



# VT World Connections

Center for Research and Development in International Education (CRaDIE)

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## ***Price Travels to Zambia***

From October 25 – November 10, 2007 Dr. Bill Price traveled to Lusaka, Zambia. He delivered two papers at two different Zambian national forums. First, he represented The World Bank as a speaker at the 2007 TEVETA National Stakeholders Forum where he delivered a paper entitled "*Innovation in the TEVET as a Means to Economic Growth.*" His second paper, "*Enhancing and Expanding Vocational Education Programs in Zambia Primary and Secondary Schools*" was presented at the Forum on Simulated Mathematics and Integrated Vocational Training, sponsored by the Zambian National Institute for Science and Industrial Research.

In addition to presenting his papers, Price met with officials at TEVETA and the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Vocational Training (MSTVT). He also visited several rural and urban high schools, technical colleges, and the University of Zambia. During each visit, he had the opportunity to talk with teachers and administrators to discuss the status of vocational education in Zambia. He also had the opportunity to visit several business districts in Lusaka to talk to individuals representing the Zambian business sector.



*Price and Principal Kayama Nyambe at Chonwge High School in Chonwge, Zambia*

Vocational teacher capacity became a central theme when talking with people throughout his trip. There is a critical need to upgrade the credentials of Zambian vocational teachers and to increase their numbers. Price will be hosting a Zambian delegation consisting of MSTVT and University of Zambia officials visiting Virginia Tech in March. They will be discussing strategies for establishing bachelor and master degree programs in vocational teacher education at the University of Zambia. Plans for collaboration among the Zambian MSTVT, University of Zambia, and the VT School of Education are underway to work on this initiative.

## ***Synergy Workshop Held in Washington, DC***

In August 2007 Higher Education for Development (HED) marked its tenth anniversary of collaboration between USAID and higher education with a Synergy Workshop in Washington, DC that brought together over 345 current and former partners, representing 94 partnerships across 43 countries. Members of the media, private sector organizations, the international diplomatic corps, and U.S. and host country governments also attended.

Josiah Tlou and Patricia Kelly were invited to discuss the results and sustainability of the 1999-2001 Virginia Tech grant to develop school-based capacity problem solving sites in three trial schools in Malawi. Also attending were Malawi partners Dr. Elias Chakwera, principal (president) of Domasi College of Education (DCE), and Chokocha Selemani-Mbewe, chief lecturer and former Dean of Education at DCE. Jennifer Sughrue, formerly of Virginia Tech and now at Florida Atlantic University, attended and reported on a grant that she and Tlou had to upgrade the research skills of faculty at teacher education colleges in Malawi.

The workshop enabled attendees to review the contributions of higher education partnerships over the past decade and discuss how the program's effectiveness can be enhanced and extended. Participants included 68 host country institutions and 93 U.S. colleges and universities, representing 34 percent of all partnerships since 1998.

## ***SOE International Efforts***

CRaDIE has agreed to organize information about the international efforts of SOE faculty for Dean Ott Rowlands. Although the first report to her is on January 31, the Center will maintain an on-going record so that such information can be readily supplied. As faculty engage in international teaching, research, exchanges, study travel, etc., please send a note to Patricia Kelly [kellyp@vt.edu](mailto:kellyp@vt.edu) or Josiah Tlou [tlou@vt.edu](mailto:tlou@vt.edu).

### ***Virginia Tech Hosts Central Asia Visitors***

Twelve visitors from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan were on campus on October 24 and 26 and again on November 5 as part of a US Department of State grant awarded to Legacy International, a non-governmental organization that partners with CRaDIE on occasion. Patricia Kelly coordinated the three days of workshops for the project, "Responsible Governance, Civic Education, and Citizen Participation for Central Asia."

David Hicks served as the primary consultant for two days of civic education workshops, assisted by Darren Minarik, Katrina Landon, Melissa Lisanti, and Charlie Crabtree, all doctoral students in social studies education. In addition, Dean Karen DePauw addressed the group on the concept of "citizen scholar," an emphasis of the Graduate School in encouraging graduate students to apply their research to "real-world" problems. Michele James-Deramo, director of the Service-Learning Center, discussed service-learning as a way to learn through citizen participation. Kris Tilley-Lubbs, a second language teacher educator, talked about her use of service-learning with her students who work with immigrant families. In another session, Kerry Redican and Jane Falls described their on-line learning programs. Kelly led the visitors on a tour of the campus.



*David Hicks taking notes of the ideas offered by workshop participants during a discussion. Elena Bobko is the translator.*

The visitors, representing education and community sectors, will return to their countries to carry out projects they designed based on activities they saw in the US. They will also participate in delivering seminars for others from their regions. Sue Magliaro, Director of the School of Education, will serve as a consultant during this in-country work in April 2008.

### ***Scholarships Established at Domasi College of Education***

When Domasi College of Education (DCE) began its new Bachelor's of Education degree program in primary teacher education specialization, each year well-qualified candidates had to be turned down because the program was limited to the 30 students who could be provided room and board by the college. The degree program was the end result of the five-year USAID grant awarded to Virginia Tech.

As a result of discussions with Dr. Elias Chakwera, president of DCE, he agreed to try a new approach with three new scholarships established by Virginia Tech, Radford University, and North Carolina A&T University. These three universities collaborate on the Malawi Study Abroad program and the faculty involved wanted to sponsor teacher education candidates who would otherwise have been turned down because of lack of dormitory space. The new scholarships are for tuition and books only. The selected candidates will "find their own accommodations and board," Dr. Chakwera said with assurance.

Patricia Kelly and Josiah Tlou have sponsored a science teacher educator selected by DCE for this new scholarship approach. Tawina Chiluzi, a teacher at Nkukula Free Primary School in Lumbadzi near Lilongwe, began in January 2008 as a freshman, studying primary school science education. Upon completion of the four-year B.Ed. program, she will be deployed to a teacher education college to teach primary school teacher candidates in certificate programs.

### ***Hewlett & Gates Foundation Contacted***

As a follow up to the meeting that Josiah Tlou and Wallace Allen had with Suzanne Grant-Lewis, who coordinates the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, the Hewlett & Gates Foundation was contacted in August to determine its interest in supporting the development of a process for assuring the quality of teacher preparation in the teacher training colleges, i.e. an accreditation and standards of quality process. Although the Malawi government has endorsed the need for such a system of quality assurance, they do not have the resources to fund this last component of the five-year USAID project with Virginia Tech for developing a B.Ed. degree in primary teacher specialization at Domasi College of Education.

### ***Civic Education Seminars in Kenya***

The first major phase of the Kenya cultural exchange project, funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in the US Department of State, began in September. David Hicks, Patricia Kelly, and Josiah Tlou traveled to Nairobi to attend seminars at Kenyatta University on historical, cultural, and political influences that impact accountability and transparency in governance. Hicks then presented a week-long seminar for the participants selected from Nairobi and Mombasa. From those participants, ten were selected for the US portion of the exchange. Those ten were then given an orientation to prepare them for process of traveling and living in the US.

Kenyatta University is CRaDIE's partner for the project, and Dr. Frederick Gravenir is the in-country coordinator. He gave the first seminar on accountability and transparency issues in higher education. The next seminar given by Dr. Feliz Kiruthu provided an excellent historical and political overview. Meetings with the USAID Mission, the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Embassy and various Kenyatta University administrators, three public school visitations and a school administrator training facility, various cultural activities, and a get-together at the home of the US Ambassador were part of the first week's activities.

Hicks led the team in a week of activities and discussions that engaged the nineteen selected Kenyans in thinking and talking about democracy and citizenship and the attendant responsibilities that accompany both. The participants had been selected from almost 200 applications from educators, religious leaders, and community organizers. Many were actively participating in the processes leading to the election in December.



*Hicks awards certificates at the end of the seminar. Here Ahmed Hussein Hassan receives his certificate.*

Based on the performance, leadership, and interpersonal skills, ten participants were selected by the team for the US portion of the cultural exchange. Those ten received an extensive orientation that included Dr. Justus Mbae, from the US Embassy (Bureau of Cultural Affairs), who met with the group.

### ***NCSS To Donate Backpacks to Mwanje School***

The International Assembly of the National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) voted to sponsor a project at Mwanje Primary School, a village school near Domasi, Malawi, at its national convention in San Diego. Josiah Tlou made a presentation on the history of the school from its origins in 1997 when villagers put up temporary shelters as classrooms to 2003 when the German government completed six new classrooms. The school suffers high drop-out rates (with 243 students in standard 1 and 32 in standard 8 in 2006) and low achievement (with no students achieving national selection for secondary school, 1 district selected, and 2 community day selected).



*Temporary classrooms at Mwanje were put up by villagers in 1997. The German government provided permanent classrooms in 2003.*

NCSS will donate backpacks for each standard 8 student this year. Next year standard 7 students will receive backpacks. The USAID mission office in Malawi will assist with the project by receiving the shipment and helping to get them to the school.

### ***Malawi Study Abroad***

Plans are close to final for the 2008 Study Abroad to Malawi. Students leave on June 2 and return on July 19, 2008. Activities include cultural events, a safari, teaching in Malawian classrooms, a service learning project, and class discussions of readings, experiences, and projects.



## ***Carol Brandt Presents in Sweden***



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Please submit items and activities of interest to [kellyp@vt.edu](mailto:kellyp@vt.edu) for the Spring Semester issue.

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In August 2007 Carol Brandt traveled to Malmo, Sweden, to attend the biennial conference of the European Science Education Research Association (ESERA). ESERA is the largest academic organization in Europe that focuses on research in science education. More than 600 researchers from 39 countries attended this conference, representing every continent in the world. Malmo University and their teacher education program hosted the conference.

Brandt's presented a paper entitled "A Case Study of Persistence among Indigenous Women in Tertiary Level Science in the United States," which was also selected for the conference proceedings.

While there, Brandt met three researchers from the University of Gavle in Sweden, who are using feminist methodology and action research with science teachers in their community. They plan to exchange information on our methods and data analysis. She also traded papers and contact information with researchers from Hanover, Germany, who are using narrative methods to document students' understandings of science. They may be attending a conference in Washington, D.C., this spring and would be willing to come to the Virginia Tech campus.

Other highlights of the conference included a trip to the Experimentarium, a science education museum in Copenhagen. The after-hours visit allowed Brandt and others to use their facility, meet with their volunteer staff,

as well as speak with the director. Similarly, the ESERA conference emphasized the role of science museums in informal science education, an important facet of Brandt's own research agenda.

Brandt says, "The conference was exciting and refreshing. I found many parallels in Europe to the dialogues in the U.S. about science education standards and scientific literacy. I plan to follow up and build on the relationships that I established at the conference. I foresee how these contacts will provide new perspectives and contexts for my own research."



*Brandt visits the Experimentarium, a science education museum in Copenhagen. The ESERA conference emphasized the role of science museums in informal science education.*

## ***Barksdale Article Appears in The Reading Teacher***

An article appearing in the September 2007 issue of *The Reading Teacher* (Vol. 61, No. 1) contains an analysis of pen pal letters collected over three years between a primary school in Malawi and a school in southwestern Virginia. Mary Alice Barksdale, the lead researcher, carried out the project with Carol Watson and Eun Soo Park, both Virginia Tech doctoral students at the time. Watson is now an assistant professor at Kutztown University in Pennsylvania, and Eun Soo Park is at Silla University in Busan, South Korea. Barksdale taught in the master's program in Malawi that was part of a grant awarded to Virginia Tech by USAID. Watson went to Malawi as a participant in a Fulbright-Hays Study Abroad program awarded to Virginia Tech.

"Pen Pal Letter Exchanges: Taking First Steps Toward Developing Cultural Understandings" describes children looking for commonalities across their cultures from families, pets, food, religion, recreation, and geography to struggles with language and writing. The letters reflect the children's need to connect with each other and to try to understand each other's way of life.

The 90 American children and 85 Malawian children who participated in the exchange benefited "...well beyond the original purpose of providing an opportunity to practice written language. The participants at all levels and in both locations of this project gained unique understandings that could not have been taught" (66).