

# KANSAS AFRICAN STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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Optimism and hard work have paid off very well for African studies at KU. The Kansas African Studies Center has succeeded in getting back its NRC grant with the additional national recognition of a FLAS grant for KU graduate students to study African languages. We ended the 2005/06 academic year with a successful seminar on African politics, a unique workshop on Islam and business, a successful Ujamaa Brownbag series, and outstanding closing events to our "New African Immigrants to Kansas" project sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council. Our 2006 Teacher Summer Institute on the African Diaspora was also rewarding and it was the most successful institute with regard to enrollment, talent, depth, and significance. Our happiness with all these achievements is incomplete, though, with the great loss of Professor Deborah "Misty" Gerner, a long standing Africanist and Professor of Political Science at KU, who died on June 19, 2006.

In this newsletter, you will find reports about our spring and summer activities as well as announcements of upcoming planned events. Our fall semester seems busy, as you may see in the comprehensive calendar in this issue. We are looking forward to welcoming new Africanist faculty, dynamic seminars, brownbags, conferences, and the hiring of new staff for the Center. We optimistically accept the challenge of building on our success!

By: Khalid El-Hassan, Editor

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## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Think Big, Take Risks, Ask for Help

By: John M. Janzen

This is my last "word", written on my last official day as director, June 30, 2006. July 1, Garth Myers assumed the directorship of the Kansas African Studies Center. Although Garth has been the Associate Director for some years, this transition will look like a new era: new faces, new energies, and new ideas. The moment of transition could not have been more filled with positive portents and signs. I was in Berlin, Germany watching the tense finale

of a game in the soccer World Cup semi-finals, at the same time I was on the internet to North America where news of



The late Deborah "Misty" Gerner, Professor of Political Science at KU

U.S. Department of Education Title VI announcements were being reported from centers as congressional offices sent their faxes. Within seconds of Germany's winning score on a penalty shootout, the internet brought Craig Pearman's news from North America that our Center had received four years of Title VI National Resource Center funding. This was on top of the Title VI Foreign Language and Area Study grant for graduate students we had receive in May, and a grant from the Longview Foundation for the development of African and Middle Eastern Study materials within the framework of the Kansas and Missouri State Standards. All this recognition attests to the strength and quality of our African Studies venture at KU, recognition of the ideas and the energy with which we have been working.

If KASC has done some things right, it may be worthwhile to distill this accumulated wisdom that comes from running a center for a decade. The principles – think big, take risks, ask for help – arise in part from the nature of a Center, and what it has to do to survive and thrive. A Center such as ours is basically a group of people working with ideas and languages related to a particular world region, its distinctive experiences and cultural traditions – all of which we identify as "Africa." In an academic setting such as ours, a Center depends on the resources of more stable entities like tenured faculty in permanent disciplinary departments, libraries and museums with gradually expanding and improving collections, and steady

administrative commitments. The principles – think big, take risks, ask for help – embody the conviction that it is possible to shape the reality around you rather than letting circumstances dictate every shift of fortune.

### **Think big**

One of the best ways to avoid getting distracted amidst the daily buzz of telephone calls, visits, and email memoranda, is to focus your mind's eye on the big picture of your broad objectives. Recently I visited and was inspired by the research themes of the leading French African Studies Center at the University of Paris, themes that represent a timely focus on critical issues of our day requiring scholarly attention. They are: "The social worlds of exile, war, and humanitarian efforts"; "Globalization and the re-qualification of societies and territories"; "Local political spaces, state mediations and transnational networks"; "Media and circulation of the arts, of representations, and of knowledge in Africa"; "Political anthropology of contemporary religious movements". The themes are banner identities of research units, each headed by a research director, supported by half a dozen faculty or research fellows, and supporting eight to ten doctoral students. At KASC we have analogous defining themes and projects. Our course clusters in the undergraduate minor, recently published in KU's new Undergraduate Catalogue, offer six curricular categories: Societies and Civilizations; Intensive Language Learning; the Political Economy of Health and Development; People and Space; Arts and Performance; and a student-defined cluster. They should now be carried through to the Graduate Certificate Program that needs to be formalized. The Executive Committee and the Council are charged with debating and defining areas of priority in African Studies. The Center can facilitate this quest for currency and relevant meaning by being sensitive to good ideas that faculty members might wish to develop. KASC's most noteworthy initiatives have all originated from one or a few individuals. Ideas improve with discussion. Discussion in a public forum gives ideas a wider ownership, it legitimizes them, and gives the Center broader support. Our "Business and Islam" workshop was one of our most rewarding recent initiatives, built around ideas and connections put forward by Mohamed El-Hodiri and his Egyptian colleague Professor Sultan Abou Ali. Our "New African Immigrants" project began with a discussion, led to a seminar organized by Khalid Elhassan that helped define a winning Kansas Humanities Council grant and project. The next step of this on-going project is incarnated in the NRC funded "Great Plains Outreach Initiative" to combine collaborative research about the African presence in our region within the Mid-American Alliance for African Studies. The Teacher Summer Institute, organized each June by Khalid Elhassan, will be enhanced by the Longview Foundation project "Teaching Africa and the Middle East on the Great Plains" with three master teachers ... Building on a considerable interest in and expertise in Sufism in Africa, and the relationship to Senegal, with Gitti Salami in

art history, the Spencer Art Museum will host the exhibition "Saint in the City" in spring 2007 and with NRC sponsorship we will host a conference on Sufism and performance.

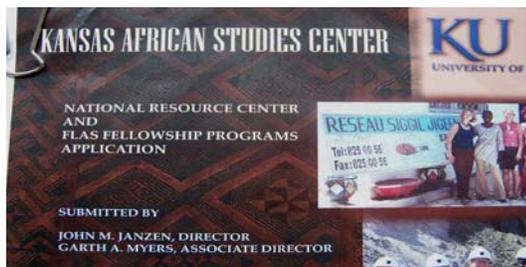
### **Take risks**

As these initiatives and projects suggest, a center, unlike a department, exists mainly by and through its dynamic initiatives. It loses momentum if it merely repeats last year's routines; it dies if it rests on its laurels. Although established centers may benefit from basic infrastructural and personnel support from the university, the more common scenario – one seen at KU – is that in which the conditions of a center's operation are continually shifting. Vacillations in state budgets are but one of the sources of change. The revolving door of administrators, fresh currents from academia about how to conduct area studies, old countries in Africa "closing" as others "open," changing configurations of faculty, changing policies in Washington D.C., and new initiatives by foundations, all contribute to the likelihood of a "boom and bust" pattern in a center's well-being. The best way to respond constructively to such constant change and uncertainty is to seize the moment, to take risks. This means, to invite new people to participate in programs; to venture into new areas and issues in research initiatives, seminars and workshops; to recognize new inspiration from faculty, students, administrators and help flesh them out, to develop their creative efforts. Often this may mean putting aside what you were going to do on a given day to spend time with a walk-in visitor, or taking that telephone call from an inspired colleague, rather than organize the files. Almost always it means working overtime. But that's the exhilaration of the job as well, and the source of strength for a center, a sign that it's in touch with the pulse called Africa.

### **Ask for help**

A center is its people – the faculty, students, alumni, constituents, investors, administrators. Most are more than willing to help, or are willing to be persuaded. The KASC Executive Committee represents the first line of the Center's constituency; their support, their credibility. Their involvement gives the Center its legitimacy. Three years ago, shortly after being rejected in the previous NRC round, we asked the College for systematic support in filling empty faculty positions and in projecting new positions, without which we knew we did not stand a chance of being funded as an NRC. The College agreed to make a major investment in new faculty in languages, political science, francophone African literature, North African culture, transnational migration, and, with NRC help, two language lectureships in Arabic and Swahili, and in 2008, a tenure track position in the political economy of health and development. We asked KUCR for a Major Project

Proposal Grant to support research needed for the NRC. The College and KUCR both had confidence in our objectives, in what we represented. Foundations like Longview wanted to know that our project was original, well thought out, and that it would yield what it promised. Our work with master teachers in the Summer Teacher Institute and beyond was critical in this. Asking people and agencies for support is like a conversation about the credibility and legitimacy of your enterprise.



**Title page of our successful Title VI proposal**

Precisely because KASC has received NRC/FLAS and Longview funding, it needs to resist the temptation to coast in its newly acquired status. There will be plenty to do to meet the expectations of Longview and the Department of Education. But now is the time to develop new initiatives. To that end, as an example, the Center is working with Raj Bhala, Rice Distinguished Professor of Law, to develop an initiative in capacity building for international trade and development with African partners. Now is the time to push through the graduate certificate in African Studies, and promote graduate study and research in African Studies. Now is the time to negotiate improved exchange relations with African counterparts.

An outgoing director's words are hardly revolutionary, but they may have the value of bearing some relation to experience. I look forward to continuing to be a participant in African Studies at KU as it gains ever more prominent on the national stage. But I hope to be a little farther away from the absolute center of all things. I have great confidence in Garth Myers and his team, and wish them every success in the months and years ahead.



## Fall 2006 CALENDAR

### **I. African Studies Seminar "U.S. National Security Interests & the Role of the Militaries in Africa"** **Thursdays, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. Room 109, Bailey Hall**

August 31, "Islamic Terrorism in Africa and America's Response to It," Major (Chaplain) Bob Owen, CGSC.

September 14, "China in Africa: Has a New Cold War Returned to the Continent?" Doug Lathrop, CGSC.

September 28, "Use of the Military in Counter-Poaching Programs: The Case of Botswana," Mark Lauber, CGSC.

October 12, "The Curse of Oil in Africa," Doug Lathrop, CGSC.

October 26, "Wars of National Liberation: Rhodesia/Zimbabwe," Mark Lauber, CGSC.

### **II. Ujamaa Brownbag** **12:00-1:00, Alcove G, the Kansas Union**

Friday, August 25, "Kansas Farmers' Experience in West Africa," Jim French, wheat, cattle, and sorghum farmer, Partridge, Kansas and Charlie Melander, wheat and row crop farmer, Assaria, Kansas.

Wednesday, September 6, "Decommissioning Rebel Armies in Africa," Takao Shibata, former Japanese Diplomat in Africa.

Wednesday, September 20, "Experiences in Malaria Research, Dakar, Senegal," Ryan Lash, KU graduate student.

Wednesday, October 18, "Summer Institute in Al-Akhawayn University, Morocco," Abdullah Jaradat, Arabic Instructor and KU students who attended the Morocco Summer Institute, 2006.

Wednesday, November 15, "My First Encounter with Africa: Ghanaian Culture and Anecdotes," Kim Warren, Assistant Professor of History and Jane Segebrecht, KU student.

### **III. Public lectures and seminars sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities:**

Tuesday, September 12, "The Fork in the Fork of the Road," public lecture to be presented by the Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah, Woodruff Auditorium, Kansas Union, 7:30-10:00 p.m.

Monday, September 18, "Representations of Mogadishu in *Black Hawk Down* and Nuruddin Farah's Novels," Garth Myers, KASC Director and Associate Professor of Geography/AAAS, Hall Center Seminar Room, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 26, "What is Globalization? Interdisciplinary Answers," Globalization Seminar sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities, Malott Room, Kansas Union, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 5, "Images of the 'Francophone' Middle East at the International Colonial Exhibition of Vincennes, France, 1931," Samira Sayeh, Assistant Professor of Francophone Literature, Hall Center Seminar Room, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Monday, October 23, "Creating the 'Arab': The Consequences of a Privileged Identity," Karenbeth Zacharias, PhD candidate in history, Hall Center Seminar Room, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Monday, November 13, "Colonial Knowledge and Post-Colonial Power: The French in North Africa," Majid Hannoum, Assistant Professor of Anthropology/AAAS, Hall Center Seminar Room, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

#### IV Conferences:

12<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Mid-America Alliance for African Studies (MAAAS), "Creative Africa," November 3-4, 2006, St. Louis, Missouri.

"Fair Trade in the Heartland", a regional conference for education and advocacy of fair trade on a local and global scale, sponsored by OxFam, ECM at KU, KASC, Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of United Church of Christ and Campus Ministries at KSU and University of Tulsa, Manhattan, KS, November 3-4, 2006.

African Studies Association 2006 Annual Meeting "Thinking Africa and the World: Internal Reflections, External Responses," San Francisco, CA, November 16-19, 2006.

#### V. Other Events

Wednesday, August 16, "Archeology in Libya," informal talk and reception for Giuma M. Anag, Chairperson of the Libyan Department of Archaeology 'DoA', Room 109, Bailey Hall, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Friday, October 6, "International Employment Workshop," sponsored by Area Studies centers, Room 318, Bailey Hall, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 15, "South African Musical Performance and Dance," Francois LeRoux, Ecumenical Christian Ministries (ECM), 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 21, World Concert Series at the Lied Center of Kansas featuring Simon Shaheen and Dr. A. J. Racy, UCLA, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 24, "The Lost Boys of Sudan," Film and Discussion, sponsored by the School of Social Welfare and the Kansas African Studies Center, Alderson Auditorium, Kansas Union, 12:30-3:15 p.m.

Friday, October 27, "African Migration Public Meeting," Room 109, Bailey Hall, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.



#### WELCOME NEW AFRICANIST FACULTY AT KU

By: Khalid El-Hassan

In this newsletter, we would like to welcome our new Africanist faculty Dr. Majid Hannoum, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and African and African American Studies, Dr. Ebenezer Obadare, Assistant Professor of Sociology, and Ashford Njogu, new instructor of Swahili language at KU.

**Dr. Majid Hannoum** holds an MA and Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies and Anthropology from Princeton University. Furthermore, he obtained his BA and MA from the University of Fez (Morocco), Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (Degree of Advanced Studies) from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris; and Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies and a Ph.D. in Arabic and Comparative Literature from the University of Sorbonne, Paris. Dr. Hannoum previously taught at Simon's Rock College, Princeton University, the College of New Jersey, and the New School for Social Research. He was also a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (1996-98), Post-doctoral fellow at the Center of Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University (1999-2000), and a visiting scholar for the Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, NYC. (2003-4). He will be joining the University of Kansas as an Assistant Professor in Anthropology and African and African American Studies, teaching a course on Islam, colonialism, and nationalism in North Africa. Dr. Hannoum's research interest is in cultural anthropology and history, social theory, cultural identity, political modernity, violence and the state, historiography and memory, translation and the imaginary, (post) colonialism, Egypt, North Africa, and France. He has published widely on these subjects.



**Ebenezer Obadare** (PhD, LSE) is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Kansas, Lawrence. Before his appointment, he was Visiting Research Fellow in the Centre for Civil Society, Department



of Social Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science, where he completed his doctorate in Social Policy in June 2005, and was co-recipient of the Department of Social Policy's Richard Titmuss Best PhD Thesis Prize for the year 2005. Dr. Obadare holds undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in History and International Relations respectively from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. In 2004, he was jointly awarded the MacArthur Foundation's prestigious Research and Writing grant for a study of the short- and long-term impacts of current migratory patterns on citizenship in Africa. In 2003, through the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, he received a research grant to study the citizenship effects of the Nigerian national service program. Dr. Obadare has been the recipient of several other prestigious awards and research grants from internationally-acclaimed research institutions. He was a visiting scholar in the autumn of 2004 at the Trans-regional Center for Democratic Studies (TCDS), New School University, New York; and from 1995 to 2001, he was on the faculty of the Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Before joining the academia, he was a national award-winning investigative reporter with *TEMPO* newsmagazine, famous for spearheading the resistance to military rule in Nigeria in the early 1990s. Dr Obadare's scholarship connects various complementary issues in African governance and development, including migration, civil society, the state, religion, NGOs, the public sphere, citizenship, youth, and civic service. His articles have appeared in books and refereed journals, including the *Review of African Political Economy* (ROAPE), *Journal of Civil Society*, *Patterns of Prejudice*, *Africa Development*, and the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. At KU, he will be teaching in the areas of Comparative Societies, Transnational Migration, as well as Civil Society, Social Change, and Development in Africa. He has traveled widely and presented papers at numerous seminars and conferences in different parts of the world.

**Ashford Njogu** will be the new KiSwahili lecturer at KU starting this fall. Mr. Njogu is a graduate of The University of Queensland (Australia) with an M.A. in Social Planning and Development in 2004. He received his bachelor's degree in education from



Kenyatta University (Kenya) in 1996. He taught Kiswahili at the Institute of Modern Languages in the University of Queensland before joining the University of Kansas. At this institute, he was assigned one-on-one teaching to new learners of KiSwahili seeking basic mastery. Along with teaching students at an elementary level, he was also responsible for all aspects of class preparation including

sourcing for supplementary texts and other teaching materials.

Mr. Njogu has also taught English and literature in Kenyan high schools for 7 years. He was the head of the English and library departments. He taught English and literature on a full time basis to high school students which included preparing departmental schemes of work, assessing students, and setting and assigning grades. He was responsible for all aspects of running the department including ordering texts, supervising, and coordinating syllabus coverage. He improved language teaching through participation and involvement in facilitating inter-school language teaching seminars

Ashford is a member of the Kenya National Union of Teachers and has also worked as an examiner with the Kenyan National Examinations Council (KNEC) for several years. He was appointed and trained to mark in English exam papers of the final year of the national high school examination, administered by KNEC. He was responsible for setting the English grammar, writing and literature papers, including preparation of marking schemes. Ashford is a native speaker of KiSwahili and fluent in English. He also speaks Kimeru, his first native language in Kenya. Welcome on board, Ashford!



#### **ARI MPYA, NGUVU MPYA, KASI MPYA**

By: Garth Myers

As the new school year approaches, it is increasingly apparent to me that I am the new Director of the Kansas African Studies Center! I have the exciting task of leading KASC over at least the next three years, and I'd like to start my tenure by inviting all of you to be a part of the excitement.

Let me begin this note by thanking John Janzen for his leadership over the last eight years. KASC would be wandering in the wilderness, if it existed at all, without John's patient guidance. I have much to learn from John's experience, and I am delighted that he has agreed to make this transition a gradual one, to help me into my new responsibilities slowly but surely over the next two months. As you are all aware, the biggest excitement around here stems from the fact that KASC has been awarded the Title VI National Resource Center grant and the Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship grant, and John thus leaves the office with a much-deserved major triumph in hand. We have just successfully submitted the revised budget on the grant to Washington, DC along with the first FLAS paperwork in African Studies history at KU.

Indeed, this marks the first time that KASC is a comprehensive NRC/FLAS center for African Studies.

Congratulations are in order for numerous individuals, since so many people played vital roles in making this success possible. For the next four years, the NRC/FLAS support will make many things possible that have not really been possible at KU before, but the true success of the Center will depend entirely on the active and enthusiastic involvement of our community's faculty, staff, and students. Let me suggest several areas where involvement and engagement is most vital:

### **Conferences**

The NRC grant will provide a base for funding for four academic conferences – one each Spring. Each themed conference will have a leader or leaders to shape its intellectual content and participant list, and to seek out additional funding sources to enhance the conference. I am already working with Gitti Salami and several others in shaping the first of these – on Sufism in Africa, February 22-25, 2007 in conjunction with the Spencer Museum of Art's Spring 2007 exhibit, "A Saint in the City: Amadou Bamba in Senegal." Byron Caminero-Santangelo and I will be working this Fall to begin planning the Spring 2008 conference, on "Culture and the Environment in Africa." John Janzen and Sandra Gray will work together to develop the Spring 2009 conference on a health-related theme, and the Spring 2010 conference on "Doing Business in Africa" will rely on expertise from our CIBER and Economics department. I encourage each individual with interests in these respective themes to keep in close contact with KASC and conference organizers as we develop these.

### **Seminars**

Our seminar series gets a new facelift with financial support from the NRC grant sufficient for at least 2 distinguished visitors per semester. I would like to retain the themed seminar format, but with a sharper focus and a few slight adjustments. My vision for the seminar involves limiting it to four or five talks per semester, each one a 40-minute scholarly talk based around a paper, followed by a question-and-answer period. If we have a faculty colleague taking the lead in that semester's seminar series (for instance, as Hannah Britton so ably did in Spring 2006), then I propose that this colleague look at the four or five papers from that semester as comprising an edited volume of journal articles. If we can successfully produce some form of an edited volume from each seminar, for different subject-appropriate journals, then everybody wins. KASC gains in its intellectual content, and our colleagues and/or students earn scholarly publications. Furthermore, such engaged discussions may lead to synergistic and collaborative projects (see below) that further strengthen African Studies at KU. I already have some ideas of my own for potential seminars (Globalization and Africa, Cities in Africa, North African Culture, Social Psychology in Africa), but it is critical for you to come forward with your own ideas. I invite anyone to propose a seminar on a theme that might produce a focused edited volume.

### **Brownbags**

The Ujamaa Brownbag series will continue to serve as the informal step-sibling to the seminar series. The brownbags make possible a more casual conversation, often engaging people newly involved in African Studies. I anticipate a steady growth in brownbag attendance, and I encourage suggestions for these potential lunchtime discussions in the future.

### **Grants and Projects**

We are very fortunate to have four years of federal funding for our Center, and we have the most generous support package that we have ever had from the College. However, I feel that we need to work to expand our funding base and grant activity, building on the successes we have had with the Longview Foundation and Kansas Humanities Council in the last year. These two projects – focused on outreach to Kansas and Missouri teachers, and African immigrants in Kansas, respectively – will continue in many ways after these specific funds run out. I hope the folks most involved – people like Bianca Elliot, Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka, David Katzman, and many more – will work together with KASC to foster further extensions of both. In addition, Raj Bhala has initiated an exciting project on Trade and Development in Africa that John Janzen and others will assist with, moving forward to future funding. I want KASC to have a half-dozen irons in the fire like this, but obviously I am only one person, and the Center as a whole is too small to keep those irons hot alone. But we have many possibilities here – the strategic partnership with Fort Leavenworth is only beginning (and our Fall seminar series will foster its further expansion); the "identity, self, and place" grants that Glenn Adams has created ought to form a KASC focused project in the near future; and this most recent Summer Institute, on "Africa in the Diaspora," our most successful ever, ought to spin off into grants and projects with a bright future of funding – so please help us build in any direction you want to see us go in. Seminars and brownbags can be – as they already have been – great places to jumpstart these ideas.

### **Outreach**

We will now be hiring a 50% Outreach Coordinator off of the NRC grant, as well as significant funding for our Great Plains Outreach Initiative. Again, this will make new initiatives possible. I want to see us continue to build on the excellent relationships we have with K-12 teachers in the region, African immigrant communities, MAAAS, and Fort Leavenworth, but I also feel our Title VI status and new funding will make new opportunities for us. I invite everyone to help us develop new outreach options even as we continue with our existing relationships.

### **FLAS and African Languages**

FLAS grants have been awarded to five KU graduate students for 2006-07. We will have several more to award in Spring for Summer 2007, and then for 2007-08, Summer 2008, and each of the two years after that. FLAS goes together with the enhancement of our language program. This year, we have supported two graduate students studying Arabic, and two studying Swahili, and we were able to cobble together funding and gain DC's permission for one studying Karimojong. I hope that we can in future support graduate students studying Hausa and Wolof, our two other African languages. Clearly, our language program's strengths were crucial to earning the NRC. Just as clearly, the untimely departure of our KiSwahili professor throws us a setback right at the beginning of this new era, but with support from the College and the NRC, we have been able to hire Ashford Njogu as a full-time lecturer for 2006-07 to cover the full range of KiSwahili courses. We strongly urge the College to push at all costs for a search to replace the KiSwahili professor in 2007-08. Jane Irungu and I will be working with Ashford to help him into place, and hopefully to build on our strengths in KiSwahili rather than stepping backward. I will, for one example, initiate a KiSwahili lunch-table on Thursdays at the Kansas Union as part of this. The NRC also will fund a new Arabic lecturer position beginning in Spring 2007, and we anticipate continuing, spiraling growth in our Arabic offerings thanks to Naima Omar's leadership. I invite everyone to use the FLAS awards as a potential recruitment tool for your top graduate student prospects and a retention incentive for students who have already begun their graduate programs.

### **Curriculum: New Minor, New MA, New Certificate**

We have three curricular areas to build up in the next four years. First, I ask your help in expanding the African Studies Minor that we launched last year as a KASC/AAAS joint venture. Second, this will be the year in which we put the new AAAS MA proposal through its final revisions to gain approval for 2007-08 admissions. I have been the titular graduate director, a position I can no longer manage while fulfilling the duties of Director of KASC, and so I ask all of you to put forth extra efforts to put the MA proposal through its last hurdles. That will be quickly followed by a proposal for a graduate certificate in African Studies that will be available to MA and PhD students throughout the university. Again, I ask for your assistance in guiding this process through, by voicing your views, and engaging your Executive Committee.

There are in fact still further implications of our new status, and other matters to communicate about, but I have already gone on for three pages, so let me close now with some African wisdom. I am just back from Tanzania, and so let me take a page from Tanzania's new President, Jakaya Kikwete, and his campaign slogan (Ari Mpya, Nguvu Mpya, Kasi Mpya), to explain what the new tasks before me

mean to me: "New Effort, New Strength, New Speed." Rest assured, we have incentives for your involvement in all we do at KASC, but I need effort, strength, and speed – both yours and mine – to make this work!



### **NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS**

By: Khalid El-Hassan

#### **Deborah J. "Misty"**

**Gerner**, professor of political science, and internationally noted expert on North Africa and the Middle East died on Monday, June 19, 2006 after a long battle with cancer. Deborah Gerner was an extraordinary scholar and teacher who embodied a deep passion for her field of study and an equally strong ability to engage and inspire her students. She consistently focused on her students as individuals, seeking out their talent and developing it, in the process forging close bonds that in many cases have led to continuing contact long after students have graduated from KU. Her respected books and many honors for teaching reflected her ability to present complex topics objectively and with distinctive clarity. Misty contributed immensely in the establishment and the development of the Kansas African Studies Center at KU and served in its leadership institutions. Despite her illness and suffering, Misty contributed generously in the planning of our 2006 spring seminar on African politics. The last help we received from Misty was her invaluable advice of how to use the email distribution list efficiently. She wrote: "Khalid, If you put the African studies email list into the bcc part of the message header, then people won't have to wade through dozens and dozens of names to get to the message you are sending. This is how I handle a similar list of over 200 people and it works well; the only thing is that you have to include a single name (it could be your own) in the 'to' line, just a thought." Misty also helped us generously in the book drive for Mogadishu University in Somalia. In this regard, she wrote the following "Khalid, Whatever you are doing differently is definitely working: I am getting your emails but without everyone else's name, see below. Is anyone going to tape the talk tomorrow? I would very much like to hear what Abdinuur, Abdrahman, and Osman are going to say, but I am unable to do so (or, rather, I would have to leave at 3:45, which seems too rude). Also, what is the deadline for putting together books for Somalia? I have some I would like to donate but haven't managed to gather them



in one place. I will be in the office tomorrow afternoon from about 1:00 until 3:15 – if I can find a box or two is there someone who could pick up the books before the talk? Thanks – and again, sorry I haven't been able to be more active in the seminar this semester. As Hannah can tell you, it has just not been a good time for me. Carpe diem, Misty.” Misty will be greatly missed in our community. On behalf of our Africanist community at KU and Lawrence, we offer our sincere condolences to her husband Professor Phil Schrodtt, family, and friends. A memorial celebrating the life of Deborah Gerner will be at 3:00 pm on Sunday September 17 at the Ecumenical Christian Ministries at the University of Kansas.



**Professor Misty Gerner (middle) attending 2006 African Studies Seminar on African politics**

**Elizabeth Asiedu**, Associate Professor of Economics, presented a paper at a symposium organized for professors in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HIBCs) at the University of Memphis, April 6-8, 2006. The symposium was jointly organized by the University of Memphis and Michigan State University CIBER. The paper presented was titled: “Africa’s Economies: Realities and Strategies for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development, with special reference to Southern Africa.” Professor Asiedu also presented a paper at a conference on foreign aid, organized by the United Nations University/World Institute of Development Economic Research (UNU/WIDER) in Helsinki, Finland, June 16-18. The title of this paper was, “Does Foreign Aid Promote Economic Growth? A Dynamic Panel Analysis.” Elizabeth was also invited by the United Nations Economic Commission in Africa (ECA) to serve as an outside reviewer for their 2006 annual publication, Economic Report for Africa.

**Dorothy Pennington**, Associate Professor of Communications Studies and African and African American Studies is one of 11 black scholars nationwide recognized in a new book called [Black Pioneers in Communication Research](#), edited by Ronald L. Jackson II and Sonja M. Brown Givens. Professor Pennington was recognized as a

forerunner in the study of interracial communication and as an important contributor to the field. Among her published books is [African-American Women Quitting the Workplace](#) (1999), and [Interracial Communication: Case Studies and Critical Incidents](#) (2003-04). Dorothy will complete a fourth book, [Case Studies in Interracial Communication](#), this summer. In recent years, many of her journal articles and presentations have focused on encouraging a multicultural curriculum in all learning institutions and on creating a foundation to understand culture's role in communication. Born in rural Mississippi, Professor Pennington attended segregated schools and experienced the tensions of the birth of the civil rights movement in her home state. After earning a bachelor's degree in English in three years at Rust College in Holly Springs, Miss., in 1968, Pennington came to KU as a master's degree student in the speech communication and human relations program. Congratulations, Dorothy!



**Garth Myers**, KASC incoming director and associate professor of AAAS and geography has recently finished and sent in the final manuscript for the book, [Cities in Contemporary Africa](#), co-edited with Martin J. Murray for Palgrave Macmillan Press. This summer Garth has begun a two-year research project with NSF funding, focused on 'Peri-Urban Land Reform and Political-Economic Reform in Zanzibar, Tanzania.' He traveled to Zanzibar in June and July 2006, and he presented a paper there at a conference sponsored by the British Institute in Eastern Africa. In Spring 2006, Garth also presented the Humanities and Western Civilization James Seaver Lecture, the Hall Center Theory Across the Disciplines Discussion of Homi Bhabha's, and the Location of Culture Hall Center Celebration of Books.

**Beverly Mack**, professor of African and African American Studies at KU has been promoted to the rank of full Professor effective 2006-2007 academic year. At KASC, we would like to congratulate Professor Mack for this great academic and professional achievement and recognition.

**Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka**, Associate Professor of Theatre and Film/Women's Studies at KU, attended the African Literature Association (ALA) conference in Accra, Ghana, May 17-21. According to Professor Ajayo, it was a highly successful conference with over

350 registered participants and as many scholarly presentations. Literary readings, and theatre productions – dance, drama and musical performances admirably complemented the scholarly presentations. The conference was rounded up with tours to historic sites in the country, further highlighting the thematic focus of the conference: “Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century: Generations in Creative Dialogue.” Folabo presented two papers: “Beyond Negritude: Critical Theories, Local Concepts and Global Paradigms,” at a panel on “African and African Diasporic Performance Theory,” which she had put together and chaired. The second paper titled, “If we count slaves, secrets will... OUT?” and it was presented at a panel on slavery. Professor Ajayi spent three more weeks in Ghana after the conference to enable her to do some research on Efua Sutherland, a pioneer theatre practitioner (playwright, director, children’s drama) in contemporary African theatre. She interviewed some of her relatives, colleagues, former students, and artistes. The month of June was spent in Nigeria, gathering materials on dance at the archives of the Centre for Black Arts and Culture (CBAC) in Lagos, and interviewing women on their gender-specific experiences. Folabo’s summer in Nigeria was rounded up with a public lecture, “Imagine Nigeria,” delivered at the Ajasin University, Akungba in Ondo State, as part of the university Summer Lecture Series. Of course, Folabo had to experience the malaria bug to get the total experience of a summer in West Africa!



**Folabo at the ALA Annual Meeting in Accra, Ghana**

**Jamaine Abidogun**, Associate Professor of History, Southwest Missouri State University, published a chapter, “Yoruba Cultural Influence on Junior and Senior Secondary Curriculum” in *The Yoruba in Transition*, eds. Toyin Falola & Ann Genova, Carolina Academic Press, 2006, pp. 463-490. Jamaine also presented a paper, “Ghana: Education and Culture – the Question of Gender Role Change,” at Africa

Conference 2006 “Movements, Migrations, and Displacements in Africa” at the University of Texas – Austin, March 25-27, 2006.

**Jane Segebrecht**, an undergraduate majoring in Community Health and minoring in African Studies, was in Ghana for the summer for two separate study abroad programs. She attended a program through North Carolina State University and took courses in “Ghanaian Culture and Society,” “Social and Psychological Issues in Contemporary Ghana” and “Twi Language.” With NC State, Jane was based in Accra and worked on capacity building projects for “Catholic Action for Street Children.” She also attended a public health focused program through the University of Utah in Kumasi and surrounding rural areas. With Utah, Jane looked at functioning, effective health projects and programs that are successfully changing health conditions in West Africa. Jane will share her Ghanaian experience with Africanist community at KU in a brownbag this fall.



**Jariat Oyetunji**, a University of Kansas pharmacy student from Nigeria, is one of 12 winners of a \$2,500 Student Leadership Award from the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. Oyetunji is a third-year student in KU’s Doctor of Pharmacy program, a six-year professional degree program similar to degree programs for the practice of law or medicine. Her role as the first president of KU’s chapter of the Student Society of Health-Systems Pharmacy, the student branch of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, made Oyetunji a prime candidate for the award. Under Oyetunji’s leadership, the group has nearly doubled in size from about 30 to approximately 60 members. Michael A. Oszko, Associate Professor of pharmacy at KU Medical Center, and Jeff Pierce, clinical pharmacy coordinator of the Department of Pharmacy at Lawrence Memorial Hospital, helped nominate Oyetunji. Oszko, who serves as faculty adviser for the pharmacy student group, said Oyetunji showed great leadership in getting the organization started. “She was a pioneer,” he said. “They basically started from ground zero.” Oszko says Oyetunji played a major part in getting other pharmacy students involved in the organization, which focuses primarily on careers in hospital pharmacy, and did everything she could to get the group functioning. Oyetunji plans to do a pharmacy practice residency following her graduation from KU in 2007. Her goal is

to enter a specialty residency program. Oyetunji is married to Numukunda Darboe, a first-year medical student at the KU Medical Center from Gambia. She is the daughter of Sim and Bola Oyetunji of Lagos, Nigeria. The award package includes a plaque, a drug information reference library, and a \$2,500 cash award from the society's Research and Education Foundation. The 12 award winners were selected from among 73 applicants. Applicants were evaluated on evidence of interest, achievement and leadership in health-system pharmacy practice; and evidence of involvement and personal leadership attributes demonstrated by testimonials from student peers and professionals.

**Nuruiddin Farah**, the famous Somali novelist, will visit KU and present a public lecture titled "The Fork in the Fork of the Road" on Tuesday September 13. Mr. Farah is considered one of the world's great authors and is winner of the 1998 Neustadt International Prize for Literature. Farah's fiction often deals with women's liberation issues in Africa and particularly his native Somalia. His most famous novel, *Maps* (1986), along with *Gifts* (1993) and *Secrets* (1998), comprise his acclaimed "Blood in the Sun" trilogy. *Knots*, his new novel, is informed by Farah's own recent efforts to reclaim his family's property in Mogadishu, and his experiences trying to negotiate peace among the city's warlords. His lecture is sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities and is supported by the Sosland Foundation of Kansas City.



**Seydou Ouedraogo**, a farmer from Burkina Faso, visited KU and KASC offices and met with KU Africanists and graduate students on April 20, during Oxfam America Trade Justice Week of Action, April 16 to 23. He spoke to the KASC of the connection between low commodity prices in West Africa and farm subsidies in the U.S. and Europe. Ouedraogo stated that hunger in Africa can be best combated by restoring a healthy African market as incentive for food production. Mr. Ouedraogo also visited Kansas State University on April 19 and discussed with the audiences in the effect of U.S. agricultural policies on the farms of West Africa. On April 20, he visited Baldwin City and discussed how poverty and hunger can be addressed both here and abroad through fair trade policies. Nancy Boyda, former candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, and Jim French, farmer and rancher from Reno County, Kansas, participated in the discussion. Seydou is a young cotton producer from the village of Tabou, in the Sissili Province in Southern Burkina Faso. He farms a four-hectare cotton field and a two-hectare cereal

field (for subsistence farming) since 1993. Seydou is the deputy secretary general of the National Union of Cotton Growers in Burkina (UNPC/B in French), an organization created in 1998 which works to defend the interests of cotton producers and other actors within the cotton sector. Seydou is also the deputy secretary general of the Farmers' Confederation of Bukina Faso (CPF in French), the national coordinating institution for all professional organizations, which also works to defend the interests of all Burkina Faso peasants. Additionally, Seydou also works with the West African Network of Peasant Organizations and Agricultural Producers (ROPPA in French), and has served as a delegate to their convention. The host organization, Oxfam America works for long-term solutions to hunger and poverty worldwide.



**Seydou Ouedraogo speaking to KU Africanist faculty and students**

**Bill Tuttle**, Professor of African American history, received the Steeples Service to Kansans Award this year (2006). In 2006-2007, Professor Tuttle will be the John Adams Distinguished Fulbright Chair in American History at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

**John Mutiso**, undergraduate student from Nairobi, Kenya, is the first recipient of the John Colvin Robeson Family Scholarship for the KU School of Engineering. Recipients of the new civil engineering scholarship, created for international students from developing countries, state a commitment to return to their home countries and use their education to help improve their communities and nations. "In Kenya, there's a lot of improper construction," said Mutiso, who is majoring in civil engineering and intends to go home after graduation to develop stable buildings in urban areas and help build the country. Leawood, Kansas resident Daniel

Robeson, and his brother, Mark Robeson, of Los Angeles, created the scholarship. When the brothers received an inheritance from their late uncle John Robeson, they wanted to find a way to both memorialize him and help people in another part of the world. The two considered several ideas, including irrigation construction projects, food assistance programs, and medical care. Finally over a year later, they settled on



something that made incredible sense, something that is highly transportable, very difficult to take away from someone, and could help solve today's needs as well as the needs of the future. They both agreed that the perfect answer to these needs is education." The brothers gave \$50,000 to KU Endowment to create the scholarship. Mutiso believes that the financial assistance of the scholarship would help him reduce the time he spends working, currently more than 30 hours each weekend, and allow him more time to focus on school. His dad passed away two years ago, and he has a younger brother at home. He has been on his own for several years, supporting himself. Mutiso will be the first recipient of the scholarship when he receives it for the 2006-2007 academic year.

**Kelsey Needham**, a graduate student in Anthropology, presented her MA work at MAAAS 2005 annual meeting in Springfield, MO and at the Society for Applied Anthropology and Human Biology Association meetings in Anchorage, Alaska. The title of her paper at the MAAAS conference was "Beer production, consumption, and sale among the Karimojong: A preliminary assessment of increased commercialization on nutrition and social regulations of drinking." For the Human Biology Association she presented "The influence of commercialization on the direct and indirect nutritional value of sorghum beer in the diets of the Karimojong." Kelsey also presented with Professor Sandra Gray "Even the tobacco gets drunk.": The influence of beer on the health of the Karimojong." at World on the Edge, the 2006 meetings of The Society for Applied Anthropology, Vancouver, Canada, on March, 2006. Kelsey finished her MA in Biological Anthropology and defended her thesis successfully this summer. Her thesis addresses increased beer consumption and commercialization among the Karimojong of Uganda. She will start the PhD program in Biomedical Anthropology at Binghamton University (in New York) in the Fall.

**Dr. Abdinur Mohamud**, North-America representative of Mogadishu University in Somalia, visited KU on Thursday,

April 27. Dr. Mohamud is an educational consultant with the Lau Resource Center for English as a Second Language, Bilingual, and Multi-cultural Education of the State of Ohio Department of Education. He is also the current president of Sunrise Academy Board of Education, which is a premier K-8 chartered Islamic school in Hilliard, Ohio, serving the Muslim community in Columbus and its vicinity. In his visit to KU, Dr. Mohamud discussed, with AAAS and KASC, the existing relationship between Kansas University and Mogadishu University. He also participated in a seminar titled, "A Nation without Government: Somalia Case Study."



**Dr. Abdinur Mohamud (right) with key players in the KU-MU relationship**

**Kwame Anthony Appiah** will be visiting KU in March 2007. Professor Appiah is a well-known Africanist scholar, born in London (where his Ghanaian father was a law student), and raised in Ghana. He received his education from Cambridge University in England, where he took both B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in philosophy. His dissertation explored the



foundations of probabilistic semantics. Once revised, these arguments were published by Cambridge University Press as *Assertion and Conditionals*. Out of that first monograph grew a second book, *For Truth in Semantics*, which dealt with Michael Dummett's defenses of semantic anti-realism. Since Cambridge, he has taught at Yale, Cornell, Duke, and Harvard universities and lectured at many other institutions in the United States, Germany, Ghana and South Africa, as well as at the école des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. He is now a member of the Princeton University faculty, where he is a member of the Philosophy Department and the University Center for Human Values. Professor Appiah will present a public lecture titled, "Making Sense of Moral Conflict,"

sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities, on March 8, 2007.

**Jim French**, Oxfam regional coordinator and farmer of wheat, cattle, and grain sorghum from Partridge, Kansas, and Charlie Melander, a wheat and row crop farmer from Assaria, KS, joined farmers from Texas, Illinois, Virginia, and Vermont in a tour of Mali and Senegal, from July 9 to July 16. The selected group of U.S. farmers represents a broad spectrum of commodity production. The tour, hosted by Oxfam America, gave U.S. farmers the opportunity to meet West African farmers and visited rural agricultural communities. This face-to-face experience provided a close look at the lives of rural Africans in the challenging context of the global economy. Over 80% of the world's poorest people, like these in West Africa, live in rural areas and depend largely on agriculture for their livelihoods. The tour had implications that go beyond farming; it also touched on issues like hunger, poverty, immigration, and political stability. Oxfam America, an international development agency, believes that by reforming trade rules and U.S. agricultural policies, benefits could flow both to impoverished African economies and to U.S. farms. This tour comes at a crucial point in time as the recent Doha talks in the WTO continue, and as the U.S. Congress looks to authorize a new farm bill in 2007. Upon returning from this educational journey, Jim and Charlie will have the opportunities to share their West African experiences with our KU Africanist community on Friday, August 25.



**Jim French cultivating sorghum with oxen in the Dafara agricultural village in the Ouelessabougou region of Mali**

**Dr. Francois Strydom**, Director of Student Development and Success at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa, visited KU on July 17-18, 2006. At KU, Dr. Strydom visited different offices related to student development and international education. At KASC offices, Dr. Strydom discussed with Khalid El-Hassan opportunities of exchange and study abroad of students between KU and Free State University in South Africa.



**Dr. Francois Strydom at the KASC offices**

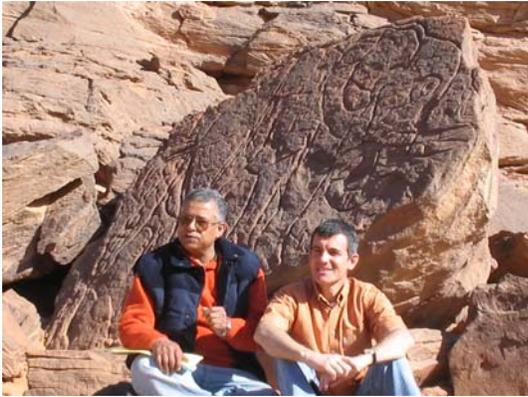
**Selbee Diouf**, graduate student in English, successfully defended her PhD dissertation on Monday, April 17. Her dissertation topic, "Intersections of Race and Gender in Three Black Women's Texts," was successfully supervised by Professor Maryemma Graham. Our congratulations go to Selbee and Maryemma for this big achievement. Selbee and her daughters Awa and Rokhaya left for Senegal, after living in Lawrence for almost six years. We wish them the best in their life in Senegal. **Osman Seck**, Ph.D. student in economics from Senegal, also defended his PhD dissertation successfully in the spring. Osman will be teaching economics in California starting this fall.



**Osman Seck (right) and Selbee Diouf (left) attending African Studies Council meeting, May 2006**

**Giuma M. Anag**, Chairperson of the Libyan Department of Archaeology 'DoA', will visit KU August 11 to August 18. Giuma attended school at KU as an undergraduate and graduate student in Anthropology. He received his B.A. in 1972 and Masters in Anthropology in 1982. He has been working in the Libyan Department of Archaeology since 1982. Giuma has recently been appointed to the Chairperson of the DoA. Prior to that, he was the DoA advisor and a senior archaeologist for a number of years. DoA is the government scientific agency that supervises all archaeological sites, activities,

and museums in Libya – a country with one of the richest and most diversified cultural heritage in North Africa, stretching from the Lower Paleolithic to the present, including the fabulous prehistoric art open-air galleries of both multi-color paintings and engravings, as well as the unique and well preserved Greco-Roman sites. Mr. Anag will be a guest of the State Department to tour the USA, July 23 to August.11, to meet with a number of American institutions, universities, and museums, as relations are improving between the two countries.



Giuma Anag (left) at Alfeel archeological site, Libya



### THE AFRICAN DIASPORA: THE EXPERIENCE OF A KU GRADUATE STUDENT

Report on 2006 Teacher Summer Institute

By: Kendra L. Fullwood

KU Graduate Student in English

“Kendra, are there any Black people in Kansas? Do you see Black people everyday? How often do you see ‘us’? Are you okay out there by yourself? How is it out there in the Midwest?” I am bombarded with these inquiries each time I go home to North Carolina from the University of Kansas. Even though I have heard my family say, during gatherings and reunions, that “Black people are everywhere,” I wonder if they know exactly how it is that “Black people are everywhere.” Often, we converse on topics and say things that become commonplace, which results in perfunctory behavior; we do not really process what it means and what history and/or context from which we draw our information. Apparently, my family and friends do not think about the profundity of black people being everywhere, particularly since they have questioned the very existence of Black people in Kansas. All of these thoughts resurfaced in my mind while participating in a 2-week seminar on the African Diaspora.

The Kansas African Studies Center’s Teacher Summer Institute could not have come at a more vital moment in my personal and academic career, for in my studies of African American expression (rhetoric and literature), I must

consider the total spectrum of the African American experience (noting that without the “African” there would be no “American” blacks). The institute was held in Bailey Hall, June 12-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006, and was the first time I had witnessed a comprehensive approach to the Black experience. When I discovered the theme “Africa in the Diaspora: A Paradigm of Black Connectedness,” I instantly knew that this would be the place to “jumpstart” my professional interest in the language and expression of people of African descent. As a graduate student in English focusing on the African American preacher as a rhetorician, I am also especially concerned with helping 21<sup>st</sup> century students acquire multiple rhetorical strategies, which will allow them to navigate among various competing discourses; studying the African American preacher will be the model from which I can create my analysis because she/he has had to navigate discourses and social situations historically.



Professor Ronald Bailey presenting the first lecture of the Institute

Listening to the first lecture on Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, “Connecting Black People: A Curriculum Challenge Facing K-12 and University Educators,” has given me further insight on socio-historical issues relative to language and discourse. As Professor Ronald Bailey, from Northeastern University’s African American Studies Department, begins discussing the four concepts of African American Studies: color, class, culture, and consciousness, I begin to see the connection: these concepts can serve as a guide for me! I can incorporate them into a pedagogical approach, as a way to get students to tap into a discourse that may be different from their own; then, they may better understand other discourses as a part of the American continuum of expression—having a voice and having a say.

These rhetorical practices that I am trying to tap into go back to West African oral practices. In order for me to understand that, I need to look to the field of geography to determine what particular countries on the West Coast of Africa are most affected by the slave trade; additionally, this can possibly help narrow my focus to Eastern Seaboard States of the United States, (like North

Carolina and South Carolina). Significantly, I have the example of my own ancestors who were brought to the shores of Brunswick County, NC in the 1790's. Knowing this may even broaden my own knowledge about the discourse community to which I belong and the rhetorical legacy that I embrace, for I am descended from a long line of preachers that possibly extends back to the 1800's. Professor Garth Myers' presentation, "Africa in the Diaspora: A Geographical Perspective," on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> contributes to this outlook and enlightenment on African geography, for I had not even contemplated the connection of geography to African American rhetoric prior to his presentation. And, geography is significant for studying the African American preacher, for it helps to counter the myopic view of Christianity as the only religion significant to Black people.

When thinking about the Black preacher, he too, has navigated between discourses and social situations to be an effective leader in the community. However, Blacks have not always been Christians and this might suggest that the rhetoric of the Black preacher possibly emerges from something other than Christianity. The impetus for this breadth of new knowledge comes on Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>; Professor Peter Ukpokodu gives a lecture entitled "African Traditional Religions in the Diaspora: Condomble in Brazil." He affirms that I simply cannot limit my scope to the religion of Christianity. Professor Ukpokodu's presentation has broadened my awareness of religious consciousness, allowing me to connect the rhetorical practices of African Traditional Religions that may have survived and transmitted through the African American preacher. And if this is true, I would need to find a scholarly route that would describe how the rhetoric occurred. Little did I know that my answer would come so quickly.

Professor Maryemma Graham gives a lecture entitled, "Understanding African American Expressive Culture and Consciousness" on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. One of the major points from her discussion is "cultural creolization," which "refers to a process whereby cultures come together and are recoded into a new system of meaning" (Graham). Upon hearing this, I now understand that cultural creolization can inform my thinking about the transmission of the rhetoric of African Traditional Religions through the Black preacher. While thinking on this, the presentation by Imam Omar Hazim, from the Topeka Islamic Center on Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> has also affirmed that Christianity is not the sole Black religion; I need to consider Islam. I can certainly look at the rhetorical practices of Islamic leaders in their speech delivery, for Africans were Muslims before they were brought to this country! Africans have maintained their way of life through the African worldview, a view that is comprised of unity, spirituality, community, and interconnectedness with individuals and the world. This

African worldview is perpetuated in the rhetoric of Black people today.



**Professor Maryemma Graham talking to the participants of Teacher Summer Institute on African Diaspora**

Likewise, the presentation by Tony Daniels and Bob Kendrick on "Athletic Talent and African American Participation in Sports," given on Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, makes reference to this "African worldview" in understanding the Black male athlete. They also discuss common misconceptions about black athletes; what is considered style and individuality by the black athlete is misconstrued by the media and other factions as arrogance and poor sportsmanship. I instantly connected rhetoric to that, for African American rhetoric is historically linked to struggle and individuality, seeking to be treated as knowledgeable subjects instead of lifeless objects. Therefore, I have another dimension of African American rhetoric to consider, making college athletes—who fill many of my classes—and their consciousness of language more palpable, so that they can use it as a leverage to be effective in the classroom, the sports environment, and the community environment.

Lastly, one other presentation has afforded me the opportunity to contemplate the gravity of African American rhetoric as a course of study. Professor Omiunota Ukpokodu, from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, presented on Wednesday, June 21 on "Educational Problems in Minority Schools." These educational problems, according to Professor Ukpokodu, seem to emanate from the lack of language awareness and diversity in our public schools. This was helpful because my future endeavor is to teach at the college level, and many of the freshmen students entering college will probably come from experiences such as those Prof. Ukpokodu describes. This adds to my aim, reminding me to adapt innovative and creative strategies for students in a post-modern society.

What does all of this really mean? To recognize our heritage and invoke the spirits and creativity of our African ancestors is needed to consider the breadth and scope of Black American rhetoric. One must not start here in America, but as Prof. Garth Myers' lecture has taught me, one must start and look at the creative and literary practices of people in Africa and the dispersal of Africans in the world. However, I now know that all of my ideas explored in this essay are not relevant in preparing for future dissertation writing, but I can use my dissertation as a template for a life long career of study and research on the African American preacher and African American rhetoric.



**Participants of the Teacher Summer Institute, Museum of Jazz and Negro League Baseball Hall of Fame, June 2006**

I am so grateful for the wealth of information on African Diaspora Studies that I gained from the KASC's Summer Institute. My interest in rhetoric does not have to remain under the realm of English, for it has now embraced an interdisciplinary approach; I have gained valuable insights from the field of geography, sociology, psychology, sports, education, religion, and of course African and African American Studies. Scholars within the field of English have also discussed the importance of an interdisciplinary approach. In "Rhetoric and Graduate Studies: Teaching in a Postmodern Age," Roxanne Mountford and Nedra Reynolds endorse the "remappings and rewritings of the core graduate-level course in rhetorical theory and history . . . believing that the interdisciplinary interest in rhetoric bodes well for graduate students" (193). And in their book, *The Ends of Rhetoric: History, Theory, Practice*, John Bender and David Wellbery's emphasis on "rhetoricity" is concomitant with the issue of rhetoric as an interdisciplinary approach: "Rhetoric today is neither a unified doctrine nor a coherent set of discursive practices . . . It is a trans-disciplinary field of practice and intellectual concern. . . The term 'rhetoricity' is termed because it resists a totalizing theory of rhetoric but instead becomes something like the condition of our existence" (13). In this case, "rhetoricity" suits my interest well, for the motif of "existence" is rampant in African-American history, language, and culture.

And, back to the issue of "existing," I am now equipped with this comprehensive knowledge of Africans in the Diaspora to answer questions that my family members pose. I have gained a greater appreciation for my African heritage, a greater appreciation for the experiences of all Black people, and new knowledge on African American history in Kansas. I can quell the fears of my family and friends by sharing with them not only how Black people came to Kansas, but how it came to be that "Black people are everywhere."



**KASC FALL 2006 PHOTO GALLERY**



**Kevin Willmott, Associate Professor of Film and Theatre, discussing his movie *CSA: The Confederate States of America* with the participants of the 2006 Teacher Summer Institute**



**Melissa Filippi-Franz (left), graduate student in anthropology, with Somali women at a Kansas City community gathering**



**The Lawrence African migration meeting, “Identity, Voice, and Community Among New African Immigrants to Kansas,” Lawrence Public Library, March 27, 2006**



**African Studies Spring Council Meeting, May 2006**



**Professor Sultan Abou-Ali, of Zagazig University, addressing the “Business and Islam” conference, April 7, 2006**



**“Africa in the Diaspora” Teacher Summer Institute; the feast!**



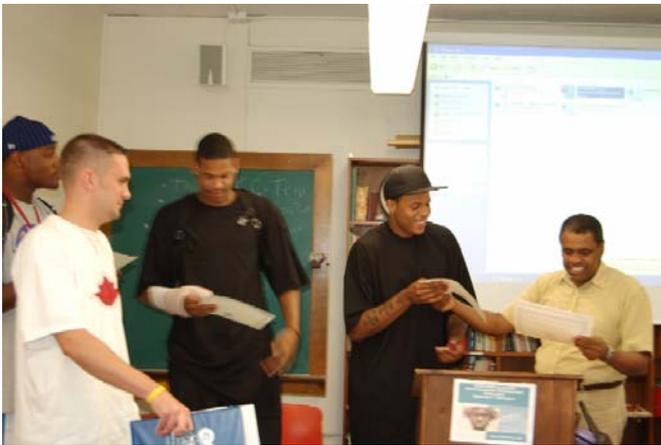
**Executives of the United Sudanese Association (USA) at the African migration meeting in Kansas City, May 1, 2006**



**Kansas City African migration meeting at Jewish Vocational Services, May 1, 2006**



**Djembe Kaam drumming group of Kansas City, performing the closing ceremony for the 2006 Teacher Summer Institute**



**Khalid El-Hassan, Director of Teacher Summer Institute, handing out Institute attendance certificate to Brandon Rush, KU student athlete**



**"Africa in the Diaspora" Teacher Summer Institute; the dance!**



**Imam Omar Hazim of Topeka Islamic Center sharing his experiences with the participants of the 2006 Teacher Summer Institute**

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By giving to KASC, you contribute to African academic activities, outreach, special events, and research programs like those described in the preceding pages of this newsletter.

- **KASC** supports the development of new courses, faculty and student research travel for study of African languages, and the Africana Library at KU.
- **KASC** promotes knowledge of Africa through academic conferences, seminars, brownbags and public lectures, cultural performances, exhibits, recitals, and festival celebrations.
- **KASC** organizes the annual teacher summer institute and other outreach programs that serve K-12 and post-secondary schools throughout the Great Plains region.

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Kansas African Studies Center

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