



**THE AFRICAN DIASPORA
FOUNDATION**

An African Peace Education Initiative

**Informational Profile
April 2004**



DRAFT

ADF INFORMATIONAL PROFILE - Outline

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION:

MISSION STATEMENT:

The African Diaspora Foundation is dedicated to developing Peace Centers, peace curricula, teachers, and supporting outreach programs that promote peace, nonviolence and reconciliation in Africa and other parts of the world. Ultimately we strive to empower individuals to have a choice to choose peace instead of violence to build stable communities and progressive nations.

WHO WE ARE:

The African Diaspora Foundation (ADF) is a non-profit 501(c)(3), educational organization established in September 2001 to develop a coalition of national and international leaders and organizations to address critical issues concerning peace, nonviolence, and reconciliation in Africa. Our key objective is to make peace, nonviolence, and reconciliation a working reality in Africa first and foremost. To accomplish this, ADF proposes developing African-centered peace education curricula, a teacher and public policy education institute, and placing certified peace education teachers in select African nations.

PEACE EDUCATION:

Peace education, as defined by UNICEF and supported by ADF, is a process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to:

- 1) bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural;
- 2) resolve conflict peacefully; and
- 3) create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level.

It is UNICEF's position and the position of ADF that peace education has a place in all societies — not only in countries undergoing armed conflict or emergencies. Lasting behavior change in children and adults primarily occurs over a span of time. Hence, effective peace education is a long-term process, not a short-term intervention. While often based in schools and other learning environments, peace education should ideally involve entire communities.



MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER:

The concept of ADF was born in 1991 out of the concern that there is a wide gulf among the people of African descent across the globe. **Whereas, marginal gains have been made in terms of economic and political emancipation, these gains have not translated into increased economic and political participation of significant proportions.** Africa needs friends and allies.

In almost every society, the people of African descent often constitute the majority at the bottom rung of the economic and political ladder, relative to their overall number in the population. This is not a result of lack of skills or natural intelligence, but rather the consequences of historical subjugation spanning more than four centuries of oppression.

African history has been that of a people subjected to the vagaries of international trade and exploitation. There was the slave trade, colonization, and economic exploitation through unequal exchange. This historical subjugation has left Africa's people oppressed and their continent in great conflict, both in physical devastation and in terms of human lives taken. While the African Diaspora spans the globe, and has embraced the global culture, little effort has gone into building the necessary infrastructure that would promote Africa's economic, technological, social, and political interactions.

If the people of Africa are to enjoy human security and economic opportunities in their homeland, we must build on the necessary infrastructure of durable peace. Peace through Education, although it is a long journey, it is the basis of a sustainable infrastructure for future leaders ... our children.

Agrippa O. Ezozo,
Founding President



THE ADF SOLUTION: PEACE & PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS AND POLICY MAKERS

Many African nations, regions and communities suffer from an excess of conflict and violence or an imminent threat of these escalating. Although they possess varying forms, have ranging degrees, and are based in countless origins, all these morphs of civil conflict have similarly interrupted the sustainable development that is quite achievable in Africa. Peace and cooperation is a necessary precursor to establish and strengthen a civil society that can boast of decent standards of living, improved public health, thriving economies, sound infrastructure, and good governance. The challenge is to find vehicles to inculcate the culture of these communities to make peace, non-violence, and reconciliation a valued and preferred way to handle conflict.

Based on ADF's work, we have found that an enormous body of research has been developed in the subject areas of conflict mediation, peace, non-violence, and national security. In addition, numerous universities have established peace studies, conflict resolution, and security programs and institutes. These initiatives have strengthened understanding in these areas and fostered many teaching, implementation, and research projects in the areas of peace and conflict mediation, yet none have taken the approach ADF has resolved.

The core units of the ADF solution are the development of 1) a peace and public policy education institute, 2) an African-centered peace education curriculum, and 3) the placement of peace education teachers in select African nations. ADF looks to mobilize the sound paradigms of peace and public policy institutions outside of Africa, with African sympathizers and people of African descent. This merger of resources, research, and care for Africa will fashion a peace and public policy institute that will be the base for development and implementation of ADF strategies. Peace education curricula will be developed in consortium with African government leaders, academia, and NGOs to tailor an established curriculum to the needs of the target locale. Lastly, African and U.S. educators and policy makers will be trained to teach the curricula to students and other educators and also to implement the principles that promote peaceful solutions to Africa's complex social, cultural, and economic problems. Through these methods ADF will forge direct links to the people at large and governance units of African society, all to inform a new generation on the rewards of peace and unity.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS IN THE INSTITUTE DEVELOPMENT:

The ideal home base for the proposed peace and public policy Institute will be a university in the United States that is willing to foster a program under their African Studies, African-American Studies, Public Policy, Peace Studies, or Social Welfare departments, or such related fields of study. The university department or committee will collaborate with ADF to bring the program to fruition. ADF has chosen the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) to host the institute.

Another component to this collaboration is the partnership with a famous leader committed to peace in Africa. ADF proposes naming the institute after that celebrity leader. This arm of the partnership and the use of the name will add high esteem and credibility needed to gain the acceptance of African leaders and communities for ADF's program and curriculum. The African leader of high celebrity that ADF is aiming to partner with is Kofi Annan. His history and commitment to peace and progress for Africa, its people, and beyond is an ideal fit for the goals of the institute. The institute and also the curriculum will carry his name in order to brand the curriculum as one ratified by an individual who is dedicated to stabilization and progress, by promoting peace and reconciliation.



Lastly, each year three African partner countries will be chosen to work with the peace institute. For the inaugural year, South Africa, Nigeria, and Uganda have been selected. These African countries have been selected because their governments have shown the greatest interest and commitment to participating. While any nation would benefit by participating in this program, it is a country's commitment to providing the necessary support to the fellows and to incorporating the curriculum in their K-12 and post secondary educational systems that is most critical for success.

The institute will form committees and develop strategies to develop the curricula, recruit teachers and policy makers, implement the curricula, find additional donors, maintain relations with collaborators, and develop evaluation measures.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:

Capturing the principles of peace and non-violence in a bound compilation of lessons is a crucial project to be produced in the Institute. The curriculum's content must be pertinent, understandable, culturally acceptable, age-appropriate and also teachable. Because Africa is a huge continent, hosting an array of cultures, languages, political systems, and histories, the core curriculum will be tailored to meet the needs of a particular target area. Africa has its triumphs, heroes, icons, role models, values and principles that can be celebrated in a peace curriculum. The identities and core beliefs that are not perpendicular to progress have to be weighed and appropriately incorporated into a curriculum that is to have the planned effect. This is what ADF terms an African-centered peace curriculum.

The overall goal of the curriculum will be based on Martin Luther King's principles of non-violence and the entire African American legacy. As Arnold Toynbee originally stated and Dr. King reiterated, "In a study of history, it will be the Negro who will give the new dynamic to western civilization that it so desperately needs to survive, because what the Negro can radiate to the world, comes from love, understanding, goodwill and nonviolence."

The following outline describes the phases for going from the development of a core curriculum to a customized curriculum for a target area.

Phase 1:

Selecting and grouping boards of specialists and delegates in the areas of non-violence, peace, conflict-resolution, and public policy. This board would work with identified governmental and non-governmental partners, field workers, and private business supporters.

Phase 2:

Identification of peace curricula having a track record of success in settings that have been challenged by various forms of conflicts.

Phase 3:

Organization of select individuals and institutions for information gathering conferences in Africa, on the particular needs of various African nations, or communities for which the curriculum will be introduced. This material will be used to build a peace curriculum along with material gathered in Phase 2.

Phase 4:

Appraisal, adoption and ratification of the curriculum by officials of the individual African nations.

***Additional Points on the African Regional Conferences:***

- Each delegate-participant should bring to the conference his/her written concept to contribute to a final journal compilation for the Institute. Contributions should also be submitted in an electronic format so they can be edited and included in the final journal.
- Each contributor should provide a short history of the conflict in their area and outline how it has been solved or what attempts have been made to solve the problem.
- Each delegate-participant should bring a series of lesson plans on key people who have contributed to peace and reconciliation in a particular location (Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela...) and details on traditional ways of solving family, local, and national problems or conflicts.
- The delegate-participants will be grouped according to core themes in the curriculum and also the target age/grade levels for the curriculum (i.e. primary school, secondary, and university level).
- After the conference a committee at the institute will review the findings and incorporate them in the core curriculum.

THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM:

The Peace and Public Policy Center will offer a one-year Certificate Program aimed to train individuals on the principles of peace, non-violence, conflict resolution, and reconciliation. Related subjects will also be included that involve understanding the history and present state of a region's social, economic, and political challenges and triumphs. The attendees will be schooled on the ways all of these concepts and their principles affect individuals, families, communities, businesses, and public policies. The curriculum will be taught to the attendees and they will also be trained on how to teach others the curriculum.

There are two distinct groups that will attend the program:

- 1) U.S. educators who will commit to spending one year in an African host country training teachers in the proposed program and curriculum; and
- 2) Top African policy makers. At the beginning of each year, approximately 30 U.S. educators and 20 African policy makers will begin their three quarters of courses at the university holding the institute. Participants will take a mixture of core courses and electives, in policy analysis, international relations, government, education, community development, African studies, not-for-profit management, and conflict mediation.

The purpose of having both U.S. and African participants together is so that they can learn from each other. Once the three quarters are complete, the U.S. participants will go to their African host country and, after a short period of orientation, will begin teaching courses to K-12 and post-secondary teachers. The teachers would then incorporate the peace curriculum into their classes. Their African counterparts will use the summer to do an internship, either in a government or not-for-profit institution.

Once this internship is complete, they would then return to their policy work in their country.

All participants will receive a certificate from the university's institute upon successful completion and will be considered a Fellow of the institute (e.g. Kofi Annan Fellow).



BUDGET AND FUNDING STRATEGIES:

Areas to establish funding strategies and budgets for the Peace and Public Policy Institute:

U.S. government
Major private foundations

United Nations
African governments

An endowment fund of \$20 million dollars will be generated to establish the institute in the name of a famous African leader known for peace. It is critical that ADF creates a substantial endowment fund to provide financial stability, make long term planning possible, and protect the institute in years when other funding sources or revenue may decline.

The annual certificate program budget is \$3.1 million.

This will pay for:

- tuition, room and board of the participants,
- travel, as well as a one-year stipend to the U.S. educators while in Africa.
- monthly stipend set at \$3,000 per month.

Annual Program Budget:

1.	Tuition (9 month program for 50 Fellows)	\$900,000
2.	Program Management (3 full time staff)	\$156,850
3.	Stipend for U.S. Fellows (\$36000 X 30)	\$1,080,000
4.	Housing for African Fellows (20 X \$7200)	\$144,000
5.	Travel	\$80,000
6.	Equipment and Supplies	\$17,000
7.	Network Access Fee (7.5%)	\$178,339
8.	UCLA Overhead (21.5%)	\$549,581
TOTAL		\$3,105,770

A planning grant in the amount of \$150,000 will be secured to establish the foundational elements of the institute and certificate program. This grant will fund the following activities:

- Curriculum development (including case studies)
- Establishment of partnerships with educational institutions in South Africa, Uganda, and Nigeria
- Hold a roundtable of Ministers of Education and other leaders from the three African countries at UCLA
- Recruit UCLA faculty to teach in the program
- Establish a program web site
- Author grants and raise \$3 million to launch the Peace Program named after a celebrity

Additional Projects In Nigeria, South African and Uganda for which to seek funding:

1. Establishment of Peace Libraries
2. Establishment of Educative Video-Teleconferencing Centers
3. Establishment of Computer Technology Centers



THE ADF PROCESS: PARTNERSHIPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In the pursuit of its goals, ADF has patterned a history of relationship building with individuals and non-profit organizations doing important work in Africa. Because of the plethora of individual and collaborative efforts already making successful headway in Africa, it has become a central strategy of ADF to be a multi-faceted organization that collaborates with these progressive groups.

To this date, ADF has mobilized a coalition of national leaders and non-governmental organizations that are uniting to see the ADF mission successfully flourish. These include:



Mr. Jacob Zuma
Deputy President of S. Africa



Mrs. Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar
Wife of Nigeria's VP



Mr. Jermaine Jackson
Earthcare Intl.



South African
Council of Churches



ADF is encouraged with the progress being made to build a powerful network of visionaries who believe that peace is achievable through education and commitment.

To Highlight:

- EarthCare International and The African Diaspora Foundation are organizations founded by Africans, African Americans and friends of Africa. Our shared mission is to work with the African Union, NEPAD and other parties interested in contributing to peace and development in Africa.
- Over the past four years, ADF has shared tremendous collaborations with the Rev. Dr. N.J. Tshawane Africa, CEO of the King-Luthuli Transformation Centre and Dr. Molefe Tsele the Secretary-General of the South African Council of Churches.
- ADF has recently been approached by many Los Angeles based peace organizations to host a conference entitled "What Can South Africa Teach Us About Reconciliation and Forgiveness", to be held in 2004. We are encouraged that the outside world may finally be ready to learn from South African wisdom, a wisdom that has echoed throughout history.
- ADF has acquired a letter of agreement with the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) James S. Coleman African Studies Center to develop a Peace Studies program at UCLA that will serve as the foundation for Academic Peace Centers in Africa and other parts of the United States.



More detailed summaries of interactions with the some of these alliances are detailed below.

1. Developments with UCLA

ADF has developed a working relationship with UCLA since 1999. Recently, on May 3, 2004, UCLA's James S. Coleman African Studies Center approved the ADF proposal to develop a Peace Studies Initiative at UCLA. Tracking back to early developments at UCLA, in November 2001, ADF collaborated with the Advanced Policy Institute to create the first proposal for a peace institute. This proposal was later presented to and approved by the Dean of the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research in March 18, 2002. This proposal outlined the peace education institute program, budget, and offer to Nelson Mandela to name it after him. On January 24, 2003, ADF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of Student Affairs that gave ADF an official role at UCLA to start a peace education center. In this role, ADF has sponsored and co-sponsored a number of activities and held meetings with staff, faculty, students and members of the UCLA community to involve them in our program and projects. On September 30, 2003, ADF held a detailed policy meeting with UCLA's Vice Chancellor and also the Dean of the School of Public Policy and Social Research, where we reported our developments to them and received feedback on how to continue the program to fit into the UCLA academic community.

2. Developments with the King-Luthuli Transformation Center (KLTC)

KLTC is a service center in Johannesburg, South Africa providing democracy education, Ubuntu/non-violence and conflict resolution techniques, developmental services to youth, women, and disadvantaged communities. ADF and KLTC have united in their purposes to be progressive, human rights, educational, developmental, organizations committed to the reconstruction and development of African societies and people. In September 2002, ADF participated in a New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) conference, in association with the South African Consulate office in Los Angeles, CA. At the conclusion of the conference, ADF guest, Dr. Molefe Tsele, of the South African Council of Churches and Rev. J.N. Tshawane of KLTC agreed to ADF cosponsoring a peace education conference in Johannesburg in June 2003. The conference's ultimate goal would be to establish a peace center in South Africa that would function in cooperation with ADF in the United States. The conference was planned for June 23-27, 2003, and a delegation of eight ADF members and affiliates from the United States. The conference was successful with a peace resolution signed by ADF, KLTC, and SACC resolving the road map for developing a model peace education program, peace library, and distance learning center in Johannesburg. ADF has formed an international board of librarians conferring to develop, source and support the peace library, while ADF has been receiving donations from various people and institutions for the distance learning center.

3. Developments with EarthCare International

Jermaine Jackson, of the musically famous Jackson family, is founder and CEO of EarthCare International, a 501(c)(3) organization. His success in the music industry has afforded him the opportunity to travel the world. In so doing, he became impassioned with assisting the hungry, sick, homeless and suffering with programs that foster the development of modern housing, clean water, electrical power, and waste water treatment. EarthCare Intl. was created specifically to assist people suffering from the deadly affects of the AIDS epidemic. Although the AIDS epidemic exists throughout the globe, EarthCare's initial focus is to begin combating the epidemic in Africa.

Because of his compassion and commitment to Africa, ADF has chosen, and Mr. Jackson has accepted, a partnership role as ADF's Ambassador of Goodwill to Africa. ADF and Mr. Jackson have joined forces to



develop the peace institute and work on projects that will bring large international attention to the problems in Africa and also provide an effective and sustainable plan to get new resources to African people who require them most.

CURRENT EVENTS AND STRATEGIES:

1. Relationship building with African Heads of States

ADF realizes that the heads of states of the African nations play an integral role in the implementation of peace education programs within their countries. They possess vital information, political agendas, access, and resources that ADF desires to be aware of and work with. We have had meetings with and developed varying degrees of working relationships with the leaders of the following nations:

- *Hon. Jacob Zuma, Deputy Vice President of South Africa*
- *Hon. Amos Masondo, Mayor of Johannesburg, South Africa*
- *Hon. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria*
- *Hon. Mrs. Stella Obasanjo, First Lady of Nigeria*
- *Hon. Mrs. Titi Abubakar Atiku, Wife of Nigeria's Vice President*

2. Relationship building with NGO's and private businesses doing work in Africa

ADF looks to partner with more organizations and companies doing work in Africa. Collaboration will lead to more effective implementation of the various institutions' missions. Collaboration creates a larger interface and allows sharing of information and resources. This is necessary to work efficiently in Africa.

3. Curriculum Development and Refinement

ADF has identified peace and non-violence curricula to train new staff and board members in these concepts. Before the institute is established, ADF is working to develop and refine existing ones, to have a head start and begin piloting the curriculum in local schools or charter sites in Africa

4. Increasing international attention and participation to our mission

ADF is working on developing concerts and other public events that will showcase the work of ADF and other people and organizations dedicated to making peace, non-violence, and reconciliation understood principles and methods to creating sustainable developments and progressive communities.



BOARD MEMBERS:

**President**

Agrippa O. Ezozo is the Founder and President of The African Diaspora Foundation, former Co-Chair of the California delegation to the National Summit on Africa (Washington, D.C.), a Benefits Analyst at the office of Benefits Services at Campus Human Resources at UCLA, publisher of the Black Church Review magazine; and Past Executive Director of the League of Patriotic Nigerians in Los Angeles, CA.

He was born in Nigeria where he earned a degree in public education from Wudil Teacher's College in Kano State, Nigeria, and subsequently became a teacher at Kundila Primary School in Kano, Nigeria before moving to California in 1981. He is a graduate of California State University at Dominguez Hills with a B.S. in Computer Information Systems, and UCLA with a M.A. in African Areas Studies with a concentration in Public Policy.

As president of the UCLA Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA), in 1991 he led and organized numerous events including a conference entitled, "Bridging the Gap between Africans and African-Americans." In September 1995 he organized the African Diaspora Conference event with special guest Father Carlos Matsinhi of Mozambique, the special envoy for Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

In 1997, he organized and hosted a 6,500 plus participant religious conference at UCLA Pauley Pavilion entitled "A Change Is Going to Come" with Bishop T.D. Jakes and Bishop Noel Jones. And in 1999, he worked to host the Nigerian Women's Soccer Team (The Nigerian Falcons) during the Federal International Football Association (FIFA) games in Los Angeles. He is married to Wanda Ezozo and has two children, Aaron Oke Ezozo and Zola Uzezi Ezozo.

**Chairman**

Thomas Mitchell is Chairman, President, and Managing Director of Mitchell, Porter & Williams, Inc., a Los Angeles based investment advisory firm, specializing in investment real estate and Dow 30, Nasdaq 100, and S&P 500 equity portfolios, with a client base of small businesses, qualified investors and retirees with substantial net worth. The firm incorporated in October 2000 and has clients throughout the US and has recently expanded its operations into Africa where its first international office was opened in Johannesburg, South Africa. Prior to forming this company with his partners, he worked for Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers, and Morgan Stanley in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles offices. He has worked in the financial services industry for fifteen years. He was also President and Director of Cellutel, Inc., a cellular phone operation headquartered in San Diego, CA.

He received his BA in chemistry and mathematics from Florida A&M University in 1967. He received his Executive Management degree from UCLA in 1985 and an M.A. in African Studies also from UCLA, specializing in foreign direct investment and international real estate development focusing on tourism and resort/business hotel development.

He was a delegate to the World Economic Summit for the National Association for Securities Professionals in July 1999. He attended the World Economic Summit for Southern African Development in Durban, South Africa, meeting newly elected President Thabo Mbeki and a number of other key government and business leaders.



Vice President

Itibari M. Zulu is the Head Librarian at the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies' Library & Media Center at UCLA, Provost of Instruction and Curriculum at Amen-Ra Theological Seminary, author-editor of four books, and the African and African American editor for the MultiCultural Review magazine. He holds a Th.D. in African World Community Theology, a M.L.S. in Library and Information Science, undergraduate degrees in African American Studies, and is currently developing the ADF co-sponsored King-Luthuli Transformation Centre Peace Library and Distance Learning Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa.



Secretary

Deanna Wallace is the Executive Director for All As One, a registered NGO in African countries and also a nonprofit organization in the US. All As One currently operates a Children's Center, school, medical clinic, and sponsorship program for children in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The organization also operates in The Gambia and Zimbabwe. Over the past twenty years, Ms. Wallace has lived and worked in several African countries and networked with many other charitable organizations in her efforts to improve the lives of African children. Ms. Wallace is the author of several books and also served on the leadership team for the California delegation to the National Summit on Africa in 2000.



Program Director

Chita Obasi is currently a Computer Programmer and Analyst in the University of California Los Angeles' (UCLA's) Extension program. In this capacity she analyzes the needs of programmatic and administrative departments to build new software applications that streamline workflow with efficiency and accuracy. She has been charged with building highly sophisticated applications that manage the financial, academic, and other administrative data for this continuing education division of UCLA. As an entrepreneur she owns, Isabo Systems and Design, a Software Development and Information Technology consulting company, serving small to medium business where the outsourcing of their information technology needs is ideal.

Her community service record tracks her involvement in local academic, social, and cultural organizations. She was co-founder and board member of the United Igbo-American Association (since 1999), an organization serving Los Angeles' Igbo community with networking events, investment clubs, newsletters, and community service opportunities. She works with a host of organizations designed to be a bridge between Africa and its children in the diaspora. She is a mentor to inner-city high school students through the HUEMAN foundation, and also participates in various outreach programs to youth including annual summer camp counseling at Cal State, Dominguez Hills, youth mentoring and after-school tutoring with neighborhood youth programs.

After pursuing a B.S in Biological Sciences at the University of Southern California (USC) and working in research laboratories examining hypertension, cancer treatment drugs, and cytogenetic subjects, she shifted her focus to information technology and working to bridge the digital divide negatively affecting the economically disadvantaged. She has worked with libraries, public schools, a group home and after school programs to develop computer learning centers for youth.

**Treasurer**

Patrick M. Ayota is a senior consultant and certified public accountant at The WPG Group of CPAs in Atlanta, GA, and a Diplomat of the American Board of Forensic Accounting. He is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, Columbia with a B.S. in Finance, and Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA where he received an M.B.A. He has a successful background in strategic planning & implementation, financial system development., project monitoring and control, business evaluation and analysis, and budget development and management.

He is Chairman of the Board of Directors for East Africa American Business Council (EAABC) (1999-present); He founded the East Africa American Business Council (EAABC) in 1999 with the mission of marketing the East Africa region to investors in the USA. Currently he serves as Chairman of the Board and has successfully hosted two trade summits involving cabinet members from East Africa. EAABC was recently named one of the top twenty-five international organizations in Atlanta, Georgia.

Other honors and community activities include the following: Treasurer, Board of Directors for the Uganda North America Association; a volunteer teacher for the Northminster Youth Organization in Columbia, SC and also he was the Most Outstanding Finance Student, Class Of '89 (LU).

**Member**

Beverly J. Robinson is Associate Vice President of Community Development at Central Florida Community College in Ocala, Florida; formerly the Associate Vice President of Planning and Community Development at the same college, former director of the Learning Center-Equity/Retention at Lake-Sumter Community College, and former Coordinator of School and Community Outreach at the Florida Department of Education Prevention Center.

She is also the owner and CEO of Robinson and Associates Consulting Firm and a business associate of RG Management Enterprise, Inc., a member of numerous community advisory boards and professional organizations, and the author of over 54 training manuals and curricula in the area of alcohol and other drugs prevention. She is also the staff and program development and community capacity building; specifically in the areas of organizational infrastructure.

Dr. Robinson has a Ph.D. in Education Administration from Columbus University in New Orleans, Louisiana, an Ed.D. in Higher Education from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida; a M.Ed. in Employee Counseling from the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, Florida, and a B.A. in Speech with a concentration in Hearing from Albany State University in Albany, Georgia. And she is the mother of two sons, Minister Cleveland E. Robinson, II a junior at Fisk University, and David a senior at Belleview High School.

She's experienced twenty-four years of progressively responsible experience in staff supervision, program management, public relations, and working with diverse populations. Present locally, statewide, and nationally on topics related to minority student success, strategic planning, community development, and multi-cultural and post-secondary education issues. She is also a Certified Trainer of Trainers Diversity and Racial Prejudices.



Member

Louis Ebodaghe has been the president of the Coalition of Concerned Africans, Inc., since January 2001, and a member since 1998. He currently works at St. Joseph's Hospital of Atlanta, as a Clinical Specialist in the Coagulation Laboratory, where he has been since October 1992. Prior to this, he worked in the same capacity at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, Illinois, from 1988-1992. As President of the Coalition of Concerned Africans, he has helped to initiate and facilitate various community programs that serve to mobilize and promote awareness of Africans and people of African descent.

He has served as the executive vice-president of Esan World Association. He served as a treasurer, and then President of Esan Progressive Association. As a founding member and President of the Esan Progressive Association, he initiated the "Books for Esan" project, and in 2002 facilitated the delivery of over 2,500 medical textbooks, journals and medical equipment to the Ambrose Alli University, in Ekpoma, Nigeria. This effort resulted in the accreditation of the medical school at the university. He serves on the Boards of the Nigerian Youth Alliance of Georgia, the African Diaspora Foundation and Mercy Foundation. He is a founding member and planning committee chairperson of the Alliance of Nigerian Organizations in Georgia.

He holds an MBA degree in Management from Troy State University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology, from North Dakota State University.



Member

Antonia DeCuir is a Human Resources Manager at UCLA, member of the UCLA Black Faculty and Staff Association, and a volunteer mediator for the Los Angeles City Attorney's Dispute Resolution Program. Ms. DeCuir has also served as a Employment Manager at Loyola Marymount University, Assistant Budget Officer at California State University, and Project Director for the Watts Labor Community Action Committee. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from California State University Los Angeles, a Professional Designation in Human Resources Management from UCLA, and certificates in Conflict and Dispute Resolution



Member

Robert Laurent was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on March 13, 1947. He attended Jean Marie Gilloux School in Port-au-Prince and graduated with honors. In 1968 he moved to New York City, enrolled at Brooklyn Community College and earned an AA degree in 1970. He met and married Veronica Rae; they moved to Los Angeles, CA and had two beautiful children. In 1974 Robert graduated with a BS in Business from California State University at Los Angeles. In the arena of employment, he worked at the Sheet Plant Corporation where he rose from customer service representative to president in seven years. Thereafter, he opened his printing business that has now serviced the greater Los Angeles for over twenty years.



Member

Henry Pekun is a corporate controller for Kor Group Realty. He has more than 14 years of experience in the hospitality industry with much of his experience in hotels and resorts, and co-founder of Cosmos Consulting International in Lawndale, California, a company is currently soliciting U.S. partners to develop a 425-room hotel in Lagos, Nigeria.

In 1997 he joined the Sheraton Hotel (later known as Starwoods Hotels), prior to joining Sheraton Hotels, he spent more than seven years as controllers and hotel manager, managing rooms operations in Florida and pre-opening operations at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Westin Hotel in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, and a property with 285 rooms and 96 timeshare villas. He earned his B.A. (Accounting) and M.B.A. (Finance) from Azusa Pacific University in California.



Member

Douglas Willis is chairperson of the Santa Monica Rent Control Board (an elected position) in Santa Monica, California; treasurer of the Santa Monica Democratic Club, and a fund manager specializing in special state appropriations at the Business and Finance: Corporate Accounting unit of University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) where he establishes new funds/accounts, appropriate funding of new awards, prepare monthly reimbursement claims, year-end statements and to act as a liaison between UCLA and the Office of the President of the University of California. Mr. Willis has a B.A. in Economics from UCLA. His community leadership involvement includes the board of directors of the Santa Monica/Venice NAACP; Family Service of Santa Monica; Pico Neighborhood Association; Community Corporation of Santa Monica; the Santa Monica Charter Review Commission and the Santa Monica Housing Commission.



Member

Althea Stokes is the owner of CRUISIN' Travel and Tours, a cruise only agency specializing in theme, specialty, and fundraising cruises. CRUISIN' Travel and Tours opened its doors in 1994 and has coordinated theme cruise such as "The JAZZ Cruise" and "Gospel Fest At Sea", a fundraiser for the Los Angeles based KTYM Urban Contemporary Gospel Show program. Through her cruise agency she has supported events for non-profit groups such as the Denise Roberts Breast Cancer Foundation. She began her career in the travel industry in 1981 as a full service travel agent and then took her first cruise. Mrs. Stokes will tell you that she was the only African American on her first cruise and since has become dedicated to educating the community on the affordability, vacation value, and of most importance, "The fundraising opportunities a cruise affords organizations". Cruising is her passion but by trade she is a Computer and Network Specialist for Administrative Computing at UCLA.

She began her career in outside vendor contract negotiations for UCLA in 1984 and as Information Technology evolved she was promoted to Local Area Network technology. She works with community-based organizations, churches, and schools to promote education and understanding of Information Systems and Personal Computing. She coordinates fundraisers to trickle surplus hardware and software to the community at large.

She holds a diploma in Mass Communications from the University Of Maryland, College Park and after graduation she began her travel to various parts of the world including Africa. She is dedicated to continued travel and to fundraising for organizations in need.