Studies programs globally.

The first year of my tenure as ASC director has meant making our alliances stronger within our campus and across many sites on the continent. The foundation of our collaboration continues to wax stronger from day to day. My appreciation goes to Andries Coetzee for staying with the center for another year and serving as associate director. At the same time, I want to welcome Massy Mutumba as our new associate director starting July 1, 2023. Massy's commitment to ASC dates back to her student days in the School of Nursing, and since becoming a U-M faculty member, she has worked tirelessly to contribute to making ASC stronger.

Last fall, ASC was proud to receive the Foreign Languages and Area Studies (FLAS) funding from the U.S. Department of Education and, recently, the National Resource Center (NRC) grant under Title VI. The FLAS scholarships enable the center to support undergraduate and graduate students in their Swahili, Yoruba, and other African language studies. This year alone, ASC awarded FLAS scholarships to four graduate students (two masters and two doctorates) and eight undergraduate students studying Yoruba, Swahili, and Portuguese languages. ASC welcomes two Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) to campus this year. Kehinde Enilolobo will teach the Yoruba language,

and thanks to the U.S. Department of Education for approving another FLTA, Marion Oloo will also join the center this fall semester to teach the Swahili language.

As for the recent NRC Title VI grant, this funding will enable ASC to collaborate with Wayne State University and Eastern Michigan University and help support their Swahili language programs. In addition, the grant will allow us to create new programming that connects U-M Ann Arbor with UM-Dearborn and UM-Flint, and collaborate with teachers from community colleges and K-12 schools in Southeast Michigan through programming that helps bring Africa into the classrooms.

Our alliances and partnerships with Africa continue to grow, as demonstrated in this edition of Alliances. As you all know, building stronger ties with our partners in Africa wouldn't be possible without the support of all our faculty colleagues and many units on campus. We continue to appreciate the Offices of the President and

Provost, the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS), the International Institute, the College of Engineering, the Center for Global Health Equity, and the Center for International Reproductive Health Training. The unwavering support of these offices and programs are critical to the actualization of ASC's goals. DAAS, in collaboration with ASC, administers the Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS) African Studies specialization. The generous funding provided by DAAS helps to fund our MIRS program and supports several students through the Moody's Scholars program.

This academic year, we welcome our second recipient of the Heleniak-Carstarphen fellowship to campus. We are grateful to David Heleniak (a member of the ASC Advisory Board) and Meria Carstarphen for their continued support of master's students from Africa. The Heleniak-Carstarphen fund also supports fee waivers for potential graduate students from Africa. This year, we were able to provide application fee waivers to students, and we are happy to report that a few of the students were successful in their applications and will be joining our Michigan community as Ph.D. students this academic year.

Thank You for Your Support!

We hosted 22 UMAPS scholars in the 2022-23 academic year. This year, we are looking forward to welcoming 20 new scholars to our campus. We are grateful to all ASC associates who continue to serve as hosts and collaborators to these colleagues from the continent.

Our African Perspectives book series witnessed the publication of several new titles during the year, and we remain committed to publishing works from scholars within and outside the continent. Thanks to the University of Michigan Press and the series editors Kelly Askew, Laura Fair, and Pamila Gupta for their commitment to the success of the series. This year, we continued our tradition of supporting our associates who collaborate with colleagues in Africa through our four main initiatives: the African Social Research Initiative (ASRI); the African Humanities and Heritage Initiative (AHHI); STEM-Africa; and the partnership with Ethiopia (EMC2). Through the awarding of seed grants to colleagues, we are able to support projects from different regions of the continent, as you will read in this edition. The seed grants have been instrumental in cementing research partnerships between UMAPS alumni and our associates in the last few years, and we hope to continue this work as we strengthen our partnerships with Africa. The final Mellon Conference took place in May, marking the end of a fruitful ten-year collaboration between ASC and the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. Thanks to Marwa Hassan, Derek Peterson, and Keith Breckenridge for shepherding the conference.

Finally, our enormous accomplishments in the last one year would not have been possible without the support of ASC staff who work behind the scenes to make the center what it is. Thanks to Marwa Hassan, Teyei Pam, Amanda Kaminsky (our graduate intern), Gloria Caudill, Raquel Buckley, and Kathy Covert for all they do to make our center run smoothly. I hope many of the stories in this edition will inspire all of us to continue to work assiduously to make our center stronger. Onward to another successful year in the annals of our center!

Thank you.
Omolade Adunbi

Since our founding in 2008, the African Studies Center (ASC) has enjoyed sustained support, financial and otherwise, from the U-M campus community and beyond. It is only with the generous help of our extended community, including foundations, alumni, and friends, that we can successfully fulfill our mission to support research in and about Africa by U-M students, faculty, and staff. The help of our community of supporters further allows us to increase the presence of Africa-focused content in the U-M curriculum and makes it possible for us to bring African scholars to campus as part of the UMAPS program.

As indicated in the director's message (p. 2), the Offices of the President and Provost have supported ASC generously over many years, and we are very thankful that U-M's leadership remains committed to this supporting engagement. We are particularly grateful that our new president, Dr. Santa Ono, recognizes the importance of engaging substantively with Africa. Beyond U-M's leadership, ASC benefits from our deep collaborative relationships with the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS) and the International Institute (II). ASC and DAAS jointly administer a master's degree in African Studies, and DAAS has also supported the UMAPS program for many years through their South African Initiatives Office. We also collaborate closely with DAAS in the development and support of U-M's African languages program. The International Institute has provided an institutional home to ASC since our founding, and their support includes staffing, administrative services, and always advocating on behalf of ASC.

The past year saw the fruition of two new campus relationships in support of our UMAPS program. Last year, a generous grant of \$300,000 from the Center for International Reproductive Health Training (CIRHT) enabled us to open up the UMAPS program to scholars from Rwanda for the first time. This academic year, we

we welcomed our first Rwandan fellows: physicist Pierre Celestin Uwitonze and mathematician Jean Pierre Ngendahayo. Secondly, last year the College of Engineering pledged \$180,000 in support of the UMAPS program over the next two years, which will enable us to admit as many as six additional UMAPS scholars with a research focus in the engineering sciences. In the first year of this collaboration, we are expecting to host 3 Engineering scholars beginning in Fall 2023. We deeply value the trust these U-M units have placed in ASC. With their generous support, we hope to continue to sustain and grow the UMAPS program.

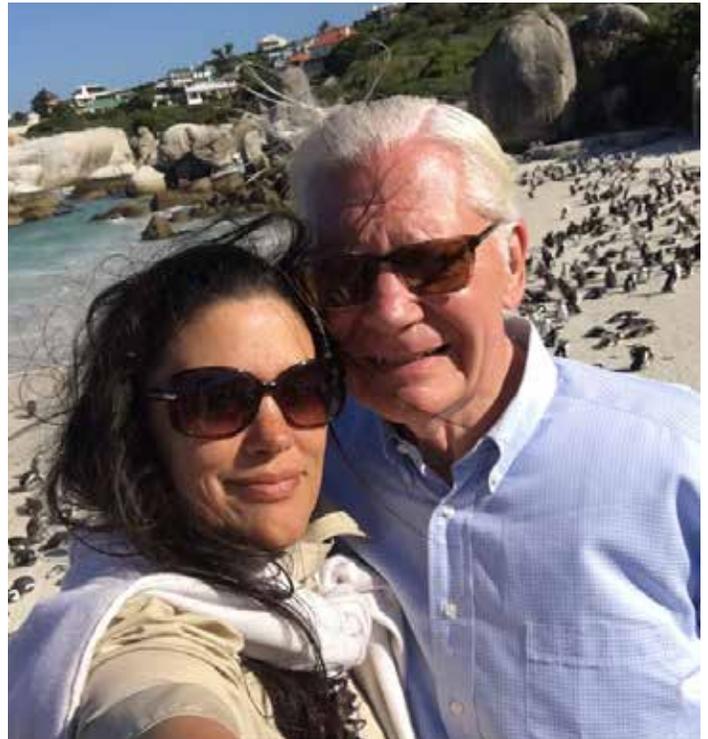
This year's recipient of the Heleniak-Carstarphen Graduate Student Scholarship is Lidiya Amare. Amare is a lecturer of botanical science at the College of Science, Bahir Dar University, in Ethiopia. Her research interests include urban agriculture, food security, medicinal plants, tree structure and ecosystems, and environmental science.

The Heleniak-Carstarphen Graduate Student Scholarship is made possible by a generous gift to ASC by David Heleniak (ASC Advisory Board member) and Meria Carstarphen to support master's students from Africa. In Fall 2022, the fund's inaugural recipient, Omowumi Banjo-Ogunleye, began the Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS) program. A big thank you to David and Meria!

In March 2023, ASC also participated in U-M's annual Givingblue Day fundraising campaign. Once again, David Heleniak and Meria Carstarphen demonstrated their deep support for our program by matching all donations up to \$10,000. Through a true community effort, ASC raised \$15,695 from 19 individual donors, including

U-M alumni, current students, faculty and staff, and many more friends of U-M. This generous support will enable ASC to fund students' research projects and internships this summer and over the coming year. The trust that the ASC community places in us does not go unnoticed — we are deeply thankful for your support!

In the coming year, we will continue to work towards securing funding that will enable us to expand U-M's Africa-focused programming. However, we cannot do this on our own and therefore extend our heartfelt appreciation to the whole community supporting us in this endeavor. We look forward to another successful year of fundraising in 2023/24.



Meria Castarphen and David Heleniak

A sincere THANK YOU
to our generous donors for their continued support.
Without you, our work would not be possible!

Heleniak-Carstarphen Graduate Student Scholarship Recipient

Lidiya Shimeles Amare

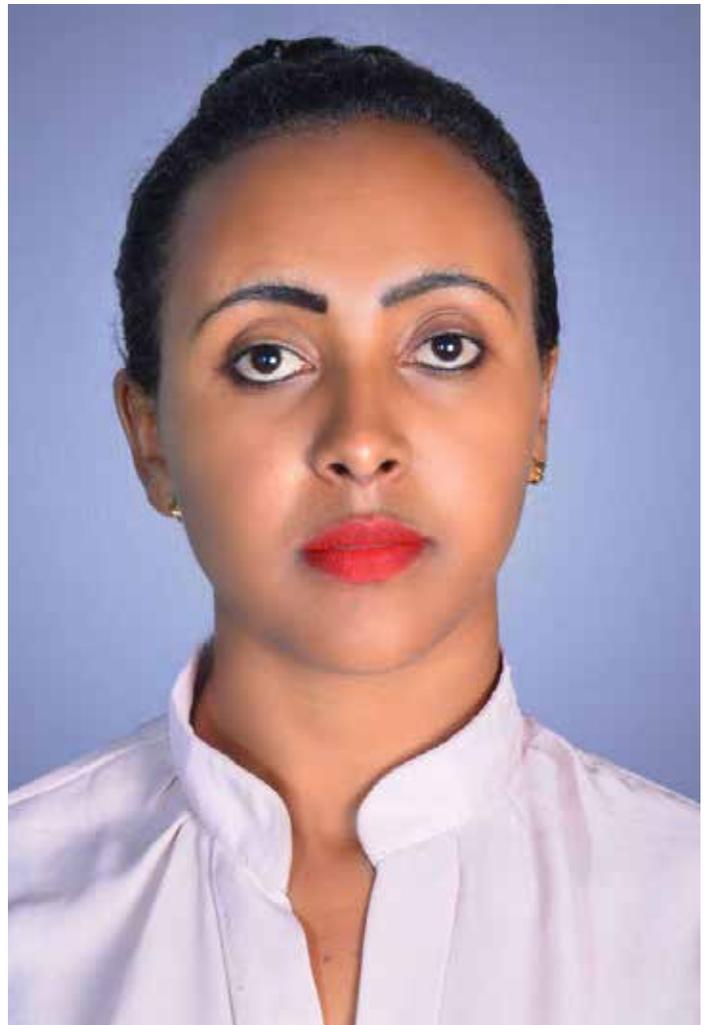
This year's recipient of the Heleniak-Carstarphen Graduate Student Scholarship is Lidiya Shimeles Amare. Amare will be enrolled in the Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS), Africa Specialization program at U-M. Originally from Ethiopia, Amare is a lecturer of botanical science at the College of Science, Bahir Dar University. With over 50,000 students enrolled, Bahir Dar University is one of the leading public universities in Ethiopia. Amare's research interests include urban agriculture, food security, medicinal plants, tree structure and ecosystems, and environmental science. She is particularly interested in emerging technologies of urban agriculture and their potential to ensure food security in Sub-Saharan Africa, including her own country of Ethiopia.

Amare's journey began when her late father, who was in the military, encouraged her to perform well in school. Her mother never attended school, and her father was only a high school graduate; her sisters and brothers, likewise, did not continue further in their higher education. Amare became the first in her family to graduate from college in 2014, when she earned her BSc in Biology from Bahir Dar University. After graduating, she earned a spot as a graduate assistant through a university initiative to hire top-performing female academics. She has been working at the College of Science ever since, climbing the ladder from graduate assistant to assistant lecturer, and now lecturer. Along the way, she earned her MSc in botanical science in 2018. Her master's thesis, which was rated "excellent" by the board of examiners, was titled "Optimization of nutrient and local media for small hydroponic lettuce production in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia."

Amare is grateful to her father for inspiring her academic

journey. "Although I lost him when I was in college," she writes, "his encouraging words are always with me.

He is the motivation for my academic and professional journey." Amare is excited to pursue the next step in her graduate study at the University of Michigan. Congratulations, Lidiya!



Lidiya Shimeles Amare

ASC-Supported Research Teams Address Health Challenges in Uganda & Ghana

The African Studies Center, through its disciplinary initiatives, annually awards seed grants to support collaborative research between U-M researchers and colleagues from the continent. Here we give brief progress reports from three teams of researchers supported by ASC seed grants awarded for the 2022/23 academic year.

ASRI Collaborative Faculty Seed Grant

“Co-creation of an intervention to support obstetric providers experiencing workplace trauma in Ghana”

Research team: Emma Lawrence (OBGYN), Cheryl Moyer (OBGYN), and Heidi Burns (Psychiatry) from the University of Michigan, and Samuel Oppong (OBGYN), Titus Beyuo (OBGYN), and Ruth Owusu-Antwi (Psychiatry) from the University of Ghana.

With funding from ASC, this research team is seeking to understand how obstetric providers handle the emotional toll of their difficult jobs. The study focuses on Ghana, where many physicians and midwives struggle to deal with maternal and infant death among their patients. In a series of focus group discussions at two hospitals in Ghana, the research team listened to the experiences of obstetric providers and collected their views on supportive interventions. Overall, this study uncovered several barriers to mental health care access among obstetric providers. These barriers include stigma about seeking help for mental health issues, a perceived lack of confidentiality, and a profound sense of blame, both from the self and peers, surrounding maternal and perinatal losses. Nevertheless, the focus group participants expressed a strong need for an emotional support system. The research team is hopeful that this study will inform future interventions to help providers access mental health care in Ghana. Findings from this

study were presented at the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) meeting in 2023 and will be presented in the upcoming meeting of the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) 2023.

Cheryl Moyer conducting a focus group in Kumasi, Ghana



ASRI Collaborative Faculty Seed Grant

“Cultural adaptation of trauma and grief measures for Ugandan youth: Using ‘Best Practice’ test construction”

Research team: Janet Nakigudde (Psychiatry) and Noeline Nakasujja (Psychiatry) from the University of Makerere, Bruno Giordani (Psychiatry) from the University of Michigan, Julie Kaplow (Psychiatry) from Baylor College of Medicine, and Chris Lyne from the University of California.

In Uganda, children and adolescents who have suffered traumatic experiences often struggle to access much-needed mental health care. This research team used their ASC seed grant to study the design and implementation of trauma and grief measuring tools in Ugandan schools. Such tools are often used by pediatric and adolescent psychiatrists to diagnose and treat mental health problems like PTSD and complicated bereavement. To be used effectively in a place like peri-urban Kampala, however, these tools require substantial cultural adaptation. The research team has been working hard to adapt two trauma and grief tools to fit the needs of their young study participants. They have also collected data to establish the prevalence of trauma and grief in school-aged children and adolescents in peri-urban Kampala. After facing numerous challenges, including delays due to COVID-19 school closures, the research team has made significant progress and is now in the process of data cleaning and analysis.

Focus group on cultural adaptations of trauma and grief measures for Ugandan Youth



STEM-Africa Seed Grant

“Uganda-South Korea-Michigan partnership to develop complementary and integrative health interventions”

Research team: Cheong-Hee Chang (Microbiology and Immunology) from the University of Michigan; Patrick Ogwang (Pharmacology) from Mbarara University of Science and Technology; Eui-Cheol Shin, from the Graduate School of Medical Science and Engineering,

Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology; Youngmin Kang, from the Korea Institute of Oriental Medicine; Mi Houn Park, senior scientist, from Erom company, South Korea

Complementary medicines are treatments used alongside standard medical approaches, and they often involve natural products such as herbs, vitamins, and minerals. Artemisia, a medicinal plant used in traditional Chinese medicine, is utilized for treating febrile fevers, including malaria. U-M Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, Cheong-Hee Chang, and her research team are investigating how such complementary medicines can be optimized in Uganda, working together with Korean researchers and Ugandan health experts. Specifically, Chang’s team focuses on an Artemisia-based product called Artavol, commonly taken in Uganda in the form of tea, that has demonstrated effectiveness in preventing malaria and other illnesses like HIV/AIDS. Dr. Patrick Ogwang and his team at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) conducted research that showed the tea’s high efficacy in combating malaria. This highlights the need to understand how Artavol works and explore the potential of other indigenous plant products. To address this, Chang is collaborating with MUST and the researchers at the Korean Institute of Oriental Medicine (KIOM) in Korea. This project is funded by support from ASC, including an ASC-STEM Seed Grant, as well as support from U-M’s Global REACH program. Moving forward, the team plans to expand the scope of the project beyond MUST by collaborating with recent graduate Dr. Denis Okello, who studied in Korea and has secured a position at Kabale University in Uganda. The team is hopeful about this promising collaboration and plans to submit an NIH grant in the future.

KIOM investigators in Daejeon



ASC Supports New Collaborative Research through Seed Grants

The African Studies Center's disciplinary initiatives—African Humanities and Heritage Initiative (AHHI), African Social Research Initiative (ASRI), and STEM-Africa—annually award seed grants to support research conducted collaboratively between U-M researchers and colleagues from institutions on the continent. For the 2023/24 academic year, we supported eight projects across fields as diverse as psychiatry, art curation, climate change, health policy, and more. These projects span the continent from Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Mali. Congratulations to the research teams who secured support for their important work!

STEM-Africa

Establishing neuropsychiatric testing normative standards for older Zambians and those with limited education.

P.I.s: Melissa A. Elafros (U-M Medical School), Lisa E. Kalungwana (Psychology, University of Zambia)

Cobalt and the global transition to low-carbon technologies

P.I.s: Joshua Newell (U-M School of Environment and Sustainability), Pascal Mambwe Matamba (Geology, University of Lubumbashi)

ASRI Initiative

Anthrax and climate change in African Drylands

P.I.s: Bilal Butt (U-M School of Environment and Sustainability), Anthony Ngugi (Environment & Sustainability, Aga Khan University, Kenya)

Exploring the problem of low-quality antibiotics in lower and middle-income countries

P.I.s: Elisa Maffioli (U-M School of Public Health), Samba Sow (Center for Vaccine Development, Mali)

Bridging policy gaps to promote health and well-being among Kenyans

P.I.s: Ashley Lacombe-Duncan (U-M School of Social Work), Caroline Rucah (Western Kenya LBQT Feminist Forum)

African Heritage and Humanities Initiative (AHHI)

Zbigniew Dmochowski: Connecting transnational archives of Nigerian vernacular architecture

P.I.s: Łukasz Stanek (U-M Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning), Warebi Gabriel Brisibe (Architecture, Rivers State University, Nigeria)

Ghana 57: African art after independence

P.I.s: Laura De Becker (University of Michigan Museum of Art), Karî'kachä Seid'ou (Art Education, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana)

Rewinding the wheel: Ubuntu and the revitalization of indigenous knowledge systems

P.I.s: Charles Lwanga, (U-M School of Music Theatre and Dance), James Isabirye (Music & Music Education, Kyambogo University, Uganda)

Celebrating Ten Years of Collaboration with the University of Witwatersrand

by **Derek Peterson**

Ali Mazrui Collegiate Professor of History and African Studies

In 2013, the Andrew Mellon Foundation generously funded a collaborative project joining the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research with the U-M African Studies Center. It was a bygone age. In the United States, Barack Obama had just won the election for a second term in office. South Africans were living in the fading afterglow of the 2010 World Cup, with its lavish infrastructure spending, boom-generated electricity shortages, and the optimism of Africa Rising. On both continents, it seemed as though the humanistic study of

Africa was, at last, finding a central place in the curriculum and in public debate. In the proposal—which we titled “Joining Theory and Empiricism in the Remaking of the African Humanities”—we focused on the different ways in which South African and American institutions conceived of scholarly work: Americans were too given to abstract theorizing, while South Africans generally did empirical research. Our project aimed to challenge the conventions that constrained scholarship within our different contexts.

09 Mellon Conference, Krugersdorp, South Africa





Mellon Conference, Krugersdorp, South Africa

In the years since 2013, we have together organized more than a dozen conferences and workshops. Dozens of articles and book chapters arising out of the collaboration have found their way to print; and six special issues containing essays presented at UM-Wits conferences have been published (with several more special issues currently under review). The project has been a great success in drawing Africa-based scholars into dialogue with colleagues based in North America.

And yet, the ground has shifted very significantly since 2013. The past ten years have been characterized by a sustained and generalized atmosphere of crisis. In the United States, the 2016 election of Donald Trump has made it hard to believe the placidly liberal principles that guided the Obama presidency. In both South Africa and the United States, injustice, income inequality, and structural racism have become matters of public concern, and within the field of African studies, the obligation to “decolonize” institutions and knowledge systems is pressing.

Where does this leave the study of the African humanities? How—in the years since 2012—has the changing architecture of public life shaped scholarly work? In May 2023, we brought together a group of thirty scholars—mostly based in southern Africa—to present work and reflect on the lessons of the past decade. It was the final workshop in our ten-year collaboration. Very few of the participants had been present ten years ago when we launched our work together. A number of the participants had come into the academy during the past decade.

The conference opened with an exceptionally interesting panel comparing the American reckoning with racist monuments with South Africa’s ongoing efforts to renovate the architecture of apartheid. The panel featured experts including Paul Farber, Monument Lab director (now based at the U-M Museum of Art); Bongani Ndlovu, director of the Iziko Museums in South Africa; and Comfort Mtoha, U-M History Ph.D. student. The panel showed how South African and American institutions must reckon with broadly converging questions as they respond to contemporary demands for racial justice. Another fascinating panel about the long history of newspapers featured younger scholars whose work was grounded in a thorough facility with African languages. This is one of the consequences of the past ten years of political transformation: Black scholars are increasingly taking up permanent positions and opening up new questions about African intellectual history. There was a lively panel about archives and digitization, in which librarians and curators reflected on the promises and dangers of the widespread push to digitize endangered archives. There were also compelling panels about topics such as urbanism and architecture, music, and African capitalism.

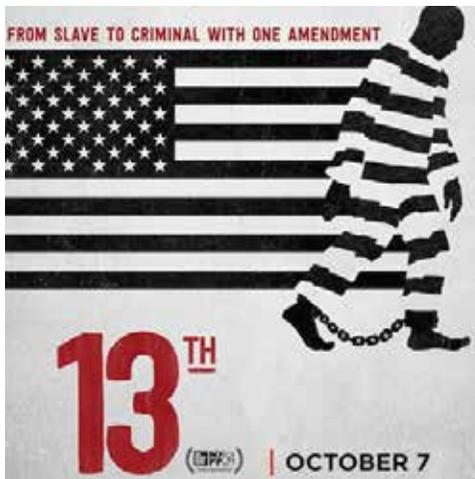
The conference was full of new voices, new ideas, and new and pressing questions. It was an altogether fitting coda for a collaboration that has energized and enlivened many of us here at U-M and at Wits. All of us involved in the work of the past ten years are very much in the Mellon Foundation’s debt. Their long-term funding has greatly enriched the academic culture at both of our institutions.

2022/23: A Year of Many Activites!

Annually, the African Studies Center (ASC) collaborates with partners from across U-M to support Africa-focused events on campus. The 2022/23 academic year was no exception, and we celebrated Africa with a plethora of workshops, films, and invited speakers from all over the world.

ASC Film Screening & Discussion *13th* (2016, Documentary)

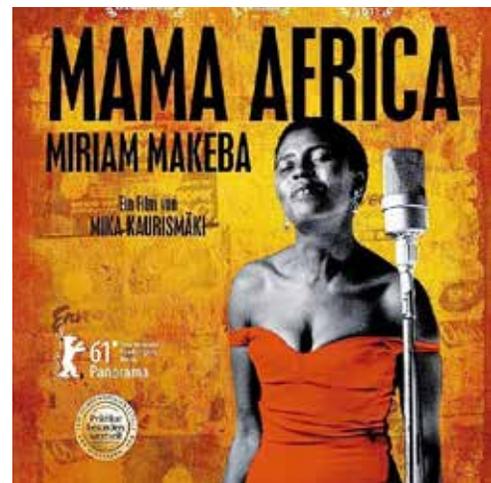
The past year saw the start of a new tradition at ASC with the screening and discussion of films related to Africa. We kicked off the series in February with a thought-provoking documentary exploring the history of racial inequality in the United States, with a focus on how the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African Americans. The screening was followed by a discussion with panelists Matthew Countryman (professor and chair, DAAS), Irene Routté (PhD student, School of Social Work), and Omolade Adunbi (ASC director and DAAS professor).



ASC Film Screening & Discussion *Mama Africa: the Story of Zenzile Miriam Makeba* (2011, Documentary)

"Mama Africa: the Story of Zenzile Miriam Makeba" was the second film in this series, and was shown in celebration of Women's History Month in March. This film explores the life of Zenzile Miriam Makeba, a South African singer and Anti-Apartheid activist, with a look at

her life, career, and activism through the lens of archival footage. The screening was followed by a discussion with panelists Raevin Jimenez (Professor, History) and Tshepiso Scott (UMAPS scholar, Winter 2023)



STS Speaker Series

Hosted by Science, Technology and Society

Throughout the academic year, ASC collaborated with the Science, Technology, and Society (STS) program to support talks with an Africa focus in the STS speaker series. This year, we supported two speakers. First, in October, Dr. Adia Benton, Professor of Anthropology and African Studies at Northwestern University gave a talk about the concept of "pandemic potential." This phrase, describing the likelihood of certain pathogens causing widespread disease outbreaks, is used by insurers and health organizations like the WHO to assess and model risk. In the context of the ebola crisis in West Africa, Dr. Benton discussed how "pandemic potential" models presume and produce categories of personhood, race, and geography. Then later in March, Dr. Veronica Jacome (Assistant Professor of Energy Geography at Temple University) gave a talk about electrification efforts in

Sub-Saharan Africa. Comparing historical analysis of electrification efforts in the US, she refutes the dominant narrative that often characterizes African users as “delinquents,” “thieves,” or “nonpayers.”

Halaloween

A Muslim Horror Film Festival, hosted by the Global Islamic Studies Center

What scares Muslim audiences? Are horror movies halal? This year’s 2022 Halaloween film festival screened horror films from across the globe that were made by, for, or about Muslims. The festival was offered in a hybrid format, offering free online screenings and an in-person showing at the State Theater on October 28th. The lineup included *Roh* (2019) from Malaysia, *Beddua: The Curse* (2018) from Turkey, *Satan’s Slaves* (2017) from Indonesia, and *Saloum* (2021) from Senegal. The film series was co-sponsored by ASC, together with the Global Islamic Studies Center, the Middle Eastern Studies Department, the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum, the Department of Communication and Media, The Department of Film, Television, and Media, American Culture, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the Center for South Asian Studies, Department of Afroamerican and African Arab and Muslim American Studies, Asian Languages and Cultures, the Center for Arab American Studies at UM-Dearborn, and Shudder.

CMENAS Fall Colloquium

Higher Ed between Authoritarianism and Neoliberalism, hosted by the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies

ASC and the Center for Middle East and North African Studies (CMENAS) cosponsored a colloquium featuring talks by scholars from around the world, with several talks focusing on Africa. Muez Ali (University College London) and Laura Mann (London School of Economics and Political Science) gave a joint talk about the long-term consequences of the commercialization and politicization of higher education in Sudan. Eric Burton (University of Innsbruck) presented research about African students

seeking higher education opportunities in Europe during the Cold War era of 1957-65.

Global Crossroads Lecture

Depression literacy in an isiZulu-speaking population in South Africa, Hosted by the School of Public Health

In December, ASC collaborated with the U-M School of Public Health (SPH) to sponsor a talk in SPH’s Global Crossroads Lecture Series. In this talk, UMAPS scholar Thembelihle Luthuli (University of KwaZulu-Natal) presented research investigating mental health awareness among isiZulu speakers in South Africa. Thembelihle pointed out that, compared to other racial groups, Black South Africans report a higher prevalence of depression. In her talk, she also explored the reasons behind this discrepancy.

WCED Lecture

Autocratic Ethno-federalism, Regime Change, and Ethiopia’s Tigray War, hosted by the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies

In February, ASC co-sponsored a Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies (WCED) lecture by Adam Fefer (visiting associate at WCED). In his lecture, Fefer presented research analyzing three twenty-first century regime changes in Ethiopia in order to assess the consequences of Ethiopia’s recent autocratization on the Tigray War.

DAAS Africa Workshop

Hosted by Department of Afroamerican and African Studies

For over a decade, the ASC has co-sponsored the Africa Workshop Series together with the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS). This year’s workshop was coordinated by DAAS faculty members Anne Pitcher, Derek Peterson, and Amal Fadlalla. Speakers were invited from all over the world—both virtually and in person—to share their research about Africa and the African diaspora with the University of Michigan community. In September, Associate Professor George M.

Bob-Milliar of the Department of History and Political Studies at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) spoke about Ghanaian electoral politics over the past thirty years. In October, Ellis Adjei Adams, Assistant Professor of Geography and Environmental Policy at the University of Notre Dame, presented research about household water insecurity and notions of masculinity within impoverished African communities. In November, Patience Mususa of The Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden, shared her paper outlining the emergence of Africa's Copperbelt agenda for its critical minerals within the context of a global green transition and shifting geopolitics. In December, Andrea Cassatella, a Senior Research Fellow in the Makerere Institute of Social Research at Makerere University, presented a critical-theoretical analysis of Franz Fanon's psychiatric writings in the context of African decolonization. In February, Abimbola A. Adelakun, Assistant Professor in the Department of African/African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, kicked off the new year with a presentation on the new prosperity gospel in Nigeria. In March, Evan Lieberman, Total Professor of Political Science and Contemporary Africa at MIT, spoke about democracy and development in post-apartheid South Africa. Finally, Fiori Berhane, Assistant Professor of Anthropology University of Southern California, finished off the year with the presentation of her new book project, *Prisoners of Our Dreams*, examining the generational politics of Eritrean refugees in Italy.

DHRC Panel Discussion

The 2023 Elections and the Future of Human Rights and Democracy in Nigeria, hosted by the Donia Human Rights Center

In November, ASC Director and Professor of Anthropology and Afroamerican and African Studies, Omolade Adunbi, moderated a panel analyzing Nigeria's contemporary political situation. In the months leading up to Nigeria's February 2023 election, questions loomed concerning past human rights violations and the erosion of democratic institutions, casting doubt over the fairness of an electoral process in a nation deeply divided along ethnic and

religious lines. The panel featured three guest experts. The first, Idayat Hassan, is Executive Director of the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) in Abuja, Nigeria. As a lawyer and a scholar, her expertise in the civil and democratic space in West Africa has been widely recognized. Her interests span democracy, peace and security, transitional justice, and information and communications technology for development in West Africa. She appears regularly in the international news media as an expert on the region. Next among the panelists was Ebenezer Obadare, Douglas Dillon Senior Fellow for Africa Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC. Dr. Obadare is a Sociologist and Public Policy analyst focusing on issues of civil society and the state, as well as religion and politics in Africa. He is the editor of the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, published by Cambridge University Press. Finally, the panel featured Anne Pitcher, University of Michigan Professor of Afroamerican and African Studies, and Political Science. Her current research examines election-related violence, state capture, and distributive politics in developing countries, especially those in Africa. She has conducted fieldwork, archival, and survey research in many African countries, and has authored four books and dozens of articles in scholarly journals.

Journeys in Global Health Equity Seminar Series

Hosted by the Center for Global Health Equity

During 2022-23, ASC co-sponsored several talks in the Global Health Equity Seminar Series hosted by U-M's Center for Global Health Equity. These talks all included a focus on Africa or the African diaspora, and included: Dr. Richard Adanu of the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons, who spoke in January about maternal health in Ghana; and Dr. Amina Abubakar, Professor of Psychology and director of the Institute for Human Development at Aga Khan University in Nairobi, who spoke in March about neurocognition and mental health in Kenya.

Two Talks on the Rwandan Genocide

by *Jean-Damascène Gasanabo*

Hosted by the *School of Information*



Dr. Jean-Damascène Gasanabo

In March, ASC co-sponsored with the U-M School of Information focusing a series of two talks on the Rwandan genocide by Jean-Damascène Gasanabo, former Director General of the Research and Documentation Center on Genocide at the Rwanda National Commission for the Fight against Genocide. In the first talk, Gasanabo analyzed the ideology and rhetoric prevalent in Rwanda during the period of 1959-1994. Through an analysis of archival and published literature at the local and international levels, he demonstrated the danger of denial and the efforts by some Rwandans, even today, to expunge the genocide from historical records. In his second talk, he examined the role of Traditional Jurisdictions Courts in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. The courts, called Gacaca, helped rebuild Rwanda's judicial system after its utter destruction. Gasanabo has been working to digitize 45 million pages of Gacaca files, creating a vast and powerful new digital archive.

The African Muslim Film Festival

Hosted by the *Global Islamic Studies Center*

ASC was proud to be a co-sponsor of the African Muslim Film Festival, hosted by U-M's Global Islamic Studies Center. This festival was the first of its kind to screen films from all across Africa that were made by, for, or about Muslims. Throughout the month of March, free online film screenings were offered every week. The lineup this year included *You Will Die at Twenty* (2019) from Sudan, *Abouna* (2002) from Chad, *Mawlana* (2016) from Egypt, and *Barakat* (2020) from South Africa.

Advancing Health Equity in East Africa

Perspectives from Rwanda

Hosted by the *Center for Global Health Equity*



Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana

In April, distinguished guest Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, Rwanda's Minister of Health since November 2022, visited the University of Michigan to speak to a community audience about health equity. His talk focused on Rwanda's current efforts to strengthen its healthcare system, including significant expansions of the health workforce and international partnerships for education, advanced training, and health innovation. This event was moderated by ASC director Omolade Adunbi and Joseph Kolas, director of the Center for Global Health Equity.

The Buahit Serit Rock Art and other Archaeological Sites along the Blue Nile Valley of Ethiopia

Hosted by the *U-M Museum of Anthropological Archaeology*

In April, Winter 2023 UMAPS scholar Tesfaye Wondyifraw Tsegaye (Debre Markos University) presented research in the U-M Museum of Anthropological Archaeology talk series. His talk focused on previously unknown rock art along the Blue Nile, on the walls of the Buahit Serit Gorge in Northwestern Ethiopia. Although Ethiopia has the largest number of rock art sites in the Horn of Africa, Buahit Serit is the first documented rock art site in Northwestern Ethiopia. The rock paintings display hunting, herding, and geometric representations. Based on a comparison of the motifs and painting style, the site has been dated relative to the late Holocene (1000 BCE–1000 CE). Further interpretation introduces the idea that some geometric designs may represent stylized headdresses, suggesting cultural continuity with living pastoralists.

UMAPS 2022-23: Another Successful Year for Our Fellows!

Since 2009, the UMAPS program has hosted early career African scholars from across the continent. During their stay on our campus, scholars are paired with a faculty collaborator, and have full access to U-M resources to further their work on a research project, an academic degree, publications, or other goals. The program supports the development of the next generation of African scholars by integrating them into international academic networks, and promotes U-M's international commitment to research and teaching collaborations across diverse disciplines, from engineering to literature to economics.

The 2022-2023 academic year was full of fun activities, community building, and intellectual exchange for the UMAPS fellows.



An indoor soccer game keeps everyone warm in chilly March.

The Winter 2023 cohort enjoys an afternoon of bowling.



Fellows get to know each other and their faculty hosts at the Fall Welcome Reception.





Winter 23 Fellows chat with their faculty hosts over breakfast.



Winter 23 Fellows tour the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.



Playing games on a sunny fall afternoon.



Fall 22 Fellows go ice skating at U-M's Yost Ice Arena.

UMAPS Research Colloquium Series

During their time on campus, UMAPS fellows have the opportunity to present their research to the campus community as part of the annual UMAPS colloquium series. In the 2022/23 academic year, this series included 23 presentations spread out over the year.

Fall '22 UMAPS Colloquium Presentations

OCT 12

Science Policy, Black Feminist Thought and Maternal Health in Africa

- Joseph M. Sieka (Liberia), "Addressing the Second and Third Delays: Using a WhatsApp-based Referral & Obstetrics Triage System in Liberia"
- Justine Geramo Nzweundji (Cameroon), "Mapping Study of STEM Undergraduate Education in Cameroon"
- Ann L. Moagi (South Africa), "Investigating Intersecting Challenges and Sexual Exploitation of Migrant Domestic Workers from Lesotho Into South Africa Households"

NOV 1

Energy Practices, Population Dynamics, and Cultures of Resistance in Africa

- Samuel Boahen (Ghana), "What If Disaster Strikes the Water-energy-food Nexus System?"
- Thembelihle Luthuli (South Africa), "Factors Associated with Depression in South Africa"
- Rodwell Makombe (South Africa), "Change Without Change: The Specter of Mugabeism in Kapfupi and Marabha's Comic Videos of the Post-Mugabe Era"

NOV 7

Ritual Dance, Artificial Intelligence, and Multimedia Subjectivities in Africa

- Narh Hargoe (Ghana), "Klama Religious Dance in Ghana: Encountering Dangme Culture"
- Nancy Judith Awori (Kenya), "Sexual Minorities Representation in Films"
- Ugochi Adaku Okengwu (Nigeria), "Sentiment Analysis on Climate Change Using Deep Learning"

NOV 21

Thermodynamics, Locality, and Elite Politics in Africa

- Uwitonze Pierre Celestin (Rwanda), "Alternative Ideas of African Students in Thermodynamics Concepts"
- Anne Jepkemboi (Uganda), "The Political Economy of Sugar Production and Development: Uganda 1930-2018"
- Celso Monjane (Mozambique), "The Political Economy of Linkages in Mozambique's Commodity Sector"

Winter '23 UMAPS Colloquium Presentations

MAR 30

Inverse Heat Conduction, Cancer, Cultural Repository and Neonatal Health in Africa

- Marissa Balmith (South Africa), "The role of the Estrogen Receptor in Breast Cancer Dormancy"
- Tesfaye Wondyifraw (Ethiopia), "The Newly Discovered Pre-historic Rock Art Paintings along the Valley of the Blue Nile"
- James Orwa (Kenya), "Comparison of Machine Learning and Logistic Regression as Predictive Models for Adverse Maternal Outcomes of Deliveries: A Hospital-based Retrospective Study"
- Jean Pierre Ngendahayo (Rwanda), "Estimation of Surface Temperatures"

APR 6

Theater, Race-Linked Genomics and Consumer Protection in Africa

- Jude Okoye (Nigeria), “Signatures of High Mortality Risk and Life-choice Practices among Patients Diagnosed with Colorectal Cancer in Nigeria”
- Tshepiso Scott (South Africa), “Small Enterprises in South Africa: Is their Protection as Consumers Warranted?”
- Eyerusalem Kassahun (Ethiopia), “Decolonizing the National Theater of Ethiopia”

APR 13

Cyber Security, Infrastructures of Green Governance and Child Health in Africa

- Grace Njoki Maina (Kenya), “Re-thinking Complementarity in Leadership; The Place and Role of Women in Indigenous Systems of Governance”
- Daniel Ramotsoela (South Africa), “Verifiable Computation for Data-Oblivious Sequestered Encryption Applications”
- Meseret Azene (Ethiopia), “Epidemiology of Diarrhea among Children with Diarrhea Aged 6-59 Months Attending Health Centers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia”
- Bosen Yirga (Ethiopia), “The Governance of Green Infrastructure Planning and Management in Hawassa, Ethiopia”

Dancing from Legon to Ann Arbor

Reflections from a UMAPS Fellow: Aristedes Narh Hargoe

Narh Hargoe was a member of the Fall 2022 cohort of UMAPS scholars. He is a lecturer in the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon, and also doubles as the artistic director of the Ghana Dance Ensemble in the Institute of African Studies at the same university. Narh holds a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from the University of Cape Coast, and a Master of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Ghana. In this essay, Narh reflects on his experiences as a UMAPS scholar.

I was overwhelmed with excitement when I was accepted as a UMAPS Fellow in 2022. My excitement grew in intensity when I met my fellow cohort members from different parts of Africa, all with different research areas of expertise. As scholars, debates on common issues affecting the continent were the order of the day as we tried our very best to identify solutions. We spent hours debating, brainstorming, and drawing parallels across our home countries and individual experiences.

As a scholar of dance, I came into the fellowship aiming to research the field of dance ethnography. My research



Narh Hargoe (UMAPS Scholar) conducting a dance workshop in a SW Michigan high school

topic, “Klama Religious Performance: A Dance of Encounter and Transformation,” examines the Klama religious dance of the Dangme people of Prampram, Ghana. My experience with dance has led me to appreciate its unique power to break inhibitions and bring people of diverse backgrounds and statuses together into a state of ‘communitas,’ or equilibrium, where all experience dance for its own sake.

Soon after arriving in Michigan, I proposed a Sunday late afternoon dance class to my UMAPS cohort members, who immediately loved the idea. The purpose of the class was to get my fellow cohort members to take their minds off their research and literally ‘let their hair loose’ while winding down, relaxing, learning a new dance skill, and drawing inspiration from colleagues to refocus on their work. The class session became one activity cohort members always looked forward to throughout the week. We were joined by Ellen Poteet, a faculty member from the Department of History at U-M, who became a constant member throughout the course of the semester. The class was also opened to everyone living in the Munger Graduate Residences, and a few graduate students joined us to dance from time to time.

I chose to teach Kizomba, an Angolan dance form that emerged as a fusion of African, Caribbean, and European-influenced ballroom dance. Kizomba describes both a genre of music and a dance style. It is a social dance form, and the name is derived from a term in the Angolan Kimbundu language that means “party”.

The Angolan expression “Kizombadas” in the 50’s referred to a big party.

Kizomba evolved from the traditional Angolan dance, called Semba, in the 1950s. In the 1980s, French Caribbean-influenced music, Zouk, was in vogue. A band called Kassav, from the French Caribbean Island of Guadeloupe, came to perform Zouk music in Angola. Angolans loved it and adapted their traditional Semba movements to the tempo and flavor of the Zouk music. In the 1990s, the Kizomba dance evolved fully into what we see today, with elements of a Western ballroom-style couple dancing. Some also speculate that Cuban presence in Angola during the civil war (1975-2002) might have influenced Kizomba with the flavors of Latin dance, including salsa, merengue, and tango.

UMAPS cohort members remained committed to the dance class. They always came to the class with fruits and snacks as well as intriguing games that allowed us to take our minds off our research activities and refocus our energies for the new week ahead.

Beyond sharing my experience with the other UMAPS fellows, my faculty hosts, Christian Matijas-Mecca and Robin Wilson of the U-M dance department, also gave me the opportunity to give guest lectures. I gave two presentations to U-M audiences: one about Kizomba social dance with the title “Kizomba Dance: A Gift from Angola to the World,” and the other titled “Klama Religious Dance in Ghana: Encountering Dangme Culture.” As part of the U-M dance department’s 1st-anniversary celebration of their new dance building, I also gave a master class on the topic of Afro-popular dance styles.

Beyond the University of Michigan, I also held Ghanaian dance workshops for high school students at Skyline High School and at the 16th Oakland County Dance Festival at Farmington High School. Finally, I gave a performance at the Carr Center, Detroit’s leading organization devoted to African and African American cultural arts traditions. I am so glad to have been able to share my dance experience with so many people in Michigan, thanks to the support of the African Studies Center (ASC) and the UMAPS program. Thank you, Michigan, and Go Blue!!!



Introducing the New 2023-2024 UMAPS Fellows!

The African Studies Center is excited to welcome 20 new UMAPS fellows in the 2023/24 academic year. These fellows will join over 220 other African scholars who have participated in the UMAPS program over the past 15 years. We're looking forward to the many contributions these scholars will make to the U-M community during their residency on our campus.

Fall 2023 Cohort



Frances Adiukwu is a psychiatrist and lecturer in the Department of Mental Health at the University of Port Harcourt and an honorary consultant psychiatrist at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital in Rivers State, Nigeria. She is also a fellow of the West African College of Physicians. She is an early career researcher and was the recipient of the 'Young Investigator Award' of the World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry in 2021 and the Education, Science, Publications and Research Initiative (ESPRI) seed fund of the World Psychiatry Association (WPA) for her research in bipolar disorder. While at the University of Michigan, Adiukwu will work with U-M psychiatry professor, Dr. Melvin McGinnis (Prechter Bipolar Research Program, Michigan Medicine) on a research project titled: "Genetic variations in bipolar disorder using genome-wide approach—a bipolar disorder longitudinal study in Nigeria."



Sola Eboda Edagbami is a lecturer at the University of Lagos. He holds a Ph.D. and MSc in computer science from the University of Lagos, and a BSc in electronic and electrical engineering from Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Recently, he has been collaborating with interdisciplinary researchers to design and develop a low-cost, rapidly deployable synchronous two-motor AMBU ventilator for patients experiencing respiratory distress. His research interests include signal processing, image segmentation, optimization, computation, and artificial intelligence. At U-M, Edagbami will investigate the performance of lateral growth rooted tree optimization algorithms as an approach to multilevel image segmentation problems. He will work with Kayvan Najarian, professor in the electrical engineering and computer science department in the College of Engineering.



Amaka Theresa Oriaku Emordi is a senior lecturer at Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile Ife, Osun state, Nigeria. She holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. She is a fellow of the Brown International Advanced Research Institute (BIARI) in Rhode Island, U.S.A., and a member of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), Conflict Research West Africa (CORN), and the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA). Emordi's research is focused on streetism, gender and development studies, local government studies, peace and conflict studies, and peace-building. Her U-M faculty host will be Professor Adam Ashforth in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, College of Literature, Science, & the Arts.



Theoneste Hagenimana is an assistant lecturer in Food Science and Technology at the University of Rwanda. He holds an engineering degree (BSc) in quality control and analysis from the University of Saïda, Algeria, and a specialized master's degree in quality hygiene safety and environment (QHSE) from the International Institute for Environmental and Water Engineering, Burkina Faso. Currently, he is pursuing a Ph.D. in food science at Egerton University, Kenya. His research interests are in food safety and risk analysis of food contaminants along food value chains. At the University of Michigan, he will be focusing on the safety and risk assessment of acrylamide in French fries with the research project entitled "Evaluation of the effect of potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) peel extracts on the acrylamide formation and risk reduction in French fries in Rwanda." He will be hosted by Professor Eric Martens, Department of Microbiology and Immunology in the Medical School.



Mundia Kabinga is a senior lecturer in Infrastructure Finance and Strategy at the Graduate School of Business of the University of Cape Town, South Africa. He holds a Ph.D. in business administration from the University of Cape Town, specializing in institutional economics and strategic management. His academic research focuses on sustainable economic, energy, and technology transitions in resource-constrained environments. He is particularly interested in understanding and modeling these transitions' institutional, financial, organizational, business, and interactive dimensions. While at the University of Michigan, Kabinga will be working with Professor Panos Papalambrosin in the College of Engineering to conduct collaborative research on the creation of technical systems and financial mathematical optimization models to aid in the growth and improvement of South Africa's decarbonized and decentralized electricity systems and markets. He will also investigate scaling technology and social entrepreneurship solutions in bottom-of-the-pyramid markets with Professor Ted London of the Ross School of Business.



Joseph Udimal Kachim is a lecturer at the Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. He is also a fellow of the Africa Humanities Program (AHP). His research interest centers around mobility, belonging, and land rights in northern Ghana. During his time at U-M, he will work on a project titled "'Staying on the Margins': Konkomba Mobility and Belonging in Northern Ghana" with his U-M faculty host, Professor Carina Ray of the Department of History, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts



Babalwa Magoqwana is a senior lecturer in the sociology and anthropology Department in Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, and the founding director of the Centre for Women and Gender Studies at the same institution. She holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Rhodes University. Her research on maternal legacies of knowledge is supported by the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences. She has recently (2022) received both the Faculty of Humanities and Nelson Mandela University's prestigious Researcher of the Year awards. Her research team at the Centre for Women and Gender Studies was awarded a Team Award for Social Justice Project by the Human Sciences Research Council-Universities South Africa (HSRC-USAF) 2023 Humanities and Social Sciences Awards. Her U-M faculty host will be Professor Fatma Gocek in the Department of Sociology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Fatumah Mirembe is an assistant lecturer in the Department of History, Archaeology and Heritage Studies at Makerere University, Uganda. She holds an MA in archaeology from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and is pursuing her Ph.D. at Makerere University. At the University of Michigan, she will work with Professor Brian Stewart of the Department of Anthropology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and Geoff Emberling (Kelsey Museum of Archaeology) on a project titled, “Iron Production Technologies: An Archaeo Metallurgical Investigation of Butiru, Eastern Uganda.”



Heitor Henriques Guedes Mutchamua is a lecturer at the Instituto Superior Politécnico de Gaza, Mozambique. He received his BSc in agro processing (2014) and MSc in food engineering (2019), from Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique and the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. He is currently enrolled in a Ph.D. program in engineering sciences at the National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology in India. His research interests focus mainly on biodegradable materials used in food packaging. While at U-M, he will work with Professor Theo Goodson (Department of Chemistry, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, and Macromolecular Science and Engineering Program, College of Engineering) on a project titled, “Interfacial properties of poly (butylene succinate) biodegradable composite: an approach for understanding the impact of natural fibers on mechanical properties of polymer composites.”

Winter 2023 Cohort



Chinasa Abonyi is a lecturer in the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. She holds a Ph.D. in gender studies and eco-poetics from the same institution. Abonyi specializes in eco-poetics and ecofeminist theorization of the environment, and her passion for decoloniality of knowledge and indigenous consciousness is foregrounded in her multidisciplinary approaches to the study of African oral narratives and modern literature. She is also a poet whose first poem, “Moribund,” appeared in *African Literature Today*. She is a fellow of the Ife Institute of Advanced Studies, a member of the African Literature Association, and a member of the Association of the Study of Literature and Environment. She is presently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Ghana, Accra. At U-M, she will work with Professor Gaurav Desai in the Department of English Language and Literature, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Benyin Akande is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Calabar in Nigeria. She has an MA degree in public administration from the University of Uyo, Nigeria, where she also just completed her Ph.D. Her research interests are in public policy, gender, and conflict studies. Her work has earned her a number of research fellowships, including a 2019 Next Gen Fellowship of the Social Science Research Council, and a 2023-2024 African Fellow of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. At U-M, she will be working with Professor Joyojeet Pal from the School of Information to conduct research on theoretical frameworks and contemporary literature about women in secessionist movements through the lens of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in South-East Nigeria.



Sisty Basil holds an MSc in environmental management (energy) from Pan African University's Institute of Life and Earth Sciences, in Tanzania. He also holds a BA in environmental studies, and certificates in energy technology and policy and energy subsidy reform. He has over twelve years of experience working with different environmental and renewable energy institutions and companies. Currently, he provides environmental and renewable energy services to Village Industrial Power (VIP, a US-based company), Camco Clean Energy, REP International Limited, EVN Consult and STEPER Consulting Company. At U-M, Basil will work with Professor Kelly Askew in the Department of Anthropology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Makai Daniel is a lecturer at the Federal University Wukari. He is currently a Ph.D. student of history at the University of Nigeria Nsukka and holds an MA in African history from the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. He is a member of the Historical Society of Nigeria (HSN), a research fellow, and a 2015 IFRA-Nigeria research grant awardee. Daniel's research focus is on Pentecostalism and the Contest for Public Space in Northern Nigeria from 1970 – 2020. At U-M, Daniel will work with Professor Adrian Deese in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Muthumuni Managa is a senior lecturer at the Institute for Nanotechnology and Water Sustainability (iNanoWS) at the University of South Africa (UNISA). She holds a Ph.D. from Rhodes University, South Africa. Her research interests include the synthesis of nanomaterials that could be applied in antimicrobial photodynamic inactivation (aPDI). At the University of Michigan, Managa will be working with Professor Theo Goodson (Department of Chemistry, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, and Macromolecular Science and Engineering Program, College of Engineering).



Tintswalo Victoria Nesengani is a lecturer of primary care nursing at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. She holds a Ph.D. in community nursing science from the University of Johannesburg. She obtained her diploma in nursing at Gazankulu Nursing College, her BA in nursing at the North-West University (NWU), her honor's and master's degree in nursing at the University of South Africa, and a diploma in primary health care at Ann Latsky Nursing College. Prior to her current position, she was a community platform coordinator at Nelson Mandela University and has a wealth of experience working as a primary health care nurse in public health clinics. At U-M, she will work with faculty host Professor Massy Mutumba in the School of Nursing.



Jean de Dieu Niyigena is an assistant lecturer in applied mathematics at the University of Rwanda. He holds an MA in applied mathematics, specializing in statistics, from the University of Rwanda. Additionally, he obtained a BA in mathematical sciences from the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) in Tanzania. Currently, he is pursuing a Ph.D. in mathematics (applied statistics) at the University of Rwanda. His research interests primarily lie in epidemiological mathematical modeling of infectious diseases and mathematical statistics. During his time at U-M, he will be working on a project titled "Mathematical Models of COVID-19 Dynamics using Machine Learning Techniques: Case of Rwanda" under the guidance of Professor Bhramar Mukherjee from the Department of Biostatistics, School of Public Health.



Allan Omondi is a lecturer in the School of Computing and Engineering Sciences (SCES) at Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya. He holds a Ph.D. from the same institution. His current research interest is in impact-driven applications of information and communication technologies for sustainable community development. He is a member of the Database Research Group and the group leader of the ICT4D Research Group, both at Strathmore University's School of Computing and Engineering Sciences. His other research interests include database theory, business intelligence, business processes, performance tuning, business continuity, high availability and disaster recovery, decision theory, economic history, epidemiology, and sustainable community development. At U-M, Omondi will work with Professor Panos Papalambros in the College of Engineering.



Latifat Olabimpe Sidiq is a lecturer at the Department of Plant and Environmental Biology at Kwara State University in Nigeria. She earned a BSc in botany (plant science and technology) from the University of Jos, and her MSc degree in pharmacognosy (phytochemistry) from the University of Ibadan, where she is currently pursuing her Ph.D. At U-M, she will work on a project titled "Isolation and Characterization of Alpha-amylase and Alpha-glucosidase Inhibitor Cyclotides from Nigerian Medicinal Plants as Drug Lead for Diabetes Management" with Professor Qiong Yang, Associate Professor of Biophysics, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, and Professor Magda Ivanova, Associate Professor of Biophysics, Michigan Medicine.



Nixon Wamamela is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. He holds an MA and a Ph.D. in philosophy, also from Makerere University. His research interests are in the areas of jurisprudence and political philosophy. At the University of Michigan, Wamamela will be hosted by Professor Mariah Zeisberg, Department of Political Science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, on a research project titled "Assessing Ethics in Judicial Electoral Petitions in Uganda."



Ayalnesh Zemene is a senior lecturer at St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She received her MSc in reproductive and maternal health from Addis Ababa University. Currently, she is pursuing her Ph.D. in reproductive health at Pan African University, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. While at U-M, she will work with Professor Sarah Compton (Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medical School) on a project entitled "Unintended Pregnancy in Ethiopia: Predictors and Adverse Consequences on Maternal and Child Healthcare Services Utilization."

DAAS and ASC welcome Omowunmi Dada, Global Artist-in-Residence, to Ann Arbor

This year, a collaboration between the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS) and African Studies Center (ASC) welcomes Omowunmi Dada to campus as the Global Artist-in-Residence. The Nigerian-born, award-winning Nollywood actress, presenter, and model has been gracing the screens and stages for nearly ten years. She is most well known for her roles as Folake in the popular M-Net television series *Jemeji* and Linda in the Netflix Original Film, *Òlòtūrè*. Dada was also in the film *Eleshin Oba*, an adaptation of Nobel Laureate Professor Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*. *Eleshin Oba* was nominated for a top award at the 2023 Toronto Film Festival, where Dada was invited as a special guest.

While Dada is a very well-established television and movie personality in Nigeria and Africa in particular, she has also become a global ambassador for the growing movie industry in her home country, Nigeria, with her appearance in many Box Office movies, Netflix, and Amazon Prime productions. Besides acting in movies and gracing the front pages of newspapers and magazines, she spends time volunteering for several good causes, such as serving as an Ambassador for Daivyan Children's Cancer Foundation and the Brian Wotari Foundation. These non-profits align with her values of supporting children living with cancer, engaging, and empowering the youth for a greater future.

Dada's inspiring connection with youth engagement aligns perfectly well with the Global Artist Residency program established through a Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education and administered in collaboration with DAAS's Artist-in-Residence program. While at Michigan, Dada will work with DAAS language instructors in developing audio-visual materials for teaching African languages as well as engaging with the

wider University of Michigan (U-M) campus community. In addition, she will engage with elementary, middle and high school students and teachers in SouthEast Michigan. While on campus, she will make presentations about Nollywood and African filmmaking at events organized in collaboration with the School of Music, Theatre and Dance, the Residential College, and the Department of Film, Television and Media. The world-acclaimed film *Eleshin Oba*, where she played a leading role, will be screened to U-M students and Southeast Michigan audiences. Omowunmi Dada obtained a Bachelor of Science (Bsc Hons) in Creative Arts from the University of Lagos. When not at a movie set, she enjoys singing and dancing.

Omowunmi Dada, Nigerian-born, award-winning Nollywood actress



African Perspectives Book Series Publishes New Titles in 2022/23

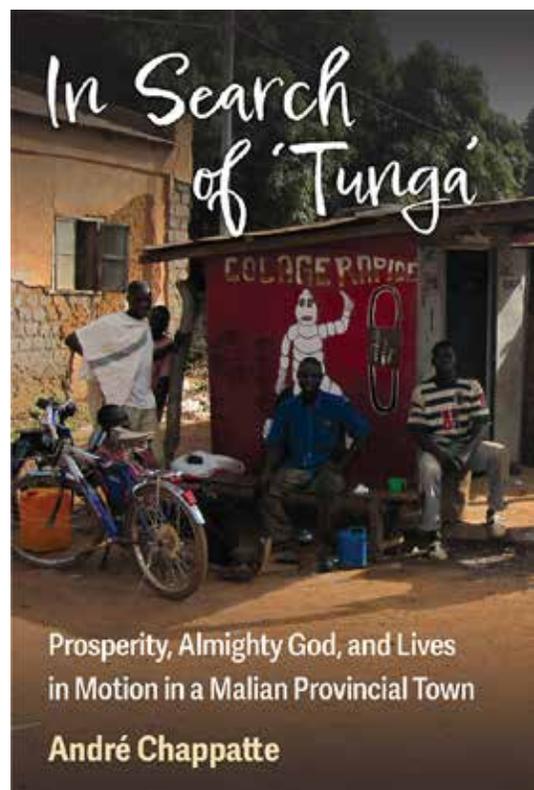
The University of Michigan Press's African Perspectives book series publishes the highest quality and most innovative research on Africa by senior and emerging scholars on the continent and beyond. This ASC-sponsored series continued its commitment this year to publishing multidisciplinary works that range in research scope, content, and context. Titles in this series cover a multitude of disciplinary methods and topics and seek to unsettle the norms of traditional Africanist scholarship. The series editors, Kelly Askew (University of Michigan), Laura Fair (Columbia University), and Pamila Gupta (University of the Free State, South Africa), especially seek manuscripts that provide "imaginative solutions to contemporary social, cultural, technological, and environmental problems."

New Titles in the Series

In Search of Tunga: Prosperity, Almighty God, and Lives in Motion in a Malian Provincial Town, by André Chappatte, focuses on the lives of young male "adventurers" in Bougouni, a provincial town in southwest Mali. Describing themselves as "simply Muslims" and "adventurers," these migrants aim to be both prosperous and good Muslims. Drawing upon seventeen months of fieldwork, author André Chappatte explores their sense of prosperity and piety as they embark on tunga (adventure), a customary search for money and more in a tradition that dates back to the colonial period. This book stresses the overlooked historical connections between the southern shores of the Sahara and the lands south of those shores. It demonstrates how the Malian savanna, this former buffer zone between ancient Mande kingdoms and thereafter remote areas of French Sudan, is increasingly becoming central in today's Sahel contexts of desiccation and insecurity.

Power/Knowledge/Land: Contested Ontologies of Land and Its Governance in Africa, by Laura A. German, profiles the consolidation of a global knowledge regime surrounding land and its governance within international development circles in the decade following this outcry, and the growing enrollment of previously antagonistic actors within it. Drawing theoretical insights on the inseparability of power and knowledge, German reveals

the dynamics of knowledge practices that have enabled the longstanding project of commodifying customaryland – and the more contemporary interests in acquiring and financializing it – to be advanced and legitimated by capturing the energies of socially progressive forces. By

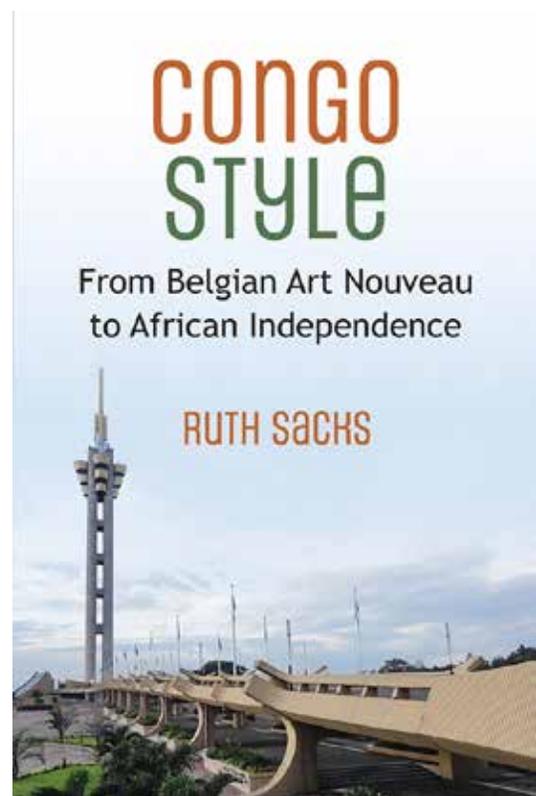


bringing theories of change from the emergent land governance orthodoxy into dialogue with the ethnographic evidence from across the African continent and beyond, concepts masquerading as universal and self-evident truths are provincialized, and their role in commodifying customary land and entrenching colonial futurities put on display.

The Infrastructures of Security: Technologies of Risk Management in Johannesburg, by Martin J. Murray, examines not only the turn toward technological solutions to managing the risk of crime through digital (and software-based) surveillance and automated information systems, but also the introduction of somewhat bizarre and fly-by-night experimental “answers” to perceived risk and danger. Digitalized surveillance is significant for two reasons: first, it enables monitoring to take place across wide “geographical distances with little time delay;” and second, it allows for the active sorting, identification, and “tracking of bodies, behaviors, and characteristics of subject populations on a continuous, real-time basis.” These new software-based surveillance technologies represent monitoring, tracking, and information gathering without walls, towers, or guards.

Forthcoming Titles

Congo Style: From Belgian Art Nouveau to African Independence, by Ruth Sacks, presents a postcolonial approach to discussing the visual culture of two notorious regimes: King Leopold II’s Congo Colony and the state sites of Mobutu Sese Seko’s totalitarian Zaire. In her study of visual culture, Sacks sets out to reinstate the compelling wonder of nationalist architecture from Kinshasa’s post-independence era, such as the Tower of the Exchange (1974), Gécomines Tower (1977), and the artworks and exhibitions that accompanied them. From the total artworks of Art Nouveau to the aggrandizing sites of post-independence Kinshasa, *Congo Style* investigates the experiential qualities of man-made environments intended to entertain, delight, seduce, and impress.

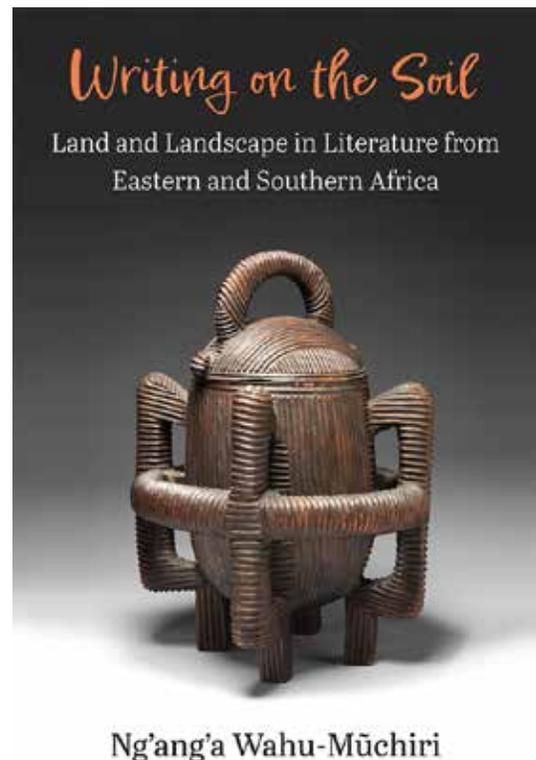
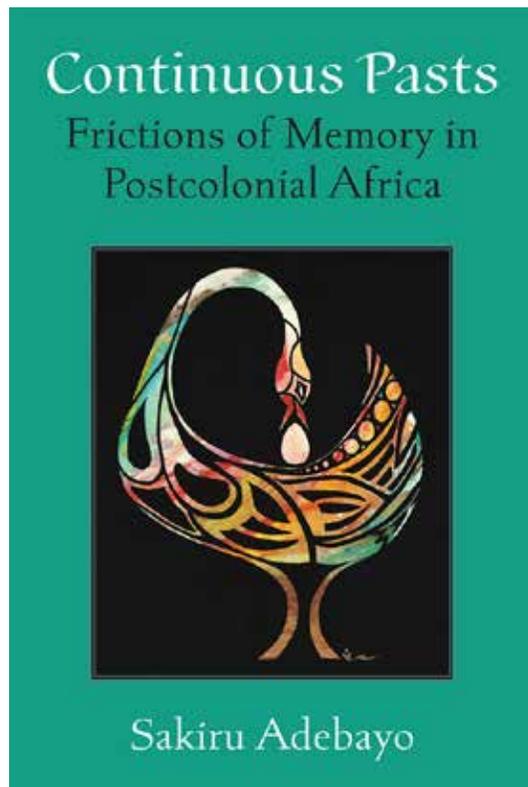


Lagos Never Spoils: Nollywood and Nigerian City Life, by Connor Ryan, traces how Nollywood arose from the social milieu of Lagos and, in turn, generates a repertoire of stories, images, styles, and sentiments with which audiences come to grips with city life. The slogan “Lagos shall not spoil,” found in print media, political campaigns, and common conversation, represents a shared expression of the optimism the city embodies. However, on city streets, the phrase also appears scrawled in irreverent variations—“Lagos cannot spoil more than this!”—that meet the frustrations of city life with irony. This book offers new approaches to the interpretation of screen texts produced in and about Lagos, a place that is today the most influential image of West African city life.

Continuous Pasts: Frictions of Memory in Postcolonial Africa, by Sakiru Adebayo, shows how post-conflict fictions of memory in Africa recalibrate discourses of futurity, solidarity, responsibility, justice, survival, and reconciliation. Adebayo argues that the post-conflict fiction of memory in Africa invites critical deliberations on the continuity of the past within the realm of positionality and the domain of subjectivity—that is to say, the past

is not merely present; instead, it survives, lives on, and is mediated through the subject positions of victims, perpetrators, as well as secondary and transgenerational witnesses. Each text analyzed in the book provides, in very interesting ways, an imaginative possibility and template for how post-independence African countries can ‘remember together’ using what the author describes as an African transnational memory framework.

Writing on the Soil: Land and Landscape in Literature from Eastern and Southern Africa, by Ng’ang’a Wahu-Mũchiri, argues that representations of land and landscape perform significant metaphorical labor in African literatures. This argument evolves across several geographical spaces, as the range of struggles over land has spawned a multiplicity of literary interventions. Each chapter’s analysis is grounded in a particular locale: western Kenya, colonial Tanganyika, post-independence Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Anam Ka’alakol (Lake Turkana), Kampala, and Kitgum in Northern Uganda. This book embodies a multi-layered argument in the sphere of African critical scholarship, while adding to the growing field of African land rights scholarship—an approach that foregrounds the close reading of Africa’s literary canon.



Congratulations to Our Newest MIRS Graduates!

The African Studies Center is proud to recognize the newest graduates in African Studies specialization of Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS) degree. Three new graduates join our growing list of alumni, and we wish them well as they embark on their next adventures!



Nahom Benyam

NAHOM BENYAM hails from San Leandro, California. Before attending the University of Michigan, he completed a BA in global studies with a minor in human rights from San Jose State University (cum laude). Nahom earned his second degree from the Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS) program with a specialization in African Studies.

Nahom treasures the opportunity to be surrounded by others who care deeply about the state of the world and, more specifically, Africa. Through academic lectures and intimate interactions with professors, the MIRS program has been instrumental in providing numerous opportunities for Nahom to explore his fascination with Africa. He was especially fond of the African Languages Day this year, in which all Swahili and Yoruba students came together to provide performances in their language of study.

Working under Professor Justine Davis, his research focuses on exploring the effects of political federalism on conflict outbreaks in Ethiopia. He argues that ethnic federalism has increased the prevalence of ethnic conflict outbreaks within the country, and future policy decisions curtailing this issue must therefore foster greater political participation from the local populace. During his time in MIRS, Nahom received a South African Initiatives Office (SAIO) Fellowship and a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship for Swahili. After graduation, Nahom will gain work experience in the public sector before pursuing his ultimate goal of becoming a lawyer.

In the future, Nahom intends to attend law school and work in international law, where he hopes to use human rights law to protect marginalized African communities.

As a U-M student from Tanzania, **ELIAH MADUKULI** reflects on the lessons he learned as a Masters in International and Regional Studies (MIRS) graduate: "I've noticed that Michigan has a perfect environment for learning and creativity and is eager to help its students academically with fantastic helpful resources, professors, and students. As a graduate, I held myself to a high standard and achieved many accomplishments academically due to them. I sincerely appreciate the African Study Center's financial support and for making my dream come true to study at the best university in the country."



Eliah Madukuli

Madukuli worked under Professor Kelly Askew to conduct research on Maasai women's groups in Tanzania. His thesis, titled "Sustainability of Indigenous Women's Economic, Leadership, and Empowerment Groups In Tanzania," analyzed the successes and challenges of Maasai women's entrepreneurship groups in Morogoro and Manyara. Through focus group discussions, interviews, and participant observation, Madukuli found that indigenous women's groups contribute positively to the improvement of households, leadership, and economic independence. He identifies several key recommendations to improve the sustainability of these and climate change-related decision-making.

Apart from academics, Madukuli also learned a lot about Michigan’s weather. He says: “Winter is, in fact, not a short season. It’s the entire semester.” He urges international students to bring a variety of warm winter clothes in preparation for the cold and to anticipate a lot of snow. Looking ahead, he plans to gain practical experience through the Optional Practical Training (OPT) option available to international student visa holders, before continuing on to future studies. Madukuli says that “being part of this community has been a wonderful time and a joyful experience.”

ERNESTA COLE graduated with a Masters in International and Regional Studies Program (MIRS) specializing in African Studies. While in the MIRS program, she received funding from the African Studies Center for her research on Sierra Leone. She was also selected to participate in two public presentations at U-M—the International



Ernesta Cole

Institute Graduate Student Lightning Talks, where she gave an introduction to her research on Indigenous languages to incoming MIRS students, and the 6th Annual Rackham King Talks, showcasing her research on the current African studies canon and linguistic standards in academia. Ernesta was also selected as the graduate student speaker for the 2023 International Institute Graduation Ceremony.

Ernesta is excited to continue her research in the Ph.D. program in the Department of African Cultural Studies at the University of Madison-Wisconsin this fall. She is also proud to have been the only Black woman in her cohort of the MIRS program.

ASC Director Omolade Adunbi with W23 MIRS Graduates. Credit: Peter Smith Photography.



Spotlight on African Students Association at Michigan

ASC continues its support for U-M student organizations in the academic year with the sponsorship of groups that bring students together through their shared interest in Africa. Currently, ASC sponsors three organizations: the African Students Association (ASA), the African Graduate Students Association (AGSA), and the African Business Club (ABC).

The African Students Association (ASA) aims to provide a welcoming environment for all U-M students to come together and learn about African cultures. Through biweekly meetings, members build community while promoting and learning about Africa by doing activities such as watching Nollywood movies or creating beaded jewelry. AGSA acts as a social, academic, and professional network for African graduate students from all graduate programs at the University of Michigan. Besides providing a space for cultural exchange and a forum for discussions of issues related to Africa, AGSA also facilitates connections between graduate students and professionals at U-M and in Africa and acts as a resource for undergraduate students who are interested in graduate school. ABC, meanwhile, serves as a community hub within the Ross School of Business and works to increase visibility, awareness, and understanding of Africa's multifaceted cultures, stories, and businesses.

This past April, ASA held its 24th Annual Culture Show, their biggest event of the year. The theme was "Owambe," a Yoruba word literally meaning "it is there" that is used to refer to large celebrations. The centerpiece of this year's celebration was a fashion show highlighting beautiful African fabrics and clothing styles. Attendees were also treated to a talent show by student members showcasing dances, music, and poetry representing many different cultures in Africa.

ASA would like to recognize two E-board members from the 2022-23 school year who have just graduated: Temi Yusuf (president, Psychology and Secondary Education) and Temi Akinbola (vice president, Biomedical Engineering). We appreciate all they have done for ASA and wish them the very best in their future endeavors!

ASA Fashion Show



ASA Dance



(L to R) ASA Vice President Temi Akinbola and ASA President Temiloluwa Yusuf



ASC Associates News & Updates

The African Studies Center congratulates its faculty associates across the university for their recent accomplishments.

Promoted to Full Professor

- **Larissa S. Larsen** (Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning)
- **Chinedum E. Okwudire** (Mechanical Engineering, Integrative Systems and Design)

Promoted to Clinical Professor

- **John Pasquale** (School of Music, Theater and Dance)

Promoted to Associate Professor

- **Ashley Lacombe-Duncan** (School of Social Work)

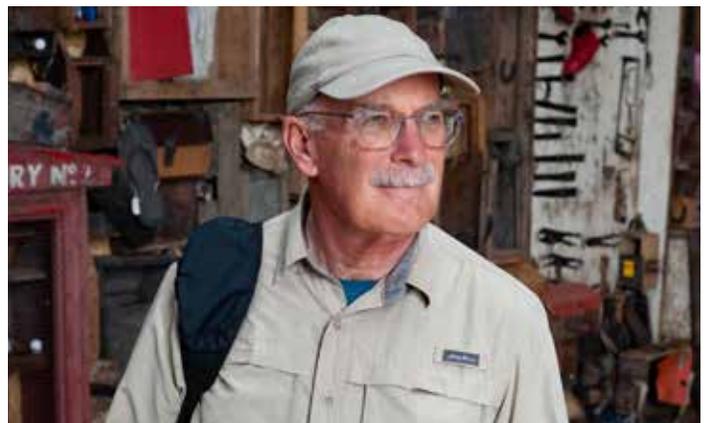
Gary Harper was named Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in the School of Public Health. The Thurnau Professorships recognize and reward faculty for outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. As a professor of Health Behavior and Health Education, Harper's work focuses on the mental health and sexual health needs of adolescents and young adults who experience varying degrees of oppression and marginalization, especially Black gay/bisexual young men, transgender and non-binary youth, and youth living with HIV in US cities and across many African countries.

Roy Clarke, Marcellus L. Wiedenbeck Collegiate Professor of Physics, received the University Diversity and Social Transformation Professorship award. This award recognizes the achievements of senior faculty members whose work has promoted the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Clarke's visionary initiatives have demonstrated exceptional leadership throughout his career in promoting students' interest in the physical sciences and finding innovative ways to diversify access to research careers in the field.

Jody Lori, Endowed Professor in Global Nursing and Associate Dean for Global Affairs, received the President's award for Distinguished Service in International Education. This award is to recognize extraordinary efforts of faculty and staff who advance international education for U-M students. Lori has shown a sustained commitment and dedication to international education through her support of the University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars program and her field work in Ghana, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mexico, and Zambia.

Celebrating Raymond Silverman's Career

Raymond (Ray) Silverman, Professor Emeritus of History of Art, African Studies and Museum Studies, retired in 2021 after twenty years of research, teaching, and service at the University of Michigan. Silverman arrived in Ann Arbor in 2002 from Michigan State University to rebuild the University of Michigan's graduate program in Museum Studies. He joined the LSA faculty with a joint appointment in the Departments of History of Art and Afroamerican and African Studies. In 2003, Ray launched a new interdisciplinary graduate certificate program in Museum Studies and served as its director until 2012.



The thriving program provided the infrastructure for a new undergraduate minor in Museum Studies founded in 2009. He taught graduate and undergraduate courses in both Museum Studies and African visual culture.

In 2007-2008, Ray served as a member of the core team of faculty and administrators in the initiative that led to the establishment of U-M's African Studies Center (ASC). After its founding, he was actively involved in ASC, serving on its executive committee and as a member of the African Humanities and Heritage Initiative (AHHI). Always seeking ways to mix his interests in African art and museums, he curated a number of exhibitions, including *Painting Ethiopia: The Life and Work of Qes Adamu Tesfaw* (Fowler Museum, UCLA, 2005) and *African Art and Shape of Time* (U-M Museum of Art, 2012). Both were accompanied by book-length publications.

Another project that afforded him an opportunity to explore the interface between Africa and museums was organizing a lecture series that led to the publication of the edited volume, *Museum as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges* (2014, Routledge). From 2013-2016, he was the founding Director of GalleryDAAS, an exhibit space dedicated to celebrating contemporary African and African American visual art, hosted in U-M's Department of Afroamerican and African Studies. Throughout his career, Ray has been interested in the relationship between theory and practice. For nearly two decades, he has been working with the citizens of Techiman, Ghana, to build the community's first cultural center, Nkwantananso. The initiative provided a context for him to organize several experiential learning opportunities for teams of Michigan and Ghanaian students to work together with the members of the Techiman community to establish the foundation for Nkwantananso.

As part of a program celebrating Silverman's retirement, a one-day symposium was held in his honor in September 2022. The symposium, organized by the Departments of History of Art, Afroamerican and African Studies, and ASC, brought together scholars (including Silverman's former students) and colleagues who spoke to his contribution to the development of the field of African art. Panels featured scholars discussing a range of topics,

such as art in Ghana and East Africa, museum and heritage studies, and collaborations at the University of Michigan. U-M faculty members from a wide range of disciplines spoke on these topics, as well as a number of invited speakers from around the world, including Donald Buaku, planner and urban designer for the city of Houston, Ethiopian artist Daniel Berhanemeskel, Heran Sereke-Brhan of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and art and architectural historian Prita Meier of New York University—to name only a few.

Since retiring, Ray is looking forward to focusing on a number of projects, some of which have been percolating for a long time. In 2021, he published with his colleagues, *George Abungu and Peter Probst, National Museums in Africa: Identity, History and Politics* (Routledge), and in 2022, *Ethiopian Church Art: Painters, Patrons, Purveyors* (Tsehai), with Neal Sobania. He is currently collaborating with colleagues here in Michigan and in Ghana on a major museum exhibition, *Ghana 57: African Art After Independence*, scheduled to open in 2027. Ray continues to work with colleagues in Techiman on *Nkwantananso*. In anticipation of building the physical site, the project team will soon launch a virtual cultural center website that will provide citizens and visitors with an orientation to Techiman and its nearby natural and cultural heritage sites. Other projects include a study of the role religious paintings play in sustaining the Ethiopian Orthodox faith and diaspora communities in North America, the visual culture of Tano (an indigenous religious institution in Ghana), and the impact that the Peace Corps had in the 1960s and 70s on the then-burgeoning field of African art studies.

It goes without saying that Ray has plenty to keep him busy! He and his wife Mary decided to continue living in Ann Arbor and intend to stay connected with U-M, especially with its Africanist community, and to enjoy the good life in southeast Michigan.



African Languages Thrive at U-M

With programs in both Swahili and Yoruba, the University of Michigan (U-M) is proud to support the study of African languages. This academic year was especially productive and filled with celebrations of Africa's linguistic diversity.

The African Studies Center (ASC) administers language funding and scholarships for deserving students across many schools and disciplines. In 2022, U-M was, for the first time, allocated Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) funding for African languages by the U.S. Department of Education under Title VI of the Higher Education Act. This year, eight undergraduate students were awarded FLAS fellowships for the 2023-2024 academic year, three graduate students were awarded summer 2023 FLAS funding, and four graduate students were awarded FLAS fellowships for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Additionally, ASC has awarded language scholarships to seven students studying Swahili and seven students studying Yoruba. As Yoruba scholarship winner Deborah Abodunrin (BA student in Business Administration) explains, "Language study can foster new relationships, as well as strengthen preexisting community bonds. Having been surrounded by a large Nigerian community, I had

always heard and interacted with the language through song, proverbs, speaking, and more. I decided to take full advantage of the opportunity here at U-M, and immerse myself in such an interesting and detailed language. Additionally, it's a great conversation starter for my people back home!"

For many students, the highlight of the year was African Languages Day, an event held on March 31st, 2023, in the Trotter Multicultural Center. This event brought together students and instructors of Swahili and Yoruba, as well as guests from several departments and units across campus, to experience music and dance performances, traditional attire, and delicious East and West African food. As Yoruba instructor Gabriel Ayoola said, "It was a celebration that truly brought us all together. I'm grateful to have been a part of it, and I know that it will continue to inspire us all in the future. All thanks to the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS) and ASC for the unending support to the African

Dr. Gabriel Ayoola and FLTA Hanifat Adeleke with their students on their first African Languages Day



languages program at the University of Michigan.” DAAS, in partnership with ASC, hopes to make African Languages Day an annual event, in order to replicate this year’s joyful atmosphere for the benefit of future generations of U-M African language learners.

Several other projects were launched this year to help students excel in language learning and to promote enrollment in Yoruba and Swahili. One of these was the Coffee and Conversation Hour, in which students met once per week to practice conversing in their respective target languages while enjoying coffee and doughnuts, courtesy of DAAS.

Another major project is underway to develop online

language modules for Swahili and Yoruba. As Swahili instructor Magdalyne Akiding explains, “The goal of this project is to enhance the quality of our instructional

materials and to streamline team teaching as enrollment in our languages is expanding and creating the need for several sections.” As more students seek out Swahili and Yoruba coursework, the language instructors are excited to expand their outreach and find innovative ways to support their students’ progress. Both the Yoruba and Swahili instructors have expressed pride in their students’ hard work and dedication throughout the year, as well as excitement about next year. As Akiding says, “The future is very promising for African languages at U-M!”

Spotlight on Hanifat Adeleke, Yoruba FLTA

Hanifat Adeleke taught Yoruba at U-M throughout the 2022-2033 academic year as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA). Adeleke excels at holistically teaching students about Yoruba language and culture, from the detailed rules of orthography and intonation to the cultural norms of communal participation and hierarchies of respect. Adeleke is an experienced language teacher with a background as a secondary school teacher in Nigeria. Adeleke has a strong desire to keep her mother tongue Yoruba alive and to expand its learners across the world, which is what prompted her to apply to the FLTA program.

Hanifat Adeleke



ASC Supports Student Research, Internships, and Language Study

The African Studies Center (ASC) is proud to support U-M graduate and undergraduate students from across the university to pursue their interests in Africa. During the 2022/23 academic year, we made awards to more than 40 students through various funding and award programs.

FLAS Funding

In 2022, U-M was, for the first time, allocated Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) funding for African languages by the U.S. Department of Education under Title VI of the Higher Education Act. The FLAS program is designed to assist meritorious undergraduate and graduate students in learning modern foreign languages and related international or area studies. ASC is proud to announce this year's awardees, including eight undergraduate students for the 2023-2024 academic year, three graduate students for summer 2023 funding, and four graduate students for the 2023-2024 academic year. These recipients are listed below:

Undergraduates: Each funded \$15,000 for the academic year

- **Mogbonjubola Adepoju**, second-year student in the School of Nursing: Yoruba
- **Ayomide Fadase**, second-year student in economics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts: Yoruba
- **Julia Odhiambo**, second-year student in political science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts: Swahili
- **Adesewa Ojo**, second-year student in DAAS and sociology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts: Yoruba
- **Eliana Provizer**, third-year student in history of art, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts: Swahili
- **Jeremi Owusu**, second-year student in computer science, College of Engineering: Swahili

Summer funding for graduate students: each funded \$7,500 for the summer semester

- **Sophia Eakins**, linguistics Ph.D. student: Cape Verdean Creole
- **Kristi Rhead**, anthropology/history Ph.D. student: Réunion Creole

Graduate students: each funded \$38,000 for the academic year

- **Delany Doggett**, Masters in International and Regional Studies program: Swahili
- **Tyler Musgrave**, School of Information Ph.D. student: Swahili
- **Kristi Rhead**, anthropology/history Ph.D. student: Réunion Creole

ASC Language Scholarships

ASC awards language scholarships to students of Swahili and Yoruba, amounting to \$500 per semester for two semesters. This year's recipients are listed below:

Swahili Language Scholarship

- **Cailyn Benton**
- **Rita Brooks**
- **Lydia Johnson**
- **Coreyn Mason**
- **Annaliese Mmari**
- **Tyler Musgrave**
- **Julia Odhiambo**

Yoruba Language Scholarship

- **Deborah Abodunrin**
- **Mogbonjubola Adepoju**
- **Chinyere Amasiatu**
- **Marsae Lynette Mitchell**
- **Adesewa Ojo**
- **Mazeed Oluewu**
- **Jeremi Owusu**

ASC IISF Funding

As part of the International Institute, ASC supports student research and internships in and about Africa through our annual International Institute Student Fellowship (IISF) summer research grant program. In 2023, ASC distributed 14 awards amounting to over \$36,000 in summer support. Of these, ten awards went towards supporting research, three supported student internships in or relating to Africa, and one supported a combination research-internship experience. Funding went to students from four different schools and colleges (School of Environment and Sustainability; College of Literature, Science and the Arts; School of Nursing; School of Public Health), and in support of projects in seven countries (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, and the United Kingdom). Of the awards, eight went to Ph.D. students, three to master's students or students in professional schools, and three to undergraduate students.

Below is a list of all of the projects and internships funded in the 2023 competition:

Undergraduates: Each funded \$15,000 for the academic year

- **Laik Leatherwood.** VACorps Pre-Medical Internship at the Khayelitsha Community
- **Olivia Arguello.** Global Health Nursing Internship Program
- **Zion Helms.** Global Health Nursing Internship Program
- **Injoh Esther Njung Baya.** Nonpharmacological Pain Management in Children with Sickle Cell Disease
- **Christopher Floyd.** Quantifying Climate Risk in Western Kenya
- **Olawale Akingbade.** The Documentation of Oloma, an Endangered Language in Southern Nigeria
- **Marlotte De Jong.** Conserving Rhino to Extinction: Understanding Success in Rhino Conservation
- **Oluwakemi Falodun.** Novel: This is Our First Time Home

- **Ryan Glauser.** Developing an Equitable Future: Human Rights and Development in the UN
- **Amanda Kaminsky.** The Racial and Ecological Politics of Chinese Foodways in Nairobi
- **Norah Cheruto Langat.** Land Protests in South Lumbwa 1890-1950
- **Fiyinfoluwa Morenikeji.** Educational Intervention to Prevent Gender-Based Violence among African Women
- **Talitha Pam.** Examining the Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in Nigeria
- **Rebecca Wai.** Maybe in My Backyard: Refugee-Host Cooperation Promotes Peace and Prosperity

Spotlight on Language Scholarship Winners:



Tyler Musgrave

Tyler Musgrave, a Ph.D. student in information science, is currently studying Kiswahili. She has been enjoying her language studies at Michigan because of her teachers. Musgrave highlights how her study of Swahili has changed her perspective in ways that demonstrate that the culture and the philosophy associated with understanding a language is critical in engaging with the world. Her career plans will be taking her Michigan education to Africa, where she plans on furthering her work. Musgrave was the first student at the University of Michigan to receive the U.S. State Department's Critical Language Scholarship in Kiswahili. She spent the past summer in Tanzania, thanks to the funding support she received from the International Language Scholarship from Rackham and the International Institute Global Individual Grant (GIG) award. Currently, Musgrave is a fellow with Ubuntu Dialogues at Michigan State University that has been a great inspiration to her Kiswahili learning.



Marsae Lynette Mitchell

Marsae Lynette Mitchell, a Masters of Fine Arts student in dance, is currently focusing her language studies on Yoruba. She is conducting research on the Yoruba religion, rituals, rhythms and movements that thrive in the Caribbean and Americas as a result of the transatlantic slave trade. Her research was a big motivation behind her pursuing the study of Yoruba language. Lynette plans on furthering her involvement through expanding her studies to the Gold Coast and the Caribbean.

Lester P. Monts Award



James Allen IV

In 2014, the African Studies Center (ASC) established the **Lester P. Monts Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research on Africa** in honor of the distinguished professor of ethnomusicology, Lester P. Monts, for all he has done to promote scholarship on Africa

and institutional engagement with African universities. Our university's support for African initiatives is truly exemplary and due in large respect to his efforts.

Congratulations to **James Allen IV**, this year's recipient of the Lester P. Monts Award! Allen recently completed his Ph.D. in public policy and economics at the University of Michigan, writing his dissertation on "Essays on Education and Health in Sub-Saharan Africa." His research examines multiple strategies for improving education and healthcare in low-income settings. His job market paper, for example, investigated the effect of overlap in the school and farming calendars on children's schooling investments. Using a recent school calendar change in Malawi as an experiment, Allen found that overlap between the school and farm calendars significantly slows grade advancement. These findings suggest that accommodating farm labor demand should be a top priority in setting school calendars, and that overlap between school and farming calendars may indeed

Deborah Abodunrin is a Bachelor of Business Administration student at the Ross School of Business. Alongside her business studies, Abodunrin has been enrolled in Yoruba since the fall of 2022. She decided to enroll in Yoruba because of her experiences at home: "I started to pick up and understand my parents' conversations in my native tongue," she says. "From there, my curiosity grew for the language." Having been surrounded by a large Nigerian community, she had grown up hearing and interacting with the language through song, proverbs, speaking, and more. She decided to take full advantage of the Yoruba program at U-M to improve her knowledge of the language and has appreciated the relaxing and inviting classroom environment fostered by her passionate Yoruba professors.

play an important role in explaining differences in schooling across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Prior to starting his Ph.D., he served in the Peace Corps in Mali (2010-2012). He obtained an MS degree in agricultural, food, and resource economics from Michigan State University (2012). He then worked as a research director at the University of Kentucky (2012-2016). Allen has experience working in several developing countries, including Burundi, Mali, Mozambique, the Philippines, and Rwanda. In July 2023, he will be starting as an associate research fellow in the Poverty, Gender and Inclusion Unit at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington, D.C.

James Allen Field Research in Mozambique





Omowumi Banjo

Honorable mentions for this award were given to **Omowumi Banjo** for her paper on “Rites of Passage: Yoruba Kingship Coronation,” and **Delany Doggett** for her paper on “The effects of Chinese investments on food security in Zambia.”

Banjo’s essay was written on kingship coronation which is a ceremonial act performed to promote the status of an individual (usually a prince) to the role of a king. This act is traditional and culturally inclined, often shaped by religious settings, socio-cultural beliefs, and rites of passage as demonstrated in a specific society. There is diversity in rites of passage across the globe occasioned by specificity in the cultural setting of a community. The paper, therefore, contextualizes the rites of passage in Yoruba coronation art. The coronation transcript of the Ooni of Ile-Ife was contextually analyzed using Victor Turner’s concept of liminality in rites of passage. This separation or “preliminal” stage is initiated by consulting the oracle; this is followed by a period of separation and preparation for the coronation rites. The liminal stage in Yoruba kingship coronation is enigmatic and ritualistic, usually performed on the king-in-the-making by the priests and custodians. This stage modifies the psyche of the king towards “communitas,” which connects him to the supernatural agents that will empower him for his royal position and the responsibilities that come with it. A

ceremonial reintegration back to the conventional society of the king as a reborn hero characterizes the post-liminal stage of the rite of passage in Yoruba coronation art. Rites of passage are persistent in Yorubaland and have resisted abolishment by other religions and civilizations.



Delany Doggett

Doggett’s essay was originally written as a final paper for the class *When China Comes to Town. Environment and the Politics of Development* at the University of Michigan. While her work has often focused on the effects of international partnerships and policies that centers on development, this class provided her with an opportunity to interrogate issues of food security in East Africa with the specific example of China’s engagement with the Republic of Zambia. Doggett found the connection between China and Zambia interesting due in part to how little they are analyzed together in the area of food security. However, what was most interesting to her was seeing a true trade-off in China’s involvement in Zambia, with Zambia seeing economic growth and rising rates of urbanization. Despite these positive trade-offs, her paper highlights that the issue of food security is often the sacrifice that the people are forced to make in order to see such growth.

Presidential Inauguration Symposium: ASC Director Omolade Adunbi Joins Climate Crisis Panel Discussion

On March 7th, 2023, the University of Michigan (U-M) officially welcomed its new president, Santa Ono, with an inauguration ceremony. The African Studies Center (ASC) participated in many activities lined up for the inauguration, one of which was the academic symposium on working together to tackle the climate crisis.

As part of this symposium, Omolade Adunbi, ASC director and professor of anthropology and Afroamerican and African studies, took part in a panel discussion on climate action. The panel, titled “Working Together to Tackle the Climate Crisis,” was moderated by Chris Kolb, Vice President for Governmental Relations at U-M, and led by Janet Napolitano, a member of President Biden’s Intelligence Advisory Board and the former governor of Arizona. Also on the panel were Andy Hoffman, Holcim (US) Inc. Professor of Sustainable Enterprise and professor of management and organizations in the Stephen M. Ross School of Business, and professor of environment and sustainability in the School for Environment and Sustainability; and Margaret Wooldridge, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Walter J. Weber Jr. Professor of Sustainable Energy, environmental and earth systems engineering,

and professor of mechanical engineering and aerospace engineering in the College of Engineering.

The panel discussed the challenges and possibilities of mobilizing government, higher education, the private sector, community stakeholders, and individuals toward addressing the climate crisis. Central to the discussion was the intersection between the climate crisis and equity.

Adunbi said:

“We have to begin to think about global inclusivity. Many of the conflicts that we see in many African countries today are climate-related, although sometimes, some of those conflicts are either tagged as ethnic or religious conflicts.

Lakes that provide livelihood to many of these communities are drying up and farmers are in conflict with herders—how do we engineer a new form of technology that is inclusive and also brings a lot of disenfranchised and disenfranchised communities to the table to be part of the solution to the crisis?”

Inauguration



Remembering Professor Oveta Fuller

In 2022, we lost Professor Oveta Fuller, a long-time U-M colleague, former ASC director, and tireless advocate for Africa. We share below the tribute that Professor Omolade Adunbi, current ASC director, delivered at the memorial event in honor of Professor Fuller.

A Tribute to Oveta Fuller

It is my honor to share a few words today in memory of Dr. Oveta Fuller, who was one of my predecessors as director of the African Studies Center (ASC). Oveta served as ASC director in the 2016/17 academic year, and was the first African American to serve in this position since the inception of the center in 2008. She had a strong and clear vision of the importance for African-American students to learn about the continent—not only through on-campus activities, but also, and especially, by experiencing the continent for themselves through research or internships. Under her leadership, ASC made sure to invite a broad and diverse pool of applications for its research and internship in/on Africa Awards, and ensured that priority was given to students who wouldn't have been able to learn about Africa—especially in Africa—as part of their U-M education if not for ASC support.

As a professor of microbiology and immunology in the Medical School, Oveta was passionate about connecting STEM researchers and students to Africa; conversely, she was also committed to making ASC an inclusive environment not just for those in the more traditional African studies disciplines, but also for those in STEM fields. Prior to her tenure as ASC director, Oveta served on ASC's STEM-Africa initiative for several years, including as the initiative's coordinator. Under her directorship, ASC and STEM-Africa organized what still remains our largest in-person conference in Africa. The "Africa-US Frontiers in Science Conference," also known as STEM-IV, was held in Yaounde, Cameroon, in the summer of 2017, and brought together over 400 students and faculty from U-M and the University of Yaounde with faculty, business leaders, and government officials from many African countries.

Interacting with the early and mid-career scholars from

African universities who came to U-M as part of the U-M African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) program was Oveta's greatest joy for all the years she was associated with ASC, be it as Director, Associate Director, or STEM-Africa Initiative member. She was generous and warm in welcoming these scholars to Michigan, where she made them feel right at home with informal conversations and gatherings. As a Black female scientist, she was a role model for many of the young female UMAPS scholars, and she remained interested and invested in their careers long after their time at Michigan had ended. I think the memory Oveta cherished most from her time as ASC director was meeting so many of the UMAPS alumni on her trips to the continent, particularly Ghana and Ethiopia. As the UMAPS scholars learned about Oveta's passing, some of them shared with us their sadness as well as their fond memories, and more will undoubtedly have shared them with you.

Speaking for all of us who currently work at ASC, as well as those who did so under Oveta's directorship, we continue to be indebted to the vision of Dr. Fuller as one of our ancestors at ASC. We continue to be inspired by her commitment to creating access and opportunities for our students, particularly Black and other minoritized students, to be included in the study of Africa, for STEM researchers to be part of our ASC community and for young female scientists from the continent to excel beyond expectations in their careers.

As Oveta transitioned to becoming an ancestor, we remain eternally grateful for her service to our community, her vision of a better collaboration between Africa and the United States, and her commitment to making a more livable world for all of us. Thank You!

-Omolade Adunbi, ASC Director

Rev. Dr. A. Oveta Fuller pictured in Zambia



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ASC is a member of the International Institute

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Alliances is produced annually by the African Studies Center (ASC). It features ASC's activities of the previous year, news about the center's initiatives, ASC associates and their research, ASC-funded student projects and internships, and collaborative partnerships related to Africa and the Michigan impact.

If you wish to receive a printed copy, please send a request to asc-contact@umich.edu

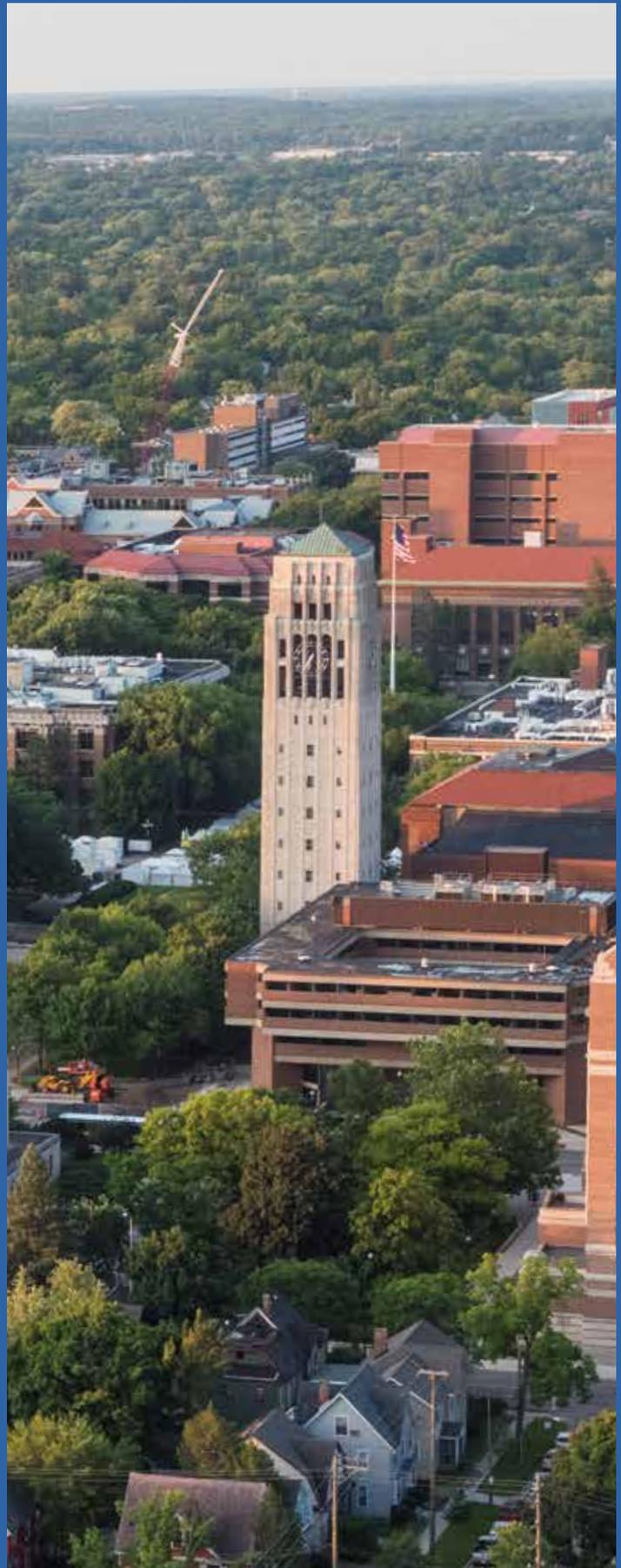
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