African Studies at Stanford continues to grow fueled by an ever expanding interest in the continent from both faculty and students. Michele Barry, a leading expert on tropical and emerging diseases and health problems in the developing world, joined the school of medicine as Senior Associate Dean for Global Health and Professor of Medicine. Dr. Barry, a tropical disease expert, has two decades of experience in Africa and has already deepened Stanford’s links with Africa and African medical practitioners in her broader efforts of promoting health equity. Among Michele’s early accomplishments at Stanford is a multi-year grant to help rebuild the University of Zimbabwe’s medical school. Among her many other initiatives is the Global Health Scholar Award program, which sends physicians to underfunded health care settings throughout the world, but with a special commitment to Africa. Michele has established long-term collaborative programs with struggling medical schools in Uganda, Liberia, Eritrea, and South Africa. Michele’s new Office of Global Health supports the Global Health Corps, Global Health Uganda, Liberia, Eritrea, and South Africa. Michele’s new Office of Global Health supports the Global Health Corps, Global Health Corps, Global Health Corps, Global Health Corps, Global Health Corps.

This past academic year also marks the second year of the new Bing Overseas Studies program in Cape Town. Faculty of African Studies worked closely with the directors of BOSP to establish a campus in Africa in order to take advantage of burgeoning interest in Africa among our undergraduates, but also to help deepen our students understanding of the complexities that are so central to contemporary Africa. The new Cape Town program is also unique among Stanford’s overseas campuses in its encouragement of public service and service learning. Under the direction of Tim Stanton, former director of the Haas Center, the Cape Town program has developed many opportunities for Stanford students to deepen their understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural challenges South Africans face in transitioning from a deeply segregated society into a democratic one. Thanks to the generosity of a donor to CAS and support from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, we have funded five Stanford undergraduates in the Cape Town program who applied for competitive funding to spend the summer in Cape Town developing research projects linked to their service learning experiences.

Thanks also to special funding from two other donors to CAS and from the dean’s office, CAS is able to provide seed grants to the ever-expanding pool of graduate students working on African research projects. These summer graduate research grants are designed to provide funding to students throughout Stanford’s seven graduate schools to spend the summers conducting preliminary research for their dissertations. This year alone, we had dozens of applications for summer research projects from graduate students in the social sciences, the humanities, sciences, and engineering. Out of the pool of summer research projects CAS has funded, several students have received major national research grants.

With the generous help from the H&H Dean’s Office, CAS has also introduced a new competition for summer intensive language training. This year we funded five students to study ChiChewa, Akan, Arabic, and Setswana.

By far the most important change in CAS has been our appointment of Michele Hubbard as associate director in the Fall 2009. Laura has brought boundless energy to CAS events and because of her deep interests in students and enthusiasm for Africa, she has drawn ever more students into African Studies. Laura has her PhD in Anthropology from Berkeley and works on urban popular and youth cultures in Southern Africa. Laura skillfully manages the complex operations of the CAS office and the increasing number of our programs with flair and infectious excitement that faculty and students recognize and deeply appreciate.

During the 2010-11 academic year, CAS went through the regular five year process of self-study and assessment of our programs. We are happy to report that CAS has been recognized throughout the university as an outstanding program that delivers a high quality and rigorous MA and a demanding Minor. On June 12, CAS held its first ever ceremony to honor our five graduating MA students. Two of the five, however, will be going to medical school; one has secured a highly competitive job at the IRC in Ethiopia; and two are aggressively probing for jobs in development and government. Our MA class for 2011-12 will bring four new students to campus. All have had considerable experience in Africa. The numbers of students, faculty, staff, and community members who regularly attend Africa Table means that we are often bursting out of our classroom. Africa Table presents are usually excited to talk to our deeply engaged community. We expect to nurture and develop this enthusiasm with existing and innovative programs into the next academic year.

With best wishes for a productive and safe summer.

Richard Roberts

Director
Center for African Studies
Professor,
Department of History

NEWS FROM THE CENTER

In the summer of 2009, the Center of African Studies proudly welcomed its new Associate Director, Dr. Laura Hubbard. Laura manages the Center’s programming, teaches African Studies courses and serves as an advisor to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Laura earned her PhD in anthropology at University of California Berkeley in 2007. Following her graduate education and before stepping into her current role, she taught courses in African studies, anthropology and media studies at UC Berkeley, UC Davis and Stanford.

Thinking back to her initial days at Stanford, Laura states “I was excited to make African Studies a more central topic of conversation on campus and was eager to engage our interdisciplinary community on the important issues facing the continent.”

At the Center for African Studies, Laura plans and manages several events per week, including guest speakers, symposiums and cultural events. She advises nine African Studies M.A. students as well as several other undergraduate and graduate students working on African issues. She is also the administrative head of the center, managing research and language fellowships, fundraising for the Center and assisting the more than 200 Stanford students who travel to Africa each summer for research.

Laura is recognized for transforming the Center of African Studies office in Encina Hall into a unique gathering place where students of all backgrounds converge to discuss their interests and debate African issues. “I love working with students at Stanford because they are committed, passionate, and reflective individuals who bring critical engagement balanced with humor. So many stimulating conversations happen in this office.”

Laura invites those with an interest in Africa to stop by the office anytime to participate in the burgeoning community. “This is a place where people are nurtured by one another throughout their intellectual journey.”

Stop by, she’d love to see you.

Last October, CAS sponsored the residency of Victor Gama, the noted Angolan musician, folklorist, instrument maker, and computer musician. He participated in several events across campus, including a solo performance of his music using his own designed musical instrument, as well as an appearance at CAS’ weekly Africa Table lunch and an evening seminar with graduate students.

Victor Gama’s music addresses the relationship between technologies and artistic traditions with a particular focus on musical styles and histories of Africa and the diaspora. Trained in electronic engineering, he draws on his interests in diasporic music and in computer generated music. His residency was jointly sponsored by the Department of Art and Art History, the Latin American Studies Center and his nomination and the Cantor Museum.
Erin spent ten weeks in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania conducting preliminary fieldwork for her PhD dissertation entitled, “To Invoke the Invisible: Muslim Healers, Magic, and Amulets in the Twentieth-Century History of the Southern Sahara.” Erin’s dissertation project asks how and why the roles and local perceptions of religious healing, and preventative and magical practices have changed over the colonial period. Her research examines the popular scope of healing within the broader esoteric knowledge of Sufi Islam in the region and how transformations in political power, education, and economy shaped this knowledge and the place of those utilizing it.

The Centre d’Études et de Recherches sur l’Ouest Saharien (CEROS), where Erin was an invited researcher, greatly facilitated her research over the summer, providing her with an office where she used their small library, met Mauritanian scholars and held initial interviews. She spent time in the capital, Nouakchott at the archives of the Mauritanian Institute of Scientific Research (IMRS) and in the northern desert town of Shingiti, where she visited family-owned private libraries and spoke with town elders and local healers.

Hilary is a third-year doctoral student in the anthropology department whose research focuses on entrepreneurship and small business practices in Botswana. In this small southern African nation, micro-enterprise (ME) is being promoted with tremendous enthusiasm as a means of “empowering” the poor—especially poor women—and developing the nation. Considerable economic and para-scholarly literature has asked whether micro-enterprise initiatives “work,” treating them as technical interventions and evaluating them primarily in quantitative and monetary terms, with mixed results. Hilary’s preliminary research suggests that we must ask far more nuanced questions, questions that can only be answered through sustained ethnographic research. In Botswana, this means taking into account the ways in which the country’s unique social and economic histories articulate with the broader political economy, and the ways in which business has become a meaningful pursuit here.

Hilary’s preliminary research has shown entrepreneurship to be a contested domain in Botswana, and suggests that by empowering diverse actors to diverse ends, its promotion is refiguring women’s roles, family structures, and urban geographies.

Siphiwe received a CAS fellowship which allowed her to travel home, to Zimbabwe, to conduct research on the issue of “belonging” in Zimbabwe. She spent significant time at the Bulawayo Archives, where she explored documents concerning The Rudd Concession, The Land Apportionment Act, The Lancaster House Agreement and more.

She states that the experience at the Bulawayo archives was invaluable, because she not only was able to conduct her research, but she also learned how to hone her own ideas about her dissertation and to articulate them better. She was often the only person in the reading room, and she visited family-owned private libraries and spoke with town elders and local healers.

Mark’s CAS-funded summer research was a two-month stretch of exploratory fieldwork in preparation for his dissertation project, tentatively entitled “Enriching uranium: technocrats and the management of Namibia’s uranium rush.” Recent events in Japan notwithstanding, nuclear power has been experiencing something of a resurgence in recent years, with its carbon-free status making it seem both “green” and a welcome safe harbor from the volatilities of the oil market. This has meant a “uranium rush” for Namibia, now the fourth-largest producer of uranium ore in the world. Several large new mines are opening up, with major implications for economic development and environmental conditions on Namibia’s delicate, hyper-arid west coast.

While in Namibia last summer he met with representatives of several of the largest mines and the industry’s trade association, talking to them about their own visions of the industry’s responsibilities. He now has an invitation to spend more time with the industry body promoting this vision of clean mining. He also spent time interviewing and shadowing several government officials tasked with overseeing the industry, as well as the private consultants who had put together various parts of the reports that will guide future management of the sector.

David Sangokoya and Francesca Mazolla

After a quarter abroad at Oxford University last year, David and Francesca decided upon their return to Stanford to teach a student-initiated course (SIC) on Africa.

The course was focused on providing students interested in development work in Africa with a brief introduction to academic literature and act as a supplement to other pre-field Stanford courses. With the help of selected readings and guest lectures by prominent faculty and graduate students, students were introduced to different issues facing the continent. The course also aimed to expose students to professionals and graduate students in different fields related to development, and equipped students with knowledge of different resources available on campus for research and service opportunities.

Students also received individualized advice for how to pursue their goals during a dinner with Professor David Abernethy.

- by Francesca Mazolla

David and Francesca
PROFILE OF SASA

The Stanford African Students Association (SASA) is wrapping up another eventful year organizing events on campus. Led by president Shubuka Anabilis Mainsah and vice-president Tanaka Mawindi, SASA promotes awareness about the African continent and fosters cultural and social ties with people of African descent and those interested in Africa within the Stanford community.

ACCORDING TO SASA’S LEADERS, MAJOR EVENTS FROM THE PAST ACADEMIC YEAR INCLUDED FEBRUARY’S CULTURAL SHOW, WHICH FEATURED ELEVEN PERFORMANCES FROM GROUPS INCLUDING THE NIGERIAN BROTHERS, DANCE MISSION THEATRE, AND AQUARELA. MORE THAN 100 ATTENDED THE SHOW, WHICH FEATURED DANCE, POETRY, MUSIC AND A FASHION SHOW. GUESTS WERE SERVED STUDENT-PREPARED CUISINE FROM SEVERAL AFRICAN NATIONS.

BEYOND THE CULTURAL SHOW, OTHER SASA EVENTS INCLUDED THE ANNUAL FILM SERIES, THEMED “SHIFTING CULTURAL PARADIGMS IN THE FACE OF GLOBALIZATION.” SCREENED FILMS INCLUDED SACRED PLACES FROM BURKINA FASO AND MAASAI: AT THE CROSSROADS.

STUDENT RESEARCH IN AFRICA

HIV/AIDS TREATMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

AIDS in Africa is a hot topic in international public health. Prevention and intervention is focused around spreading biomedical knowledge of the disease. The insertion of more Western medical knowledge and the availability of anti-retroviral treatment (ARV) are treated as the solution that will break down the devastating stigma that is frequently associated with this disease.

I spent last summer in Khayelitsha, South Africa, a community where the effects of HIV/AIDS have already been devastating. Locals estimate that forty percent of the population is HIV positive. I spent nine weeks conducting interviews, visiting support groups and sitting in on a wide range of community events and workshops. My goal was to begin to understand and unravel the local politics of knowledge around HIV.

HIV/AIDS knowledge has a contentious history in South Africa. The environment of fear in Khayelitsha due to the rapid spread of the disease coupled with the denialism on a national level created an environment where stigma flourished and a system of competing knowledges developed. Here the biomedical explanation is only one of three interacting knowledge systems: some members of the community are compelled by traditional Xhosa explanations of disease and seek the treatment of a local sangoma while others are devout Christians who believe only in healing through prayer. These three knowledge systems persist in this community. Each of these HIV discourses interacts with stigma differently creating layers of stigma rather than a single, simple unified HIV stigma. This complicated system of knowledges and stigmas make patient decision-making, including choices about treatment methods, difficult and anything but straightforward.

This is not a circumstance where there is an absence of knowledge. It is rather an instance where biomedical knowledge, which has a less than pretty colonial history of its own, is not always the most appealing or the most compelling option. In this circumstance I propose that the West alter our model of intervention that so actively seeks to construct biomedicine as the only viable knowledge system. Instead we should actively work to encourage collaborative efforts, such as the church run support groups for individuals on ARV treatment. Individuals seek out multiple forms of treatment in order to meet their physical and spiritual needs. By making these mixed forms of treatment accepted rather than demonized we will increase effective treatment and effective emotional and spiritual support.

- by Liese Pruitt
Stanford Class of 2010, first-year medical student at University of Chicago

STUDENTS CONDUCT RESEARCH IN CAPE TOWN

Last summer, the Center for African Studies launched a fellowship program for students studying abroad in Cape Town, which enables four undergraduates to pursue service-oriented research projects. The fellowship facilitates transformative experiences for students providing an opportunity to deepen their understanding of social entrepreneurship and service delivery.

Last summer’s projects include “Young in Prison,” a project examining the interrelation of perceptions of at risk youth and new government policies by Ben Arvelo. Two other students, Lucy Litvak and Bridget Connolly collaborated on a project entitled “The Impact of Projects Supported by the Social Development Fund on Community Cohesion in Khayelitsha, South Africa.” They were supervised by the Social Development Fund and left with new skills and a head start on their senior thesis work.

Continued on page 11
M.A. STUDENTS PROFILES

Davis Albohm
Davis Albohm is originally from New Jersey but has recently resided in San Francisco and Washington, DC. Before pursuing Masters degree at Stanford, Davis received a B.A. in history from Trinity College, where he was elected to the Phi Beta Kappa national honor society. Following his undergraduate degree, Davis worked as a strategy consultant for several national non-profit organizations including Amnesty International, International Rescue Committee, and UNICEF. Davis’ relationship with Africa began as a sixteen year-old, when he traveled to Kenya to work on a clean-water development project. Since then, he has traveled and worked extensively in countries including Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Tunisia.

Deshka Foster
Deshka Foster grew up on an organic farm outside of Philadelphia. She graduated with a B.A. with honors in Human Biology from Stanford University, Class of ‘08, with a concentration on Infectious Disease and Global Health. While at Stanford, she studied Swahili and was a public service scholar at the Haas Center. Deshka first visited East Africa in 2006 with the HIV education organization, Support for International Change. Since then, she has returned several times to conduct research projects exploring pediatric malaria management in Tanzania. A recipient of a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship, Deshka began her master’s in African Studies in 2009-10, before pursuing a Fulbright Research Scholarship investigating human Plasmodium knowlesi malaria in Malaysia Borneo. Deshka has returned to complete her M.A. and master’s thesis in African Studies this spring. She will begin medical school in the fall.

Hannah Harrison
Hannah Harrison is from Sarasota, Florida. She graduated from the University of Florida in 2010 with a B.S. in Biology and a minor in African Studies. She will attend medical school at the University of California, San Francisco in the fall of 2011. Hannah is particularly interested in community based mechanisms for improving public health and child and maternal health in Africa. She spent six months living in Ghana, working at an orphanage, and two months in Tanzania learning Kiswahili.

Annie Hsieh
Annie Hsieh is a second year joint degree student at Stanford, where she is pursuing a JD and MA in African Studies. Annie’s current projects include reviewing mining and natural resource legislation in Malawi, and editing a book on constitutional law and women’s rights issues across sub-Saharan Africa. At the law school, she is also Editor-in-Chief of the Stanford Journal of International Law, and Co-President of the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project. Prior to Stanford, Annie served as an Engineer officer in the United States Army, and graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Upon graduation, Annie will continue serving in the Army as a Judge Advocate General and hopes to be assigned at the U.S. African Command. In the long term, Annie wants to work on legal development in Africa.

Griffin Matthew
Griffin Matthew grew up in the Boulder, Colorado area, and is currently living in Palo Alto, California with her Husband. She graduated with departmental honors from Stanford University in 2010 with a B.A in American Studies. She is currently working towards an M.A in African Studies with a focus on health and well-being. Griffin has interned at the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Department of Justice, and has worked with various NGOs on HIV/AIDS prevention in Rwanda and Kenya. She is especially interested in sports as a vehicle of development and is currently training for the 2012 Olympics as a long jumper. Griffin has never been to Europe, and is very excited to explore Switzerland and Italy this summer while interning with the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

Annie Hsieh

Rachel Quint
Rachel Quint is a Bay Area native, originally from Tiburon, California. After completing her undergraduate degree here at Stanford in International Relations, she decided to continue her education by pursuing a co-terminal degree in African Studies, which she has found intellectually challenging and enjoyable. Rachel is particularly interested in conflict resolution and U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa. In 2008, Rachel spent six months in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and has worked for several organizations including the Flora Family Foundation, the Academy for Educational Development and FairTrade USA. In June, Rachel will be going to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for one year to work for the IRC through the Princeton in Africa Fellowship program. In her free time, Rachel enjoys baking cookies, embarking on urban hikes, and playing with her pet rabbit.

Denise St. Peter
Denise St. Peter is a Master’s student in African Studies specializing in Political Economy and Security. She graduated from Tufts University in 2010 with a B.A. in International Relation and spent five months in 2008 studying at the University of Ghana at Legon. Her current research interests include colonial and post-colonial agricultural development projects and the role of refugees in shaping the security calculations of host states, sending states, regions, and the international community. After graduating from Stanford, Denise hopes to work in refugee policy or refugee resettlement with international institutions, the federal government, or NGO service providers.

Catherine Mugasha
Catherine completed the M.A. program after winter quarter and focused her research on public health in Africa. Prior to Stanford, she attended Northeastern University, where she graduated with a M.A. in Applied Economics. Catherine earned a BS degree in Mathematics, Economics and Statistics at Makerere University in Uganda, where she was born and raised. Her current interests lie in the areas of epidemiology, biostatistics and international health. In January 2007, Catherine spent three years as a Research Assistant at the Stanford Faculty Development Center (SFDC). Prior to joining the SFDC team, Catherine interned at the United Nations Development Program headquarters in New York City and briefly worked at the Stanford University financial aid office as an Administrative Assistant.
Bob Siegel and students in Tanzania

Bob Siegel

I met Dr. Siegel, or Dr. Bob as he is affectionately called by his students at a luncheon hosted by the Center for African Studies that featured Festus Mogae, the former President of Botswana. After the luncheon, Dr. Bob approached me and we struck up a conversation. Dr. Bob has an uncanny ability to put students at ease. He knows just how to engage young students who are still unsure of how to navigate the vast universe of life at a leading academic institution.

Dr. Bob’s dedication to instruction and mentorship are unparalleled. Last Fall Quarter, I took his advanced virology course entitled Human Virology Inquiry Project (HVIP). As a student who plans on pursuing a career in infectious disease and international health, I appreciated a professor who made a direct link to the greater purpose of studying the molecular mechanisms of viruses that have changed the health status of millions across the globe.

I am truly honored to call Dr. Bob a former instructor, a mentor, and a friend.

- by Abi Dairo

Mercedes “Method” Rutechura

Every year, Method Rutechura teaches his native language, Kiswahili, to more than 20 Stanford students. “I learn a lot from my students. They ask challenging questions and show courage in learning a new language.”

From his earliest childhood days as a primary school student in Tanzania, Method wanted to become a teacher. “Growing up, three of my family members were teachers, and they inspired me.” At Stanford, Method teaches a several Kiswahili classes, ranging from beginning to advanced-level. First-year Kiswahili student Hannah Harrison states “Method brings his enthusiasm and creativity to class everyday, he is always available to help students and has a passion for Kiswahili.”

Prior to his arrival at Stanford, Method taught Kiswahili at the University of Wisconsin and worked as a lexicographer for the development of an English – Kiswahili pocket dictionary. He also taught English and Kiswahili in secondary schools and colleges in Tanzania.

His academic research interests include: African oral traditions, especially African praise poetry, proverbs and vilifications; language and politics, challenges and applications of translation, and bongo flava (Tanzanian hip hop music).

AFRICA TABLE

This year, CAS continued its weekly Africa Table lunch series in Encina Hall. Every Wednesday throughout the academic year, invited guests delivered presentations and answered questions from the Stanford African Studies community. Notable guests this year included Angolan musician and instrument maker Victor Gama, filmmaker Filip De Boeck, Professor Mamadou Diawara of Frankfurt’s Johann Wolfgang University, and Jenni Williams, National Coordinator of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA).

AFRICA TABLE WILL COMMENCE AGAIN IN THE FALL QUARTER, EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM 12-1PM IN ENCINA HALL WEST

STANFORD MEDICAL SCHOOL STRIVES TO IMPROVE MEDICAL EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

The Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MEPI) is an NIH program striving to transform medical education in 11 sub-Saharan African countries. Stanford recently entered a 5 year partnership to improve medical education and to strengthen medical research and clinical training at the University of Zimbabwe’s Medical School. The Stanford team, led by Dr. Michelle Barry and Dr. David Katzenstein, aims to improve the approach to medical education at the medical student and post graduate levels, and also to introduce programs to improve faculty training and support and investments in novel educational models and technologies.
The Center for African Studies congratulates the following recipients of summer research and language fellowships.

Lauren Prather, Political Science  Advanced Arabic  
Amanda Robinson, Political Science  Advanced Chichewa  
Hillary Chart, Anthropology  Intermediate Setswana  
Karem Said, Anthropology  Advanced Arabic  
Chad McClymonds, African Studies  Advanced Akan  
Eda Pepi, Anthropology  

Seeing like Stateless Persons: The Citizenship and Mobility of Africans in a Modernizing Jordan  
Medlina Platas, Accountability, Electoral Outcomes, and Service Provision in Uganda  
Yacoub Raheem, Quantifying Hydrological Constraints to Optimize Sustainable Rural Development Solutions  
Kory Russel, Quantification and modeling of health benefits and reduced caloric expenditure as a function of improved water access and reduced water fetching in Nampula, Mozambique  
Jeannette Laramee, The Potential of Small-Scale Biogas Digesters to Improve Access to Sanitation and Renewable Energy in sub-Saharan Africa  
Aida Mbowa, Dialogic Constructions of a New Black Aesthetic: East Africa and African America, 1952–1979  
Kennedy Opalo, Ethnicity, Elites and Institutions: The Political Economy of Development in Sub-Saharan Africa  
Isaac Penny, Field Testing of two affordable Tuberculosis diagnostic devices in rural Kenya  
Jess Auerbach, “Ten years of absence from myself.” Student migration between Angola and Brazil