

# Partnerships Between JMU and African Countries Committee – Zambia and Kenya Subcommittee

Yearend Report – 2024

## **Membership:**

**Chair(s):** Sombo Muzata, Linda Thomas

**Members:** Melinda Adams, Jennifer Coffman, Michelle Cude, Rubén Graciani, Oris Griffin, Michael Gubser, Bob Kolvoord, Mark L'Esperance, Charles May, Maureen Malomba, Bethany Nowvieskie, Ken Rutherford, Julie-Anne Savarit-Cosenza, Kayla Yurco

**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:**

- Initiated a discussion with the Kasanka Trust for a partnership with JMU. Kasanka is a national park in Zambia and is a UNESCO recognized wetland protected area. The partnership would lead to JMU faculty and students conducting educational research activities on the wildlife habitat that includes many species of birds and mammals. Kasanka is host to the largest bat migration in the world.
- Continued partnership conversations with the Southern African Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (SAIPAR) on joint study abroad with Cornell University in Zambia.
- Hosted two scholars from the University of Pretoria, South Africa in January and February, 2024. The scholars met with various JMU departments, faculty and staff.
- Co-hosted the Accountability in African Public Policy and Administration conference with the University of Pretoria at the JMU Center in Washington, D.C.
- Signed an MoU with the University of Pretoria with the support of the CGE.
- Working on a sub-grant application with the University of Pretoria to foster institutional collaborative.
- Co-hosted the Micere Mugo inaugural memorial lecture with the University of South Africa (UNISA).

**Future Work Planned:**

Due to the significant volume of activities with universities in South Africa, we are requesting that the committee mandate be extended to the entire Southern African region.

End of report