A Word from the Director

Dr. Glenn Adams

For me, the most compelling attraction of being a university professor is the lifetime opportunity it provides for learning and fresh discovery. Perhaps that’s why I have found the opportunity to serve as acting director so rewarding. Talk about higher education! I have learned much— including some things I probably wish I hadn’t—about the way the university system works (or sometimes doesn’t). A definite highlight of being acting director has been the opportunity to engage more deeply with the intellectual work of various KASC colleagues. As I have noted before, we have impressive expertise across a wide range of disciplines and many of our colleagues have strong individual reputations for excellence within their discipline. I think the next goal in our development should be to work on interdisciplinary collaboration within KASC to forge a more coherent community identity and a collective reputation for excellence.

Some of our intellectual work and reputation for collective excellence was on display at the 2009 meeting of the African Studies Association, where Garth, John Janzen, Liz MacGonagle, Ebenezer Obadare, and Katie Rhine gave presentations; Emmanuel, Shiferaw Assefa, Jane Irungu, and I presented KASC at various NRC meetings; and all of us joined with various friends of KASC (e.g., Reinhold Janzen, Fiona McLaughlin, and Leo Villalón) to sustain the emerging ASA tradition of a KU mini-reception. We hope to see you next November in San Francisco for the KASC mini-reception at the 2010 ASA meeting!

In this dismal budgetary and financial climate, KASC remains one of the few growth areas at KU. This December we invited three candidates to interview for a tenure-track position as assistant professor of Kiswahili. We have made an offer to one of the candidates and hope to conclude negotiations in the near future. The new assistant professor will join our new full-time lecturer in Kiswahili, Michael Kariuki, who joined us in October after Ashford Njogu left to take a position in Washington DC. Ashford’s departure stirred up very mixed feelings in the KASC office. On one hand, we were very happy to see Ashford’s dedication and excellent work rewarded with an excellent career opportunity. On the other hand, we were very sorry to lose such a good colleague, especially in the middle of the semester’s classes. However, the ever-dependable Ashford worked hard to find a competent replacement and ease the transition.

Please join me in welcoming Michael to KASC and wishing Ashford well in his new position. The work of colleagues like Ashford is a good example of another lesson I have learned during this acting director experience: the extent to which development/progress in African Studies—both at the global level as an academic field and at the local level of KASC—depends on personal vision and action. Yes, there are institutional mechanisms that support the mission of African Studies, but these require imaginative effort from the likes of you and me to achieve their purpose. Although we benefit here at KASC from the dedicated and dynamic leadership of Director Garth Myers and Associate Director Jane Irungu, the success of our Center really does depend on input from the rest of us. In this season of resolutions, I invite you to consider ways to contribute to KASC and nurture its development into a vibrant intellectual community.

I didn’t set out to make a fund-raising pitch here, but one way to contribute is financially through donations to the KASC endowment account. This has been another surprising lesson of the acting director experience: realizing the importance of fund-raising in the profile of administrative duties. In the current political-economic climate, it is likely that academic institutions will increasingly need to fend for themselves. Donations to the KASC endowment insure that we have funds for conference receptions, to provide modest entertainment for speakers, and to receive visiting dignitaries (such as the Emir of Machina or former President of Cape Verde) in a reasonably comfortable space. The peak season for charitable giving is over, but I encourage you to remember KASC when thinking about gifts to the community.

Beyond fund-raising, the more important sense in which we can contribute is through active participation in KASC events. I know that all of us have multiple constituencies laying claim to our time and attention. Still, I challenge everyone—especially those of us who regularly benefit from KASC support—to make participation in KASC events a personal priority. It is through our collective participation in these events—not the presence or absence of an office or NRC funding—that we actively constitute our community.

The African Trade and Development Conference that we hosted last October is a good example of the collective effort about which I speak. The conference featured keynote addresses by three presenters—Kwabena Gyimah-Brempong (South Florida), Mwangi wa Githinji (UMass) and Richard Mshomba (LaSalle University)—each scouted/facilitated by a different KASC member. An additional 15 speakers gave presentations, including KASC affiliates Raj Bhala, Mary Orije Mba, and Brett Craig. Elizabeth Asiedu and Mohamed El-Hodiri arranged to edit a special issue of the Journal of African Development in which they will publish several of the papers from the conference.

Elizabeth and Mohamed also volunteered to chair conference sessions, as did Ebenezer, Garth, Byron, Megan Greene, and John Kennedy. Shiferaw and Makame Muhajir did great service to KASC in helping to resolve some last-minute logistical issues. Last, but not least, our KASC office staff worked well beyond their stated duties to insure the success of the event: Jane did much of the conference planning, Craig covered logistical arrangements and last-minute emergencies, and our undergraduate assistants (Nefertari Hanna and Hilary Cook-Borg) cheerfully handled many of the administrative details. By all accounts, the event was a huge success.

Another huge success was the 2009 installment of the Marwa Lecture series, this year by Amiri Baraka (SUNY-Stony Brook). Originally scheduled for Alderson Auditorium, the turnout was so massive that we had to move the event to Woodruff Auditorium. The packed crowd was not disappointed, as Prof. Baraka delivered one of the most inspiring and intellectually provocative lectures I have seen since coming to KU in 2001.

Our Fall 2009 seminar series featured 3 presenta
Speaking of secrets, I have a confession to make. Prior to this year, I was not exactly a regular attendee of the presentations in the Ujamaa Brownbag series. This semester I attended all three presentations in the series, and I was deeply impressed by the quality of what I heard. Setting an example that we strongly encourage all recipients of KASC fellowships to follow, Phia Salter led off the series in September with a presentation about the field research in Ghana that she conducted last year with KASC funding from an Oswald Family Fellowship. Brad Schmidt and Jamie Shinn followed in October with inspiring discussions of overseas study experiences. Heather Aldersey finished up the series in November with a presentation of her proposed MA research on conceptions of disability in African settings. If, like me, you have not been a regular attendee of the Ujamaa brownbag series, please join us during Spring 2010 to hear what you’ve been missing.

The Ujamaa brownbag series is just one of the KASC events to keep in mind during Spring 2010. To coincide with the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, our Spring series will consider some of the broader social and political issues associated with sport in Africa. Please join us at 9:00 AM on June 11 (location TBA) when South Africa’s Bafana Bafana will face Mexico in the opening World Cup match. Hannah Britton has arranged for Kondwani Chirambo to visit KU on February 22 to discuss challenges of building AIDS-resistant democracies in Africa. Folabo Ajayi-Soyinka and Mohamed El-Hodiri are planning a literary workshop for the first weekend in March (5-6). Finally, Shiferaw Assefa and Ken Lohrentz have arranged for the African Librarians Council to hold its annual meeting at KU in April (15-17), the first time in the organization’s long history that they will hold their meeting here. Look for details and dates of these and other events in the forthcoming calendar. Looking even further ahead, Jane is hard at work planning the annual KASC summer institute for June 2010, Katie Rhine and John Janzen are planning our next major conference (on medical anthropology and health in Africa) for September 2010, and Hannah, Liz, Garth, and I are fully engaged in writing a proposal for Title VI NRC/FLAS awards to provide the funding to realize our ambitious plans for KASC during the next 4 years. If you happen to get requests for information in connection with this grant proposal process, we humbly ask for your prompt and thorough compliance.

Speaking of FLAS fellowships, we are proceeding with a call for applications for awards that we will make for Summer 2010 and academic year 2010-2011 (the latter contingent on acceptance of our proposal). In a new development, we will open the FLAS competition to qualified undergraduates as well as graduate students to be funded. The deadline for applications is February 1. More information and applications are available on the KASC website. Please encourage talented graduate and undergraduate students to consider this source of funding.

Finally, I thank everyone for their support of KASC during the past semester: by attending events, planning programming, or performing other service. A special note of appreciation and thanks goes to KASC office staff, who regularly toil above and beyond the requirements of their job descriptions for less remuneration that they deserve. Best wishes to all KASC colleagues and friends of KASC for a happy and productive 2010. May KASC continue to thrive in the new decade and develop into a leading site for African Studies!
I have now been in Uganda for three months doing fieldwork for my PhD dissertation. I came here to investigate the role of institutional and local culture, social and political networks, and the environment in cooperatives’ access to coffee certifications, governance of certifications, and in the impacts that certifications have on those they are meant to benefit – in this case, smallholder coffee farmers. Peace Kawomera, in Mbale, Eastern Region, Uganda is my third case study, after CECOCAFEN/UCAN San Ramón in Nicaragua, and Cooxupé in Brazil. My approach to my relationships with all of the cooperatives I work with is to make sure that the work I do benefits the cooperative and its members, as well as my own research, which is primarily ethnographic. In this way, I essentially came here available to work with the cooperative on projects that it wants assistance on, because I can actually improve my own skills in project development and writing, and because doing so also inserts me into the structure of the cooperative itself, allowing me to know it infinitely better than if I had simply arrived and performed thirty farm surveys and a set of staff interviews over a shorter period.

I had met and conversed with JJ Keki, Peace Kawomera’s Director a few years ago at the USFT Convergence in Boston, and was impressed by the story and vision of the cooperative. I knew it would make an interesting and unique case study in my research. After conversations last year with Ben at Thanksgiving Coffee, and some email exchanges with JJ, it seemed that my experience managing a community agroecotourism project in Nicaragua could be useful to PK. The initial idea is that I would work with PK to do a diagnostic study on the development of such a project with their members, as well as do farm surveys and interviews for my dissertation research. This project started in full force in January. I began work with the Field Facilitators, who are farmer-members employed by Peace Kawomera as trainers and promoters, to basically inventory the potential tourism attractions, the infrastructure and conditions, and services of the area covered by Peace Kawomera, which covers Namanyonyi Subcounty in Mbale District.

Which parishes and which villages, should benefit from tourism – where should visitors go? I am starting to get my own ideas as to this question based on my visits to the different farm groups, but I feel it is super important that we actually, systematically address this question, so that we can have answers that are fair and logical. There is already a bit of tension within the cooperative as to who benefits from tourism visits, because generally speaking the Jewish members benefit more than the Christian or Muslim members from the tourists and delegations that do already come. So I am trying to get that conversation started about which villages will actually receive visitors, and how the entire cooperative and community will benefit materially from those visits.
One characteristic of Peace Kawomera, at least right now as the coffee harvest ends and the vanilla-buying season begins, is that the staff and Board are all overwhelmed, and putting effort into long-term planning and projects is difficult. This is not helped by the fact that the cooperative as an organization is very young, and its management and staff are gaining experience running an organization that has a different vision than other cooperative organizations in the area, one that requires more resources. Promoting interfaith relations, peace, and rural development requires much more than just commercializing coffee; and even the task of producing and delivering quality coffee requires a set of very developed skills. Peace Kawomera is a learning organization in both these respects.

For this reason I am also working with the Peace Kawomera Staff Agronomist to write a proposal for a small grant from the ILO for training and capacity-building. We have succeeded in narrowing down the focus of the grant from every problem PK has, to strengthening management and administration systems and strengthening farmer groups, member participation, and extension services. I am currently spending my mornings revising the second version of this grant, and we hope to submit it to the ILO early next year. In the afternoons, I have been working with the six PK Field Facilitators (themselves farmers who are hired and trained essentially to be extension agents using the Farmer Field School method) to do research on what kinds of trees farmers prefer in their coffee gardens and of trees farmers prefer in their coffee gardens and what will protect the coffee, and protect the farmers’ livelihoods. I am spending my spare time mostly on working with all of the staff and Board members to compile information and text for the future Peace Kawomera website. We have gotten as far as designing the structure of it, and now are working on information. It is moving along, but I think it will be an ongoing project for the next few months.

All of this collaborative volunteer work with the cooperative is incredibly advantageous to my PhD research. It is helping me to get a deep knowledge of the cooperative, the region, and all of the political ecological issues surrounding coffee farming here. Walking the subcounty with the Field Facilitators every day as part of the tourism project diagnostic is especially helping me to understand how I should distribute my farm surveys amongst the thirty-five farmer groups of the cooperative by giving me detailed knowledge of the geographic variations between the groups and between parishes.

The idea here is to mitigate the long-term impacts of climate change, which here include increased drought as well as irregular and more forceful rains, through reforestation. Trees are what will protect the coffee, and protect the farmers’ livelihoods. I am spending my spare time mostly on working with all of the staff and Board members to compile information and text for the future Peace Kawomera website. We have gotten as far as designing the structure of it, and now are working on information. It is moving along, but I think it will be an ongoing project for the next few months.

Jane Irungu defended her dissertation entitled “The Relationship Between Engagement and Perceived Academic, Personal, and Social Outcomes for Senior International Undergraduate Students in Research Universities.” Congratulations, Jane!


Kathryn Rhine has had two articles published and has presented papers at four conferences: the Society for Medical Anthropology, the American Anthropological Association, the African Studies Association, and the International Association of Relationship Research. She also presented a paper for the KASC seminar series. Rhine is beginning the process of revising her dissertation into a book manuscript, and has been awarded a Franklin Research Grant from the American Philosophical Society for fieldwork in Nigeria this summer.

Bianca Elliott teaches at Lansing High School in Lansing, Kansas. She teaches in the Social Science department and the World Language department (Spanish). She recently defended her dissertation entitled ‘Effective Teacher Characteristics: A Two-Nation Comparative Study,’ and has presented at various international conferences. She travels internationally almost every summer and is willing to share her travel experiences with others. She is a freelance writer, author, and reviewer for various materials. She and her husband have two grown sons and six grandchildren. Bianca and her husband are owned by a cat. Elliott has been an active affiliate of KASC for many years. She regularly presents during the annual teacher summer institute and works on other outreach projects on behalf of KASC. Congratulations, Bianca!

Giselle Anatol has a second collection of essays, Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays (Praeger/Greenwood Press) which came out in May. Besides editing the volume, Anatol wrote a brief introduction and one chapter, “The Replication of Victorian Racial Ideology in Harry Potter” (109-26). Given the success of the two Potter books and her current research on the soucouyant and other vampires of the African diaspora, Anatol was approached by Palgrave to edit a volume of essays on the Twilight series by Stephenie Meyer; she accepted the invitation, sent out a call for abstracts, and is in the process of making the final selections.

Christina Lux presented “Fluid Attachment: An Ethics of Relation in Véronique Tadio’s Reine Pokou” at the National Women’s Studies Association in Atlanta, Georgia (November 2009), with the support of a Faculty Professional Development Travel Grant from the Kansas African Studies Center. This Spring she will present “Dictating the Nation: Multilingual Textuality in Theresa Cha’s Dictée” at the Association for Asian American Studies in Austin, Texas (April 2010). During the fall, she resubmitted a revised article on Kourouma’s novel “Allah n’est pas oblige” to Research in African Literatures. Her poetry is forthcoming in Women’s Studies Quarterly (Spring 2010).

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Assistant Professor of AAAS, published an essay, “Vengeance Without Justice, Injustice Without Retribution: The Afro-American Council’s Struggle Against Racial Violence” in an edited volume, African Americans on the Great Plains. He also participated on two panels entitled, “New Negros in a New Light: Black Activism in the Upper South, 1918-


Ruben Afagla recently received the Teacher of the Month Award. He was nominated by the Pi Beta Phi Sorority for this award in February. The sorority created this award in order to have better contact with the faculty and staff on campus. Each month members of the sorority submit names of professors, GTAs, etc. whom they feel have made an impact on them and their education. It is rare that a GTA is awarded this honor. The Sorority hosted a dinner in his honor to present him with a certificate and a gift for his contributions. Also, Afagla was awarded a Summer Research Fellowship for summer 2008. Factors that were considered include appointment as a teaching assistant, recommendation from the department, and superior academic performance. Afagla is a PhD student and AMS GTA.

1929” and “Re-examination of Black Leadership in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries,” at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. In addition, Professor Alexander is completing his manuscript, We Know Our Rights and Have the Courage to Defend Them: African American Civil Rights Organizations in the Age of Accommodation, 1883-1909, for the University of Pennsylvania Press.

Elizabeth MacGonagle completed an essay (co-authored with Kim Warren) on identities and encounters between African Americans and West Africans. It will be published in the edited volume African Hosts and Their Guests: Cultural Dynamics of Tourism in Africa. In November 2009 MacGonagle presented a paper on “Imagining the Past at Great Zimbabwe” at the annual African Studies Association meeting. She is writing a related essay that will appear in an edited volume titled Memory, Public History, and Representations of the Past: Africa and Its Diasporas. This work is part of a larger book project that examines intersections between history and memory at several UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the African continent.

Glenn Adams (KASC), Heather Aldersey (Disability and Rehabilitation Studies), John Janzen (Anthropology), and Katherine Rhine (Anthropology) are co-organizing a KASC-sponsored conference titled, “Medical Anthropology in Global Africa: Current Trends in Scholarship and Practice,” to be held at KU between September 16th and 18th, 2010. This conference aims to trace the contributions that Africanist scholarship has made on an array of global health themes, including: global aid, development, and politics; technologies, pharmaceuticals, and bioethics; human development, disability, and chronic disorders; public health, development and medical professionalization; violence, trauma, memory, and spirituality; epidemiology, population, and migration studies; gender, sexuality and reproductive health, and other issues of pressing public concern. Carolyn Sargent, Professor of Anthropology at the Washington University of St. Louis and President of the Society for Medical Anthropology will be giving the keynote address.
African cultures are some of the richest and oldest in the world. The 2010 Teacher Summer Institute will focus on enhancing K-12 teacher knowledge about Africa as well discussing how to use the arts and cultural events to teach about Africa. KU graduate students and upper level undergraduate students who wish to enhance their knowledge of Africa will also find these two weeks very enlightening.

This Institute is recommended for all teachers and educators who teach about Africa in their classrooms, or who seek quality information and thought-provoking discussion about different aspects of African art and culture. The daily format will include an array of learning sessions– talks, panel discussions, hands on projects, and workshops facilitated by African area specialists from KU and from around the region. There will be live performances by the KU African Drumming Ensemble and theater performances by KU students.

Participants will create lesson plans to be used in their own classrooms, as well as by other educators, and will have opportunities to meet with faculty consultants for content and resource suggestions. The last two days of the Institute, teachers will also have an opportunity to collaborate on creating teaching modules based on the content and strategies learned. This will be invaluable for use in the classroom. Participants will share their units with other participants. These lesson plans will be posted on the Center’s website and other websites related to international education, providing teachers with valuable materials and resources focusing on the continent. A celebration party including music, dancing, and African food will be held for participants on the closing day of the Institute.

Credits
Graduate and Teacher in-service credits will be available.

Scholarships
Scholarships ($200) are being offered to K-12 (teachers/educators) participants this year. To apply for the award, write a brief essay answering the following questions about your needs and interests in teaching Africa, and include one letter of reference from your primary evaluator.

* What do you teach; at what grade level?
* What African topics do you teach, and how much time do you devote to Africa?
* To better teach about Africa, what do you or your colleagues need for your classroom or your school? (ie. content, materials, resources, etc.)

The deadline to apply is **Tuesday, June 1, 2010**. The scholarships are limited so apply soon. [P/S Teachers who are not participating for credit are allowed to pick and choose sessions that they are interested in]

Deadline to register for the Institute: **Friday, June 4, 2010**. Send completed Registration Form with a materials fee ($40 for teachers and $20 for KU students[Checks should be written out to University of Kansas])

**This Institute is made possible by Department of Education Title VI grant**
ALTA 2010 Conference  
14th Annual Conference  
(jointly held with the 13th Annual Conference of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages - NCOLCTL)

Venue: Sheraton Madison Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin  
April 22nd - 25th, 2010


Theme: Enhancing African Languages Proficiency to a Higher Professional Level

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) is scheduled for April 22-25, 2010, in Madison, WI (with a pre-conference workshop scheduled for Thursday, April 22nd). Proposals are solicited for individual papers, colloquia, and poster sessions. Proposals should fall broadly within the conference theme, “Enhancing African Languages Proficiency to a Higher Professional Level.” Although proposed presentations may focus on individual languages, they address issues that clearly relate to more than just that one language. Presentations may address the linkage between language study and professionalization, curriculum and material development, methodology, bilingual education, heritage language learners, autonomous and self-instructional settings, outreach and advocacy, and the use of technology in teaching languages. Other topics may include teacher training, professional development, research, and assessment.

If you have any questions please contact the ALTA Secretariat at:

alta@mailplus.wisc.edu

ALTA  
4231 Humanities Building  
455 N. Park Street  
Madison, WI 53706

Tel: 608-265-7902  
Fax: 608-265-7904

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Elias Fund-5K run for Zimbabwe  
February 13

www.lawrencealoverun.weebly.com  
http://www.eventbrite.com/event/523377436/ebnem (online registration)

All the proceeds from the run are going to help build a micro-farming project in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe which will help increase crop yields by 300% and give many Zimbabweans jobs and opportunities to get back on their feet.

Please contact Jill Dryden any time with any questions that you may have.

jillandryden@gmail.com  
(281)787-873  
www.eliasfund.org

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SCALI  
Summer Cooperative African Language Institute  
Michigan State University  
June 14–August 6, 2010

africa.msu.edu/scali  
scali@msu.edu

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FULBRIGHT-HAYS GROUP PROJECTS ABROAD FOR

INTENSIVE ADVANCED KISWAHILI IN  
ARUSHA, TANZANIA

June 18–August 7, 2010

Conducted by Michigan State University  
africa.msu.edu/kiswahili.php

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Dear Friends,

Despite the challenges of the current economic climate, the Kansas African Studies Center (KASC) has maintained its status as one of the nation’s elite centers for African Studies. We continue to deliver high quality programs and services to meet the needs of students, faculty, and other constituents in our broad service area. As the only Title VI National Resource Center in African Studies for hundreds of miles in any direction, we serve an important mission as a site for things African in the American heartland.

To perform this mission well in an era of tight budgets and dwindling university resources, we must be creative and proactive in obtaining support. We are actively pursuing multiple funding sources, the most important of which is the next round of Title VI NRC awards from the Department of Education. We like our chances in this competition and remain optimistic that we can retain our federally funded, NRC status during the next four years.

In the meantime, and regardless of the outcome of the Title VI competition, we require other sources of support to fulfill our mission. For example, every year KASC receives influential visitors from all over the world, including current and former heads of state, congressional and parliamentary representatives, government ministers, religious leaders, and entertainers. In order to host these guests with polite hospitality in a modestly comfortable fashion, we incur expenses that are typically not allowable under grant guidelines. Instead, KASC has an account with the KU Endowment fund that we use to cover such expenses. With budget cuts and further reductions in University support on the horizon, we anticipate that we will increasingly rely upon this KASC Endowment fund to perform our mission.

In order to replenish and maintain the KASC Endowment, we are drawing upon traditions of collective self-help common in many African communities. As the end of the calendar year approaches, we ask that you please consider giving to the KASC Endowment. The money you donate will not only contribute to our intellectual work and outreach efforts, but also will assure that we continue to represent the KU Africanist community in a commendable fashion (e.g., providing a reasonably furnished office space in which to receive guests).

As you consider how much to give, we invite you to visit our website (http://www.kasc.ku.edu/). There you can learn more about our activities, including recent and coming events, student and teacher testimonials, plus much more. If you have any questions, please call me at 785-864-1064.

Checks payable to KU Endowment Acc. 38296

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Glenn Adams
Interim KASC Director (2009-2010 Academic Year)