The ACF Outlook

Newsletter of the African Christian Fellowship - USA

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News From The Board Of Directors

By Bro. Vincent C. Anigbogu
Secretary, ACF USA

The Board of Directors met in Washington, DC, from November 2-5, 2006 to deliberate on a number of issues that will position the Fellowship on a stronger footing towards fulfilling its mandate. Some of these actions are summarized below for our members and friends alike:

Outcome of the 2006 Leadership Summit

The 2006 National Leadership Summit has been acknowledged as a major step towards the fulfillment of the ACF USA goals and objectives. ACF leaders and stakeholders who share common passion of impacting Africa positively in the areas of Agriculture and Environment, Business Development, Education, Health, and Information & Computer Technology, gathered in Washington Dulles Hilton Hotel from August 29-Spetember 3, 2006 to share opinions and strategize on how best to address issues in these areas. From the outcomes of the summit, the Board has formally adopted an ACF Integrated Development policy for Africa which encompasses economics, education, health, agriculture and environment, and infrastructure development. The trust of the policy is to transform the indigenes who in turn, will transform their nations. This policy trust has been termed IMPACT AFRICA.

CASP Conference and Heritage Africa

The Board of Directors recently requested the services of Professor Diuto Esiobu who attended, on behalf of the Fellowship, a Congress of African Scientists and Policymakers (CASP) in Alexandria, Egypt from October 27-29, 2006. The purpose was to see how ACF could liaise with African leaders through African Union (AU) in addressing key issues in Africa. For proper packaging, she went on the platform of Heritage Africa - an NGO organization originally incorporated by ACF East Region and recently acquired by ACF USA for the purposes of flexibility, alignment and seeking resources to implement key ACF strategic initiatives in Africa. Sister Diuto has returned from the trip and brought back good reports such as:

- Heritage Africa was the only Diaspora representative organization at CASP.
- She was drafted to serve on the group to compile the report of the conference on capacity building.
- She introduced Heritage Africa to some representatives of international funding agencies who expressed interest in knowing us better and working with us.

To better position Heritage Africa for the anticipated collaborative partnership with African nations, the Board has created two new Directorates: Grants Management Directorate (GMD) for the purposes of seeking funds to support the Integrated Development Initiative to be headed by Professor Diuto Esiobu, who will be working hand-in-hand with the directors of Reconnecting with the Continent, and Capacity Building as members of the Grants Management Committee. One of the mandates given the Committee is to aggressively seek grants by July 1, 2007 to hire an Executive Director to whom all directorates will report, including the Grants Management Directorate. If you are a scientist, physician, nurse, engineer, etc and will like to go on a professional mission to Africa, please contact Diuto Esiobu (nesiobu@heritageafrica.org). Please visit www.heritageafrica.org for more information.

Clarification of Terms of Reference for Reconnecting with the Continent and Capacity Building Directorates

The Board clarified the terms of reference for the Capacity Building Directorate which will focus on scouting for talents and expertise in the areas of education, agriculture and environment, ICT, health, business development, and orient, train and prepare them for specific projects relevant to ACF vision and missions in USA and Africa. The Terms of Reference for the Reconnecting with the Continent directorate is to identify needs in rural areas in any or all of the five areas in Africa, liaise

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Editorial

In the face of current trends of events at both local and international levels, fears, disillusion, and distrust seem to dominate the minds of people. The hearts of many appear to be failing them, as we are bombarded from the news media with the reality and tragedy of terrorisms on a global scale. There is a stream of endless questions from every living soul. Is there still meaning in life, and what does the future hold for the present generation and the generations to come? These are perturbing questions that must be answered with assurance devoid of denial. As we step into this New Year 2007, we need clear directions to make or reach our destinations. In this context, we are deeply appreciative of the leadership of ACF USA that has given specific directions to enable this great family of God to travel through 2007 to our mission-focused destination. Our faith in our Great God is our greatest asset in a fear-gripped world. The articles in this issue of The ACF Outlook communicate the road map of directions that are consistent and well aligned to God's revealed Word. As you read on, always remember the words of our Alpha and Omega, saying "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD."⌘

News From the Board of Directors

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with Grants Management and Capacity Building Directorates to garner the funds and talents with and by which to execute them successfully.

Creation of Finance Directorate

The Board adopted a proposal to create two directorates, namely Finance and Audit Directorate and Legal and Structure Directorate out of the current Finance and Structure Directorate. Bro Emma Ike of Pittsburgh Chapter serves as the director of Audit and Finance Directorate, while Bro Chijioke Ikonte of Los Angeles Chapter will head the Legal and Structure Directorate.

2007 National Leadership Conference

The 2007 National Leadership Conference will be held at Washington Dulles International Airport Hilton Hotel from Saturday, June 30 to Tuesday, July 3, 2007. Sister Joy Akanji will serve as the Chairperson of the 2007 National Conference Planning Committee to be assisted by Ify Ubasineke, the Secretary of Young Adult group, serving as the Vice Chairperson. Please mark your calendar.

Proposed 2008 Leadership Summit in South Africa

The Chairman and the Secretary met with Dr. Ludwick of South Africa, one of our guest speakers during the Leadership summit. The high point of the conversation is as follows:

- That there is $49 billion ear-marked for infrastructure development in South Africa.
- That South African Church Leadership group wants to partner with ACF USA in organizing our 2008 Leadership Summit in South Africa to discus and mobilize leaders in politics and church to purse interests of mutual benefits.
- That South African Church Leadership group will bring about 500 leaders to the table; while ACF USA is expected to bring 100-200 leaders

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Report on ACF Young Adults Conference 2006

The ACF Young Adults Conference 2006 was only the second conference since the conference's inception in 2004 but you wouldn't know it if you were there. The conference is organized and run bi-annually by young adults. The ACF young adult group comprises young people 20 years or older, or teenagers who are at least sophomores in college. This is because the ACF Young Adults National Board decided that by this age most parents would feel comfortable having their kids at a conference and would be able to trust their kids to be responsible and to understand the purpose of the conference and be willing to attend the various sessions without being prompted.

More than 125 young adults attended this year's conference. Uncle Tunde Aiyeru, the Youth and Young adult co-coordinator was also in attendance; he was instrumental in the smooth operation of the entire conference. Among the various speakers at the conference was Dr. Obih, a man of God who is gifted in deliverance. He impressed on believers the reality of the Kingdom of God. Also in attendance were Dr. Ruby Ibekwe, one of the prominent Young Adult speakers, and Aunty Amara (a young adult herself) who has a gift for financial planning.

Attending the ACF Young Adult Conference 2006 was a blessing! I learned a lot spiritually, socially, and financially. Additionally, I was able to catch up with folks I hadn't seen in years.

Amara Osisioma
ACF NEC Secretary
ACF National Youth and Young Adults Board Treasurer

Editorial Corner

Guidelines for Submitting Articles for Publication

1. Articles may be submitted via email at any time to the editorial committee member from your region or directly to the NEC Chair / Editor-In-Chief (*newsletter@acfusa.org*).
2. Acceptable articles shall have a maximum of 300 words, preferably in Word format.
3. Articles may cover the following content areas of the newsletter:
   - Reports of activities from regions and chapters.
   - Educational and informational materials that would be helpful to the individual member, including, but not limited to, such subjects as insurance, health, immigration, investments, etc.
   - A chat corner or food for thought.
   - Youth forum.
   - Testimonies.
4. Submit newsletter articles to *newsletter@acfusa.org*

Editorial Policies and Procedures

1. The editorial committee will endeavor to include articles from across the regions.
2. All publishable articles may not get published right away, given that space is very limited.
3. Quarterly Newsletters will be issued by January, April, July, and October of each year.

Newsletter Editorial Committee (NEC)Members

Joy Akanji (Director, ACFUSA)

Joe Akinmusuru (Coordinator)
Chujor S.N. Chujor (East, NEC Chair & Editor-in-Chief)
Diuto Esiobu (South)
NgoziChukwu MP Akubuike (Midwest)
Lawrence Olayele (West)
Amara Osisioma (Youth & NEC Secretary) ⌘

Disclaimer

All the views expressed in this newsletter are the personal opinions of the respective authors and have not been verified by the African Christian Fellowship USA (ACFUSA). They do not constitute any form of endorsement by the organization. Readers may not hold ACFUSA, its officers, staff, or volunteers liable for any views, opinions or information contained in this newsletter. ⌘

Being an African in America: Reflections of four Nigerian-American Teens – Part II

This issue of The ACF Outlook features the second of the ACF Midwest Youth Articles as Part II. The remaining essays will be continued in subsequent issues.

To Be Great is To be an African

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to begin by saying thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I assure you that the words that I will evoke have been a heavy laden upon mind. In retrospect, one could say these words have been waiting to be spewed out of me since the day I stepped foot on this much venerated country, which we know as America.

An African's experience in America is not one necessarily (a question) understood by many. Being an African in America is an experience, which encompasses infinite and complex contours. As I ponder the complexities of such an experience, I think to myself: "What are those specific experiences which are intrinsic and unique to all Africans throughout America?" I am reminded of a very specific experience, which has been popularly asserted by a rather prominent black leader, the great W.E.B. Dubois.

Dubois speaks of the black experience in America, being one which incorporates an idea of double consciousness. The basis of this double consciousness concept is that the black man is born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world--a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation-- this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his dual nature, an American and a black man, constitutes two warring souls, two thoughts, two irreconcilable strivings, and two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The experience of an African in America is one, which incorporates the history of this strife: this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge one's double self into a better and truer self; a complete and unified body, not an African and an American—but an African through and through. Simultaneous with this individual idea of being an African comes a will accompanied by a drive to succeed and succeed beyond comprehension. Thus, I say that being an African in American necessitates adjectives, which describe precisely the said drive of Africans through the American economy. Being an African in America involves the need and desire to DREAM, to be DIFFERENT, AND the DETERMINATION to succeed.

Equipped with such drive and determination, an African in America must meet trouble squarely in the face. Africans lift their chin and set their shoulders when such trouble seems a perpetual burden. Even when it is vain to attempt to dodge trials and tribulations, Africans must do the best they can to conquer those troubles. There is no doubt in my mind that there may be failures through these expeditions but Africans will conquer in the end. Naturally, in an alien society, there are often black clouds about, making the future to appear rather grim.

Nevertheless, an African remains persistent in the fight, even though he knows the worst is yet come. While hope may seem futile when beset by these troubles, an African remembers s/he is facing just what other Africans have met. Though one may fail, being African in America is to fall while still fighting; Eyes front, head high to the finish.

It must not go without saying that success is always in the future of an African in America. Through all the trials and tribulations that form an Africans experience, others are bound to stand and look upon the African with high esteem. The words will come flowing out of their mouths, and they will say:

There goes an individual of high impulse,
of princely mien and grace.
There is an African of humble faith,
a credit to his race.
There is an African of conscious vast,
with will to reach his goal.
There goes a man of who has been placed
above all else upon the earth.
There is an African of noble cast
whom hardship cannot break.
There is an individual in who is clad with
merits, which duty won't forsake.
There goes an African of culture verse,
who holds a sportsman's creed.
There goes an individual too vigilant
to bow to lust or greed.
There goes an individual whose life is
spent in service, not in scorn.
There goes an African whose majesty
shines like a may time morn.
There goes an individual who is a friend
to love and truthful to duty.
There goes an African to help uplift
the lives of wholesome youth.
There goes an individual with industry
and faith at his command.
THERE is the best individual in or out
for HE is an African. ⌘

James Odetunde

News From the Board of Directors

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from USA, Europe, and other African countries.

- The suggested venue for the conference is Cape Town
- Proposed date: August–October 2008
- Potential Benefits: make professional, business, and government contacts; opportunity to serve as spokesperson for Africa in the USA; explore potential sites and collaborators for the proposed ACF Centers in five regions of Africa.

Based on this information, the Board adopted a motion to explore the proposal for the 2008 Leadership Summit to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in collaboration with Church leaders in South Africa between the month of July and August 2008. The conference will be an effort to mobilize businessmen, leaders, professionals, educationists, health-care providers with the aim to make a long-lasting economic, health, ICT, political, and agricultural impact on Southern African region.

2006 Financial Report: For a detailed financial report, visit www.acfusa.org membership only site. ⌘

Reflections on the 2006 National Leadership Summit: "Come Let Us Build"

By Dr. Adiele Nwankwo

The 2006 National Leadership Summit held in Herndon Virginia echoed a common theme that had been used in at least one of the past conferences. It also portrayed a determined effort, by the organizers of the conference, to move ACF forward by totally embracing the implementation of the Fellowship's Strategic Plan. The conference brought together distinguished speakers that are very accomplished in the areas that they addressed. They provided us with insights on the various workings of several International agencies and what we could do individually and collectively to make a difference in Africa through collaboration with their agencies. Similarly, speakers from the academia, private sector, and specialist consultants shared their experiences and suggestions for impacting Africa. Most of us left the conference with a better understanding of the resources available to impact Africa and more importantly the price that would be paid to impact Africa.

I was particularly troubled and pained as two of the speakers took us through a comparative analysis (from the 1960's – 2000's) of specific countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For the most part, the African Countries were ahead of their counterparts by most measures of health and economic well being. However, things turned for the worse in the 1970's and 80's for most of the countries in Africa. For example, it was pointed out that Malaysia sought Nigeria's expertise and assistance in palm produce in the 60's but recently Nigeria is importing/imported palm oil from Malaysia.

The purpose of this article is to encourage us to take a second look at the theme of our summit: **"Come Let Us Build"**. ***It was not come let us have a Conference or nice discussions and lamentations about Africa. The conference organizers intended this to be a call for action; collectively and individually. I perceive "the gathering of the perfect storm"; the unbridled forces of globalization coupled with the aloofness of many of the Africans in Diaspora.***

It is very cogent that we find avenues to contribute and indeed build Africa. Africa bore the blunt of imperialist ambitions that saw the colonization of the Continent and the subsequent exploitations of the continent's raw materials and human labor. It is painfully obvious that Africa is not prepared to benefit from globalization because of lack of trained labor force, absence of rule of law, lack of very basic infrastructures and the list goes on and on. Africa's challenge is compounded by the very fact that many of the people capable of leading the charge for the improvement of the continent are dispersed all over the globe. Some of these individuals may have given up while others are at a loss on how to help; meanwhile the perfect storm continues to gather more speed.

Although the task of Building might appear insurmountable, taken in small increments significant and marked improvements are possible. Here are my thoughts on some of the ways to Build:

Be Accountable – Say bye to the blame game and the Pity party! Could you recall your most recent conversations with another African about Africa? Most of us repeatedly point fingers to others for the ills in Africa and by so doing exonerate ourselves. Nehemiah did not point the blame fingers, but prayed to God; "let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. ***I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you"*** (Neh. 1:6)

Choose to take Appropriate Action - *Now, no matter how small.* Answers to our prayers and the change we are looking for in Africa would come as we take action. President Dwight D. Eisenhower noted that "The history of free man is never written by chance but by choice-their choice." Dr. Stephen Covey amplified this thought in his book; the 8th Habit – from Effectiveness to Greatness. He states; "Next to life itself, the power to choose is your greatest gift. This power and freedom stand in stark contrast to the mind-set of *victimism* and culture of *blame* so prevalent in society today."

Make Every Effort to Model the Change you seek for Africa. Gandhi, the Inspirational leader of India during its struggle for independence, stated that *"we must become the change we seek in the world."* Many of the ills we see in Africa today are attributable to the copying of many of the wrong examples. By His grace, we can collectively and individually bring profound changes by our behaviors both in the United States and when we visit and interact with friends and family from Africa. ***The Lord has blessed, gifted, equipped and prepared us to become the Difference Makers. In what areas might He be expecting you to be the Difference Maker? The choice to make the difference is yours! Remember that to whom much is given, much is required.*** ⌘

Mark your calendars!

ACF USA
2007 National Conference

June 30 – July 3, 2007

Washington Dulles Airport Hilton

www.washingtondulles.hilton.com

Be on the lookout for details on www.acfusa.org

Contact: Joy Akanji (Chair, Planning Committee)

joy.akanji@acfusa.org

'R 'U a Registered ACF Member?

The ACF National Board has requested that all ACF members nationwide, 12 years and above, be registered into the central database designated for this purpose. To expedite action, please visit the website at www.acfusa.org members only. To ensure a hassle-free registration process, do not place a comma, period, slash, or colon in the information being provided. Upon submission of registration form, a message of confirmation of receipt will appear on your screen. You will receive your membership card soon afterwards. You can then begin to process your membership benefit package. For assistance, contact acfinfo@verizon.net

Thanks for your cooperation - Administration