

B.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

FALL 2012
ISSUE 8

LEARNING CULTURE THROUGH LANGUAGE AND TRAVEL

By Katie Pickett (BAIS, 2013)

Editors' Note: *This past summer, Katie Pickett had the opportunity to study Kiswahili in Tanzania with Michigan State University. She stayed with a host family for five weeks near Arusha, Tanzania at the Danish run MS-Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS-TCDC). Her group traveled to the Tanzanian coastal region for one week in order to visit Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, and Zanzibar island. After Katie's six-week study abroad program ended, she traveled by land with a close friend from Tanzania to South Africa.*

My dreams came true when my plane began its decent into Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I had worked and studied hard to put my feet on African soil, and when the time came, the rush of joy and a sense of accomplishment hit me as hard as the Dar humidity. My African journey had begun.

My teacher's wife was kind enough to travel with me from Dar to Arusha, and as we navigated bus stations, road side stops, and taxis, I knew my passion and energy were

well placed. However chaotic an African city, town, or road may seem, I soon learned the ins and outs. I had not anticipated becoming acclimated, or acculturated for that matter, so quickly, but the rhythm fit.

Reading books, journal articles, African online newspapers, and discussing African studies with people, I knew I could hold my own academically, but I was unsure of myself on the ground. Before I left, I questioned the uncertainty that African travel can bring, the nuances



Pickett at Oldupai Gorge in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania.

Continued on page 3

THE COMMON LANGUAGES GAME

Match the languages to African countries *answers on page 3*

Afrikaans

Amharic

Arabic

Berber

Chichewa

Hausa

Kinyarwanda

Kiswahili

Shona

Somali

Xhosa

Egypt

Ethiopia

Malawi

Morocco

Nigeria

Rwanda

Somalia

South Africa

Tanzania

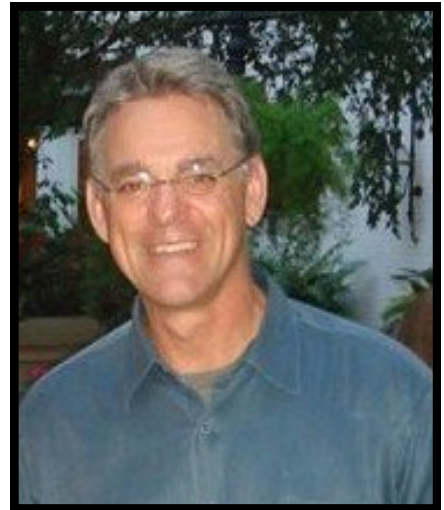
Zimbabwe

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR: JOHN HAZLETT

This *Newsletter* has been edited by two BAIS seniors, **Katie Pickett (2013)** and **Anna Marie Walter (2013)**, and it has been shaped by their vision of the importance of Africa for the International Studies student and the wider UNO community. Africana Studies is offered as both a concentration in the BAIS Program and as a minor available to all UNO students, regardless of their major. We have outstanding faculty in the field too, with **Dr. James Mokhiber** in the Department of History and **Niyi Osundare** in the Department of English, with course contributions from Political Science, Geography, Philosophy, Sociology, and Fine Arts. Like Asian Studies, this academic field is populated by students with an ardor for their subject that compels them to create opportunities for international study and experience, even when

these are difficult to come by. All of the articles and interviews in this issue make this ardor abundantly clear. Katie's travels in various African countries, BAIS senior Maha Thomas's volunteer work in Ethiopia and study in Palestine, and Sara Sisto's experiences with LSU's Kiswahili Summer Abroad Program in Tanzania required initiative and gumption. But as the reader will learn, those qualities paid off well for each of them.

Katie, Sara, and Maha are remarkable women, and we are impressed by the paths they have paved for other students. Their planning and perseverance show that students at UNO can travel the world at the same time that they are getting their BA degrees. Maha, for example, now in her senior year, will have participated in at least four study and travel abroad experi-



ences before she graduates. Each of these women is a model of the kind of students who are making the most of their UNO education, taking advantage of opportunities to explore the world and bringing the results of that exploration back to our campus.

"WE ARE TOGETHER EVERYDAY"

Sara Sisto (BAIS, 2013)

Sara Sisto is a senior International Studies, Africana Studies, major at the University of New Orleans. Sara studied Kiswahili while attending Louisiana State University and participated in LSU's Kiswahili summer abroad trip which was facilitated by the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Sara summited Mount Kilimanjaro, the African continent's highest mountain, while abroad.

One of the greatest privileges I've had was living in Tanzania for three months. Living in a new culture made me more knowledgeable of its traditions, language, and lifestyle. In the city of Dar Es Salaam, I can remember starting my day waking up to

prayer service and hearing the singing coming from the mosque. People were friendly and wanted to show you and teach you about their nation, their identity. Walking to class was proof of the harmony between nature and humans. Baboons would walk the path with you, some gracing your presence while others just stared. Like most cities, Dar Es Salaam had a lot of hustle and bustle; yet, at the same time, there was an overall sense of leisure. Time was not as complex as it seems to be in the United States. There was never a sense of urgency or rushing, just relaxation—being productive, yet soaking in every sensation of the day.

That first night when I arrived at our hotel room in Bagamoyo, it was late, the moon was full, and I was alone. I



remember running out the door until my feet hit the sand, but I kept running until my feet could feel the cold rush of the Indian Ocean. In the mornings we would learn Kiswahili in a quiet room with a salty breeze blowing through the open windows. We walked along the coast, passing the fishermen headed to the market. Not only did I find myself rewarded

Continued on page 4

LEARNING CULTURE THROUGH LANGUAGE AND TRAVEL (Continued)

that I had yet to learn. After two rides on the *dala dala* that connects Arusha to Usa River and beyond, I figured it out. There are rules, but they are not obvious to an outsider, a Westerner.

South Africa is a geographically beautiful country, but it is eager to divorce itself from its history. It projects itself as the economic leader of the continent, a success story for

Western visitors and media. To help maintain that image, citizens are not allowed to vend in the streets of Cape Town or Johannesburg. A police presence and controlled public space enables South Africa's socio-economic Westernization, but once you travel outside these cities, the informal settlements begin and so does the informal economy. South Africa appears a glistening star to the superficial glance, but it is a complex and troubled nation on closer inspection.

The contrasts between Tanzania and South Africa are as vast as the land that separates them, and this was true of all the countries we traversed during our travels. The further I traveled from Eastern Africa, the more western each country felt. The layers of complexity truly confounded me. Each time I thought I understood Africa, another variable would come into play.

Zambia is a fantastic country with the most hospitable countrymen and women. I expected to see many Chinese nationals, but what I did not anticipate were the Gucci and Dior handbags and clothing on display everywhere. My friend and I were



Pickett visited Victoria Falls, Zambia one of the natural wonders of the world on her cross continent backpacking trip.

in the heart of south central Africa, in a country that borders the Democratic Republic of Congo and provides the world with much of its copper and cobalt, yet there is an obvious sociocultural and economic struggle taking place. The U.S. dollar was thrown out as viable currency in Zambia this year, yet the Kwacha is not accepted by any exchange agency in Namibia or South Africa. Zambia is a country dependent on its rich mineral resources and its tourist industry, and they are banking on the Kwacha.

After the bus dropped us off in the Zambian border town of Sesheke, we hitched a ride through the upper half of Namibia with the driver of a Mercedes Benz. Namibia's stunning geographical beauty is unique, and it boasts the best roads on the continent. We arrived in Swakopmund, an Atlantic seaside town that sits on

a precipice overlooking the Namib Desert, where German culture is alive and well. This was typical of my time in Africa: it is a place of stark contradictions and odd juxtapositions.

Studying and traveling in the African continent was the most challenging thing I have ever done. I pushed myself, and everyday there I felt the continent and its people and cultures pushing back. The trip had its ups and its downs, but the sense of accomplishment as I navigated my way through four African countries in three months with just a backpack earned me a lifetime of respect from my family, friends, and colleagues. I didn't find the answers to every question I took with me on my journey, but the ones that are left over will serve me well on the next trip.

FURTHER RESOURCES AND MATERIALS CAN BE FOUND ON THE BAIS BLOG:

<http://unobais.wordpress.com>

WE ARE TOGETHER EVERYDAY (CONTINUED)

with relationships with the natives, but they showed me things I could never learn in a classroom. They taught me how to make *chapati*, how to climb up a tree trunk to get a coconut, and most importantly, how to speak and read their language. Tanzanians taught me how

to live free, dance, and let my spirit go.

My experiences in Tanzania have been most memorable, from snorkeling the coral reefs and exploring abandoned German castles, to climbing the summit of Mt. Kili-

manjaro. So far my time in Africa has been the best of my life, and I will always keep those friendships

In my heart. As they say in Kiswahili, *Tuna pamajoa kwa kila siku*, which means, "We are together every day."

Answers to the Common Languages Game:

Afrikaans: South Africa;	Chichewa: Malawi;	Shona: Zimbabwe;
Amharic: Ethiopia;	Hausa: Nigeria;	Somali: Somalia;
Arabic: Egypt and Morocco;	Kinyarwanda: Rwanda;	Xhosa: South Africa;
Berber: Morocco;	Kiswahili: Tanzania;	Zulu: South Africa

STUDY ABROAD

Studying abroad provides unrivaled experience and education to those who undertake it. Whether one is interested in continuing language studies or attending a university in a foreign country, studying abroad is a remarkable chance to gain college credit while expanding one's sense of the possible and broadening one's horizons. What's more, many scholarships are available to help you fund study abroad. Dr. Hazlett regularly sends emails about various scholarships to help pay for a once-in-a-life-time learning adventure. Other scholarship options can be found on websites listed in the resources section. The U.S. Department of Education funds Title VI National Resource Centers for Africa around the country. The Boren Scholarship and Fellowships offer both summer and year long Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) stipends for the Title VI study abroad programs listed below.

TITLE VI NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS FOR AFRICA

African Studies Center, Boston University
 African Studies Center, Michigan State University
 African Studies Center, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
 African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania
 African Studies Program, Indiana University
 African Studies Program, Ohio University
 African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Center for African Studies, University of California - Berkeley
 Center for African Studies, University of Florida
 Committee on African Studies, Harvard University
 Council on African Studies, Yale University

UNO STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

The Division of International Education offers some of the best and most affordable semester, year-long and summer abroad options in Asia, Europe, and Latin America. These programs are a wonderful way to use your TOPS and financial aid while gaining international experience. Please visit their website at <http://inst.uno.edu/> or their on campus office which can be found in the **Education Building** for more information.

Get Involved with BAIS!

- ◆ Get advised for Spring/Summer Semesters: Email jhazlett@uno.edu / amwalter@uno.edu
- ◆ Join Phi Beta Delta Honors Society: pbd@uno.edu
- ◆ Complete your online checklist: www.baischecklists.com
- ◆ Receive BAIS email: listserv: jhazlett@uno.edu / amwalter@uno.edu
- ◆ Contribute to BAIS Facebook and Blog: amwalter@uno.edu
- ◆ Start looking for an internship: jhazlett@uno.edu
- ◆ Join the World Affairs Council of New Orleans (WACNO): director@wacno.org
- ◆ Consider joining international organizations on campus: sil@uno.edu
- ◆ Start planning for Study Abroad: isep@uno.edu
- ◆ Join the Model United Nations Club: bnetto@uno.edu

BAIS STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE IN ETHIOPIA

Maha Thomas (BAIS 2013)



Maha Thomas is a senior International Studies, Africana Studies, major at the University of New Orleans. Born in Denmark and raised in New Orleans, Maha has travelled around the globe. Maha has studied abroad on UNO programs in Japan and Costa Rica. Presently, she is studying at the Birzeit University in Palestine.

I spent the first two weeks of August volunteering in Ethiopia before starting my study abroad semester in Palestine. The organization I went with is called Love Volunteers. Initially what drew me to the program was that it listed Ethiopia as an option, and it was also very affordable. I realize that some people dislike the idea of paying to volunteer; however, I think it makes sense since the organization can't spend its very limited funds on accommodations for volunteers. Love Volunteers partners with NGOs in each of its listed countries, so the volunteer work may vary from country to country. I volunteered with an organization called Strong Hearts in Addis Ababa. With them, volunteers can choose between teaching at a primary school or volunteering in a hospice for patients with HIV/AIDS and cancer. I chose to teach crafts at

a primary school.

Love Volunteers itself is not a religious organization, but depending on the country, the individuals you work with might have strong religious beliefs. I lived in a house with local volunteers who were very religious Christians (my housemates were Protestants, but most Ethiopian Christians are Ethiopian Orthodox). The living conditions were fine, especially for the neighborhood we lived in. However, there wasn't running water for most of my stay. We lived in a house in the same neighborhood as the primary school; some Ethiopian members of the NGO live there as well. Strong Hearts was very laid back and allowed me to take off extra days to backpack with the other volunteers to visit Lalibela, Bahir Dar, and the Blue Nile Falls.

Continued on page 7

HOW TO VOLUNTEER IN AN AFRICAN COUNTRY

Volunteering abroad is an amazing way to gain international experience while giving back to the global and local community. It provides much needed understanding of other cultures and peoples for International Studies students and others alike. Potential volunteers must keep in mind the non-profit aspect of non-governmental organizations; however, you should find a fair balance between an equitable monetary donation for time and the all too prevalent pay-to-volunteer money making schemes.

How do you find a reputable volunteer organization? Begin by researching various organizations online. The following can be helpful:

- Look at online sites such as www.Idealist.org
- Check out an organization's 501(c) records
- Read previous participants' blog entries
- Scan a few Facebook pages
- Pay attention to word-of-mouth information

You can find a large array of domestic and international volunteer programs on Idealist.org. Non-profit organization and non-governmental organizations are required by law to publicly post their financial records, and this is a good way to see where and how money is being spent. Many international volunteer organizations are registered in the US and the United Kingdom—and both countries require similar online transparency. Organizations may have blogs attached to their main website, but if not, a simple Google search will locate personal testimonies. Many organizations, small and large, have Facebook pages these days. Take a look at what people are saying. Your friends, family, colleagues, and friends of friends have spent time volunteering abroad. Ask them what, where, and why they chose a particular volunteer project.

Keep in mind that there are visa fees associated with volunteer work in some countries. For example, it costs over \$500 to volunteer in Tanzania. Volunteer visas for other countries in East Africa are much less costly. Wherever you go, it is not advisable to take an illegal route to avoid these fees while entering or exiting other countries. Make sure you speak to some embassy employees and past participants to ensure you apply for the correct visa as the consequences of not doing so can be quite expensive.

SUGGESTIONS FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT:

Forever Angels Baby Home, Mwanza, Tanzania

Love Volunteers, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and worldwide

Shack/ Slum Dwellers International, Windhoek, Namibia and worldwide

Kibera Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya



Thomas with fellow volunteers at Love Volunteers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

BAIS STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE IN ETHIOPIA (CONTINUED)

I've traveled a fair amount, and Ethiopia is probably the place most unlike New Orleans I have ever been to. I'd never seen such poverty before. This is not to say that everyone in the country is impoverished, but income is very low in much of the country, and it is quite visible. I also experienced some hassles while traveling that hadn't happened to me anywhere else. Sometimes, the people I lived with would ask me questions about America that suggested they thought the streets there were paved with gold.

Costs are very low throughout Ethiopia, and we rarely bothered to look at prices or even tried to budget. Nonetheless, the tourism infrastructure is understandably lacking, and one needs to know that before traveling there; one certainly has to be flexible (but common sense is necessary). On the other hand, everyone was welcoming and helpful. And despite some hassles, I didn't feel in danger, even while backpacking. In fact, I saw some of the most beautiful sites. The Blue Nile Falls are a series of waterfalls on the Nile River, near Lake Tana, which is the

source of the Nile. Lalibela is a series of huge rock-hewn churches carved 800 years ago that have served since that time as a Christian pilgrimage site.

I would recommend Love Volunteers and definitely recommend Ethiopia or any place that is very different from what you are accustomed to. Ultimately, that is what broadens your perspective and makes you a more understanding person.

**WANT TO GO TO
NEW YORK CITY AND EARN
3 UNO COLLEGE
CREDITS??**



Questions???

E mail us:

President,
Brett Netto
bnetto@uno.edu

Vice-President,
Carolina Andrade—
danadrade@uno.edu

Meetings Every

1st and 3rd

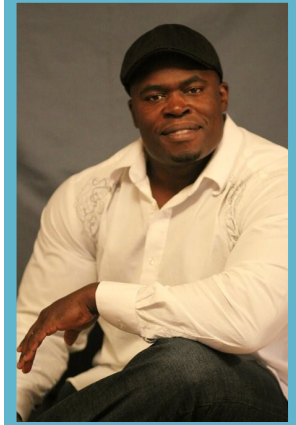
Thursday of the Month

MH 219

Join one of the world's best ranked Model United Nations Delegations as we discuss world politics and diplomacy . We meet weekly in the Spring to prepare for competition. (college credit is available) Last year UNO placed in the TOP 3% out of 300 universities present.

 **NATIONAL
COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE**
association

Meshack Simati is a Kenyan Ph.D. student in the University of New Orleans' Political Science Department. Meshack was kind enough to answer a few questions for BAIS's Katie Pickett (2013).



Katie: What part of Kenya are you from?

Meshack: I am from Western Kenya, in a town approximately 60 miles north of the equator called Bungoma that has a population of approximately 1.2 million people.

Katie: What are some things you miss?

Meshack: I miss my mom's ugali and chicken, 12 hour days (i.e., no daylight savings in Kenya), and the laid back lifestyle where we are not always rushing.

Katie: Do you speak any languages other than Kiswahili and English?

Meshack: I speak my local dialect, Luhya, and two other local dialects: Luo and Kikuyu. I wish I spoke French though.

Katie: Could you name a few differences between living in Kenya and New Orleans?

Meshack: The weather: hurricanes and tropical storms.

Katie: Where did you study before attending UNO?

Meshack: I did my undergrad at Daystar University in Kenya and my Masters at Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

Katie: How do you like living in New Orleans?

Meshack: I like it in winter. I like the wide array of culinary options available in New Orleans.

Katie: What is your research interest?

Meshack: Social identities and specifically how ethnicity influences civil conflicts, voting behavior, and development in African states.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) AND AFRICANA STUDIES

GIS is a fast growing industry that includes map making, information management, and complex geographic analysis. GIS is used in conjunction with African Studies to convey and geographically display population movement, environmental factors for policy makers, development patterns for non-profits and business marketing, and to track political situations. UNO offers undergraduate and graduate certificates in GIS (<http://www.geog.uno.edu/rsgiscert.htm>). A student must complete four classes: two in GIS and two in Remote Sensing.

Harvard has created the "AfricaMap" project (<http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/>). Harvard's GIS is a leading example of the link between this particular geographical field and African area studies. The foremost GIS software producer is Esri®. Visit the company's website, www.esri.com, to view African area maps.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

BAIS majors should seize the opportunity to attend academic conferences whenever possible. They allow students to network with international and domestic faculties, non-profits, and think-tanks. Academic conferences are an ideal place to listen, question, and learn. The African Studies Association (ASA) annual conference is the largest meeting in the U.S. This year, the conference entitled "Research Frontiers in the Study of Africa" will be held in Philadelphia on Nov 29—Dec 1, 2012. The University of Texas Africa Conference is a more intimate meeting that takes place in Austin each year. The theme for the 2013 UT Conference is "Social Movements, Religion and Political Expression in Africa" and takes place on March 29-31. The International Studies Association (ISA) conference, "Politics of International Diffusion: Regional and Global Dimensions," will be in San Francisco on

Continued on page 11



Mr. Ken Okoth is the director of the Kibera Foundation. and a current candidate for the Kenya parliament. The Kibera Foundation is a Kenyan, grassroots non-profit organization that provides tuition and scholarship funding to children in the Kibera slums of Nairobi, Kenya. Mr. Okoth travelled to New Orleans at the invitation of the University of New Orleans, Loyola University, and the World Affairs Council of New Orleans in order to talk about Kenya and the work of his foundation. Before his lecture, however, he sat down with BAIS students Anna Marie Walter (2013) and Katie Pickett (2013) for an interview. An excerpt of that conversation is included below. To find out more about the Kibera Foundation, visit their website www.kiberafoundation.org.

Katie: What advice do you have for students interested in the study of the African continent?

Mr. Okoth: Embrace it completely because it has a lot to offer. Find ways to connect with the continent or the U.S. diaspora.

Katie: What do you consider the basis for a broad and well versed understanding of the African continent?

Mr. Okoth: Africa in the next 20 to 30 years will become more important to the U.S. and the world in respects of security issues and international business.

Katie: What do you hope to achieve with a parliamentary win?

Mr. Okoth: I'm an idealist and a bit crazy. I'm tired of sitting on the sidelines. Bad leaders are elected by good people. There is an obligation for someone who has had opportunities that others have not. I want to test policies that I have seen around the world, Kenya needs systematic government policies.

Katie: How do you parlay the needs of Kibera residents to the Kenyan government?

Mr. Okoth: My experience so far has been limited. We try to work in collaboration with the government. I chose to focus on the issue of education as a private citizen, and that has been something that I can do. We work with district and county educational officials in joint programs and in advance of projects. We invite them to participate in events we are running such as arts and music programs or academic awards. We try to be collaborative with the local officials who are doing something in the community. We try to add on to somewhere else. We do not want to be confrontational but supportive. If I get elected, there will be some larger policy issues that deserve bigger debate to really get resources on the ground.

Katie: Could you explain how the Foundation is more effective than wide-scale aid networks?

Mr. Okoth: That's a very good question. I find that our foundation is effective, but I don't like to say more effective. It is effective because it's direct people-to-people. I started this bridge of connecting students in America to students in Kenya, and not as a question of charity but as an issue of solidarity, human brotherhood, and understanding. A part of it involves bringing American students to volunteer and live in Kenya for two to three weeks. We actually partner American students with Kenyan school teachers and students, so that when the American students leave Kenya they are ambassadors for real

people rather than just another poverty-pawn situation. These are kids in Africa who those American students have a relationship with. We can talk with them over Skype. We can learn from each other. It is a foundation that relies on small donors. When you think of poverty in Africa, the issues seem so huge. Individuals in the U.S. can feel like they cannot make a difference, but through small-scale people-to-people efforts, you can actually see where a small donation has an impact and you can account for that. People in American sometimes say, "I pay taxes; let the government spend the money," but you don't know where your tax money and government aid went to through corruption. Through a small organization, such as the Kibera Foundation, that has restricted focus, there are very strict rules for accounting and accountability that we follow both in the U.S. and Kenya. You can see the direct impact and also build the relationships.

Anna: That leads me to one question. I am from Honduras. I have seen a lot of Western foreign aid and Western NGOs coming into Honduras. A lot of the debate has been if this actually makes a difference, and if this is more or less effective. I have worked with local and international NGOs in Honduras. There is this view that Katie and I were talking about earlier that Latin America is a homogenous place, where some people view Honduras as one and the same as Nicaragua. I do think there is a disconnect when you bring in foreign aid and NGOs into a country. What do you think of this type of issue in respect to Kenya?

Mr. Okoth: Our foundation is a Kenyan NGO. It is a grassroots NGO in Kenya. We know the children, parents, schools, and teachers in the community that we are working with. I work in the same community that I grew up in. We have relationships there. We have the respect, trust and ability to hold the people we work with accountable. On the U.S. side we have built up a community of support. We are building that up through individual people-to-people diplomacy. People who want help, connect, and to make that difference. I do agree some people think that Africa is all one place with one problem. I am very humble and respectful to acknowledge that it is not. Even though I grew up in Nairobi, I know this one community, Kibera, where I can leverage my relationships in certain ways to bring certain impacts. Once I move to another neighborhood, just across town, even five miles, where I don't have those relationships, I couldn't have the same impact because I would be a stranger. In some ways for me, it is very personal. The group of people we work with and the relationships we have built in the community with parents' and teachers' associations are personal to me. The young people who sign up and receive scholarships from us and their obligation to perform community service to give back to the same community is personal to me. I have wanted to share the experiences from which we have learned. I have done this for five years. The organization is that old. Any new things we have learned we want to document it, and have somebody else replicate it somewhere where they have those relationships and the conditions might work. No, I don't want to grow a big organization to take care of everything in Africa. I would have had a lot of struggles in order to have the same level of impact outside of my community, where we don't have those important relationships.

Anna: This brings us to the argument that programs in which citizens are all helping each other are more sustainable than those that bring in people from the outside, but you are making that bridge. Making it about solidarity instead of charity.

Mr. Okoth: I am making that bridge in a way that is necessary. We have to be humble to know what are our limits and when we should ask for help. For instance, in our communities where people are suffering from extreme poverty in urban areas in Africa, India, and Latin America is a reality, we know the cost of paying for high school. These areas are where education is the most expensive thing a family can pay for. If they cannot afford that, they cannot lift one of their members up the social ladder and give them better opportunities. We have to make sure there is a system where the people who accept aid, tuition fees, and scholarships from the Kibera Foundation are earning it, and that we have expectations of them to give back to the community. I have seen that it can be a sense of empowerment, and it does not have to be a sense of dependency. We just have to be careful, and do it correctly. At some point we need each other, and if we cannot get help from other Kenyans, and we can get it from Americans who understand the value of education and want to help us.

Katie: How do you hope to close the gap between the constitutional right of Kenyan children to basic education and the absence of real opportunities for them to realize that right?

Mr. Okoth: For me, we need to elect more leaders who we can believe in, who can walk the talk, and who will not just give empty promises at election times. We need to elect more leaders like that, and that's why I chose to stand for election. I hope there are many more because one person in a whole parliament can't change it by himself. A coalition of forward thinking, progressive people who want to implement the constitution and make those rights a reality is much more possible. I hope many more people will make the decision I've made and get out of their comfort zone, taking a step of courage and faith. This is where they can say, "This is what my patriotism looks like for my country."

Katie and Anna: Thank you so much.

Mr. Okoth: Thank you.

April 3-6, 2013. International Studies majors should seize the opportunity to attend academic conferences whenever possible. Conferences allow students to network with international and domestic faculties, non-profits, and research think-tanks. Academic conferences are foremost a place to listen, question and learn. The African Studies Association (ASA) annual conference is the largest meeting in the U.S. This year the ASA conference, "Research Frontiers in the Study of Africa", will be held in Philadelphia, PA on November 29- December 1, 2012. The University of Texas Africa Conference is a more intimate meeting that takes place in Austin, Texas each year. The theme for the 2013 UT Africa Conference is "Social Movements, Religion and Political Expression in Africa" and takes place on March 29-31. The International Studies Association (ISA) conference, "Politics of International Diffusion: Regional and Global Dimensions", will be in San Francisco, CA on April 3-6, 2013.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



DR. NIYI OSUNDARE

Professor

Ph.D., York University, 1979

Poet, dramatist, critic, essayist, and media columnist, Niyi Osundare has authored 18 books of poetry, two books of selected poems, four plays, a book of essays, and numerous monographs and articles on literature, language, culture, and society. He regards his calling as a writer and his profession as a teacher as essentially complementary. He was educated on three continents: B.A. (Honours) from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, M.A. from the University of Leeds in England, and Ph.D. from York University, Toronto, Canada. Born in Nigeria, one of the most linguistically and culturally heterogeneous countries in the world, he learnt early in life the complexities and challenges of diversity. Currently, he is a Professor of English at the University of New Orleans, and was selected University Research Professor in 2001 and Distinguished Professor of English in 2011. His areas of specialization are African Literature, Literature of the African Diaspora, Literary Stylistics, Sociolinguistics, and Creative Writing.

About his passion for teaching, he has this to say: "For me, the classroom is a vital space inhabited - no, lived - by students and teachers as partners, even collaborators, in a process of intellectual and social inquiry and exchange I strive to be the kind of teacher who challenges and inspires..." For his creative works, Osundare has received the Fonlon/Nichols Award for "excellence in literary creativity combined with significant contributions to Human Rights in Africa".

DR. JAMES MOKHIBER

Professor

Ph.D, The Johns Hopkins University, 2002

James Mokhiber studied African and World History at Stanford University, the University of London and Johns Hopkins University. A former Fulbright fellow to North Africa, his work concentrates on the French colonial period and cultural history. In addition to the survey courses on precolonial and colonial African history, he has recently offered classes on "African History and Film," "African Crises in Historical Perspective," "France and Algeria," and "Images of Africa." He is planning on offering a 4000-level course in



the Fall 2013 entitled "'Dark Continents': Africa and Europe in the Age of Exploration."

Africana Courses Spring 2013

- **People & Culture Africa**
ANTH 1010-476
- **African American Literature I**
ENGL 2071
- **African American Literature II** ENGL 2072
- **African American Politics**
POLI 2993
- **African-American History**
HIST 3552

CONGRATULATIONS!

The University of New Orleans National Model United Nations delegation will be representing **Vietnam** at the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City.

Cheers to the **new 2013 delegation!** Brett Netto, Anna Walter, Eduardo Abreu, Carolina Andrade, Renee Barrow, Michael Bentley, Shaniqua Casey, Ashis Dahal, Hugo Garza, Chase Hukins, Francisco Juelle, Romy LaCour, Jonathan Lumpkin, Karen Lundy, Jahi Mackey, Katie Pickett, and Margo Sullivan.

Alternate delegates: Aurelie Bellot, Amanda Mancilla, Monica Montavalo, Ariel Opara and Minie Taylor.

Donations are welcome! Checks should be out to "UNO Model UN Club" and sent to John Hazlett, Director, BA in International Studies, University of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA 70148.

LOOKING FOR AN INTERNSHIP? HERE'S WHERE BAIS STUDENTS HAVE BEEN:

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REMINDER!

If you are taking French or Spanish as your second language, you can easily obtain a minor without surpassing your 120 hours.

Take both literature requirements in the target language and add one 3000-level or higher French/Spanish course to your electives. Voila!

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