

Partnerships Between JMU and African Countries  
Zambia and Kenya Subcommittee  
Midyear Report  
Fall 2023

**Membership**

**Chair(s):** Besi Muhonja, Research, Economic Development, and Innovation; Linda Thomas, The Graduate School

**Members:** Melinda Adams, College of Arts and Letters; Jennifer Coffman, College of Integrated Science and Engineering; Michelle Cude, College of Education; Rubén Graciani, College of Visual and Performing Arts; Oris Griffin, College of Education; Michael Gubser, College of Arts and Letters; Bob Kolvoord, College of Integrated Science and Engineering; Mark L'Esperance, College of Education; Charles May, Ole School Alumni; Maureen Malomba, Graduate Student; Sombo Muzata, College of Arts and Letters; Bethany Nowvieskie, Libraries; Ken Rutherford, College of Arts and Letters; Julie-Anne Savariti-Cosenza, African Education Program; Kayla Yurco, College of Integrated Science and Engineering

**Charge:** With globalization and shifting objectives and demographic needs in higher education, U.S. universities are challenged to redefine their recruitment, research, pedagogical and career development agendas. The African continent boasts some of the world's fastest growing technological and financial economies, and this African continent focused working group is charged with defining JMU's place in this expanding internationalized education and research model, while creating opportunities for research, teaching, and global community and civic engagement for our students, faculty and community. This initiative also enhances JMU's efforts in diversity, access and inclusion, and advances our vision to be national model of the engaged university: engaged with ideas and the world.

**Summary of Current Semester Activity:**

- The committee had a very productive meeting on October 23, 2023, where partners from REDI, Graduate School, JMU Global Affairs, CGE, COE, CISE, Libraries, CAL, CVPA shared their updates about many successful initiatives and plans on the African continent, as well as some of the challenges. Main discussion points included: development of options for the students from the Global South who cannot attend JMU in-person (online programs by COE, etc.), proposal to streamline numerous JMU committees focused on the African continent to align with the university's strategic initiatives, need of additional funding for sustained university partnerships, support for Fulbright students and scholars arriving to JMU, developing a common map, policy or rubric to highlight JMU initiatives in the Global South.

**Future Work Planned:**

- Chairs will collect and relay the information about the subcommittee members' and partners' initiatives in Zambia and Kenya to other JMU African subcommittees' chairs. Also, the information will be forwarded to CGE for integration with other university global initiatives.
- Chairs are planning to present the findings at the upcoming subcommittee meeting later in the semester.