



VT World Connections

Center for Research and Development in International Education (CRaDIE)

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President of International University of Kyrgyzstan Visits

Dr. Asylbek A. Aidaraliev, President of International University of Kyrgyzstan and Adviser to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, visited Virginia Tech in February. In the fall Tom Sherman and Khaled Hassouna from Virginia Tech went to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan with Legacy International to explore grant opportunities in Central Asia. As a result Dr. Aidaraliev came to Tech to meet with education and ICT faculty as well as other departments on campus.



Dr. Aidaraliev with President Steger, signing a Memorandum of Understanding between Virginia Tech and International University of Kyrgyzstan.

Talks Continue with South Africa

In May, Josiah Tlou, John Burton, and Sue Magliaro from the School of Education and James Turner from Mathematics were invited to the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. to present the concept for the International Africa Center for Excellence in Education (IACE²) to Embassy officials and representatives from the University of South Africa (UNISA). That invitation was the result of a series of discussions carried out by Tlou and Burton in South Africa over the last 18 months with UNISA, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the South African Embassy, and other universities including the University of Pretoria. Dr. Turner's presentation received enthusiastic response and an invitation was extended for a Virginia Tech delegation to again travel to South Africa to develop operational plans with UNISA and other partners in the fall.

As a follow-up to the Washington presentation, David Brewis, the First Secretary for Multilateral Affairs at the South African Embassy, came to Virginia Tech on June 6-9 to meet university administrators, education and ICT faculty, as well as to tour campus facilities to become acquainted with programs at Virginia Tech and provide additional impetus for establishing IACE² at Pretoria, South Africa.

UNISA is one of the largest universities in the world engaged in distance education, principally through the medium of print. It is Virginia Tech's experience with distance education delivered electronically that interested UNISA in a partnership. The Africa Center, however, will also foster student and faculty exchanges and research opportunities as well as serve as a location for engaging in professional development activities.

Online Comparative Education Course Being Developed

Bettina Dahl Soendergaard, a former SOE faculty, continues to work with Tech after her return to Denmark. She was hired to develop a comparative education course, Comparative Analysis of K16 Education Systems, as part of a planned online certificate program in international education. The course will focus on giving students an understanding of how and why the K16 education systems look differently in different parts of the world, what factors have in the past influenced the shape of these systems, and which factors influence the shaping and changing of education systems today.

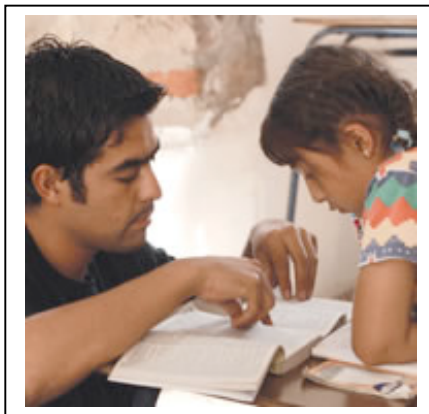
Fulbright-Hays, China 2006

David Alexander received a Fulbright-Hays grant to take sixteen K-12 educators and four university faculty to China from June 24 to July 24. Josiah Tlou and Bonnie Billingsley will accompany the group with Alexander. Eight teachers from Virginia and eight from Kentucky with two faculty from Western Kentucky University comprise the group. The first week will be spent in Beijing, the second in Xian, Shannxi Province, the third in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, and the fourth week again in Beijing before returning home.

Study Abroad Programs Begin



Working with teachers and students in primary schools



Learning Spanish in Mexico and teaching English in local communities.

School of Education students will be heading to foreign sites for classes this summer in two Study Abroad programs taking place in July.

Headed up by George Glasson and Patricia Kelly, the Malawi program focuses on ecological sustainability, culture and education in that sub-Saharan country. Students will take 6 hours of courses in social foundations and qualitative research. At the same time, they will work closely with teachers in three primary schools located in Domasi. There will be field trips to villages, local outdoor markets, craftsmen exhibits, Mt. Mulanje (the third highest mountain in Africa), a mission hospital, an overnight safari, an overnight stay on Lake Malawi where village dances will be demonstrated, and visits to the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, South Africa, as well as Mua Mission Museum near Lake Malawi. Students participating are Troy Jones, Vanessa Kreshover, Jessica Whitley, Julie Poole, Kenya Motley, Katy Walraven, and Heather Ahrens.

Kris Tilley-Lubbs is the program director for the study abroad in Puebla, Mexico, the fourth largest city in Mexico. Students will have a Spanish-language immersion course as well as a course called "Mexico Past and Present," which examines the social, cultural, political, economic, and historical issues that have shaped modern Mexico. The classes will be taught by Universidad de las Américas (UDLA) faculty. Within walking distance of UDLA is Cholula, the oldest continuously inhabited town in the Americas, as well as a panoramic views of four of the largest volcanoes in Mexico. This experience will be enriched by a service-learning opportunity to teach English as a Foreign Language in a local community. Students participating are Dannah Card, Stephanie Fairbank, Ryan Kirkpatrick, Kirsten Lubbs-Robinson, and Justin Sebera.

Science Education Research Carried Out in Malawi

Research on ecological sustainability, culture, and place-based education continues in Malawi.

George Glasson taught science education methods in the Virginia Tech master's program in Malawi. The following summer he returned to collect further data with four of the students in that program, Esther Msowoya, Ibrahim Nthalika, Ndalapa Mhango, and Absalom Phiri. In April 2006 an article based on that research was published in an online, refereed journal, *Science Education*. Under the category of Culture and Comparative Studies, the article

"Understanding the Earth Systems of Malawi: Ecological Sustainability, Culture, and Place-based Education" authored by George Glasson, Jeffrey Frykholm, Ndalapa Mhango, and Absalom Phiri (pp. 660-680) can be found on the web at <www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/jhome/32122>. The research is continuing summer 2006 with a mini-grant awarded by the Office of Educational Research & Outreach and in conjunction with Malawi Study Abroad.

CRaDIE Institutes Graduate Travel Grant

In January, the Center for Research & Development in International Education announced a grant process for supporting graduate students who are presenting on topics with an international focus at conferences. Graduate students seeking such assistance should submit a copy of their acceptance along with the description of the presentation that was submitted to the conference program committee. Submissions should include a letter explaining how the conference

presentation would further their academic goal, a brief budget, and advisor's signature. Awards will be made on the basis of merit up to \$300 for a national/international conference and \$100 for a state conference. The Spring 2006 recipients were Absalom Phiri and Ndalapa Mhango, who presented with George Glasson at AERA.

Presentations at AERA

Glasson, G.E., Phiri, A., & Mhango, N. (2006, April). Critical pedagogy of place: Eco-justice issues in Malawi. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco, CA.

Glasson, G.E., Phiri, A., & Mhango, N. (2006, April). Critical pedagogy of place: Eco-justice issues in Africa. Poster session presented at the National Association for Research in Science Teaching. San Francisco, CA.

Grants Submitted through CRaDIE for 2005-2006

"A Study Tour for Faculty Members at ACC Institutions to South Africa," submitted May 2006 by Josiah Tlou with James Turner, Art Buikema, and Richard Fell and University of Miami as a collaborating institution with Edmund Abaka as a contact person; funding agency: Atlantic Coast Conference; under review.

"Write-to-Read Literacy Center" submitted November 2005 to Oprah Winfrey Foundation (not funded); submitted March 2006 by Patricia Kelly and Josiah Tlou to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; under review.

"Citizen Exchange between the United States and Kenya," submitted February 2006 by Patricia Kelly and Josiah Tlou; funding agency: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, US Department of State; under review.

"Improving Malawi Teacher Preparation Programs in Basic Education by Incorporating Curriculum in Family Literacy through Community/School Partnerships," submitted in February 2006 by Jennifer Sughrue of Florida Atlantic University with

CRaDIE as a partner; funding agency Higher Education Development (HED)/USAID; under review.

"Building Capacity for Sustainable Democracy and Tolerance in Central Asia," a collaboration between CRaDIE and Legacy International, concept paper submitted January 2006 to Government Development Alliance/USAID; funding not available.

"A Study Tour for Faculty Members at ACC Institutions to South Africa," submitted November 2005 by Josiah Tlou with University of Miami; funding agency: ACC; not funded.

"Understanding the Barriers and Opportunities to Develop Livelihood in Kyrgyzstan," submitted November 2005 by Tom Sherman; funding agency: AACC; not funded.

"Malawi District Education Demonstration Project," submitted October 2005 by Education Development Center (EDC) with CRaDIE as a partner; funding agency: USAID/Malawi; not funded.

"Building Capacity for Sustainable Democracy and Tolerance in Kyrgyzstan," a collaboration between CRaDIE and Legacy International; concept paper submitted August 2005 to USAID/Central Asia Mission; no funding available.

"The Professionalization of the Primary Teacher Training Colleges of Malawi," submitted January 2006 by Josiah Tlou and Patricia Kelly; funding agency: World Bank; still under consideration.

"University Partners for Institutional Capacity: Primary Education," submitted January 2006 by CRaDIE and Domasi College of Education; funding agency: World Bank; still under consideration.

"Implementing an In-service and Professional Development Model for Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Kenyan Primary Schools," submitted by Josiah Tlou and Patricia Kelly with partner Kenyatta University in April 2005 to USAID/Kenya Mission; still under consideration.



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Please submit items and activities of interest to kellyp@vt.edu for the Fall Semester issue.

Malawi Primary Project Ends

The Malawi University Partnership for Institutional Capacity (UPIC) Project on Primary Teacher Education, which began in 2001 and funded by USAID, recently ended in May 2006. The over-arching goal of the project was to establish at Domasi College of Education a four-year, professional Bachelor of Education degree program in primary education specialization for the teacher training colleges. To accomplish this goal and provide sustainability, six doctoral students came to Virginia Tech to study; five of them have completed Ph.D.s; one is currently still working on her dissertation. Another aspect of providing capacity to sustain the bachelor's degree program was the graduation of twenty-four students in an in-country Virginia Tech master's

program. Graduates from both degree programs helped design and staff the B.Ed. program at Domasi, which has enrolled thirty students each year for the past three years. Another thirty students, sponsored by the Malawi Government, will enroll in 2007. The first graduates of that program will complete in 2007 and will become tutors in the teacher training colleges where primary teachers are educated.

Faculty from the School of Education who taught in the master's program in Malawi were Josiah Tlou, project director, and Patricia Kelly and Jerome Niles, both PIs on the project, as well as Mary Alice Barksdale, Peter Doolittle, and George Glasson.

CRaDIE and CITSIE Explore Opportunities in Egypt

Khaled Hassouna has agreed to explore opportunities for education and ICT collaborations with Egyptian universities. Hassouna, a doctoral student with the Conservation Management Institute at VT, will spend next year collecting data for his dissertation while also making contacts with government agencies and universities, especially the VT Middle East and African program (VT-MENA) on the campus of Arab Academy for Science and Technology in Alexandria as well as conversations with its Cairo campus, to develop an understanding of our

programs and establish lines of communication and contacts for pursuing research and development projects together.

Sedki Riad, former head of international programs in the College of Engineering and professor of electrical and computer engineering, helped develop a white paper on "Fostering Interactive Teaching and Learning with ICT" that he will use in his discussions with the Egyptian Ministry of Education.

Presentation at ICSEI Conference

In January, Fort Lauderdale was the site of the 2006 International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) Conference at which faculty presented on "Primary School Reform in Malawi: Shifting Paradigms and Conceptions." Jerry Niles, Josiah Tlou, and Patricia Kelly of Virginia Tech, co-PIs on the USAID grant in Malawi, and Jennifer Sughrue from Florida Atlantic University, who served as the evaluator of the grant, discussed their five-year experience in Malawi and the evidence supporting the paradigm and conceptual shifts that occurred both with the investigators and with the Malawian educators.