

ASEC



DECEMBER 2019



AFRICAN
SISTERS
EDUCATION
COLLABORATIVE

Rays of Hope



**Transforming Lives
Strengthening Vitality
& Building Communities**

OUR SHARED BIG DREAM FOR HUMANITY

Welcome to the African Sisters Education Collaborative's (ASEC) Rays of Hope newsletter, 2019 edition. Rays of Hope chronicles the success stories of women religious and their service to humanity made possible by their education facilitated by ASEC. The service of women religious to humanity has been appreciated over centuries. However, one central question has persisted:

If the Sisters are able to do so much with so little knowledge, skills and resources, how much more can they do if given the opportunity for further training and education?

As one of ASEC's board members remarked: "in Africa if the Sisters do not do it, it doesn't get done." This drives home the core motivation behind the founding and development of ASEC and the big dream of our largest grantor, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

ASEC's foundation relates the desire of four congregations of women religious and the four universities founded by those congregations, to respond to the educational needs of Sisters to carry out their ministries in a world in which they are confronted with untold human struggle and the quest for a better quality and meaningful life of the communities they serve.

The founders of ASEC embraced this challenge with courage and a mission with engaging. Drawing from their experience of the importance of education to carry out their own ministry, the founders of ASEC strategically tackled this mission in a profound way through a do-it-yourself approach. They mobilized their own intellectual resources for initial training of the Sisters in Africa.



ASEC Executive Director Sr. Draru greets a 9-year-old girl returning from school in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. They talked about her day at school while they watched the other Sisters sing and dance in the street.

Behind ASEC's exponential development and growth is the prophetic vision and the big dream of Conrad N. Hilton; the little boy and later the faithful, Catholic businessman, who saw the Sisters as positive game changers of human development and worthy of his will and testament:

*"Give aid to... the Sisters, who devote their love and life's work for the good of mankind, for they appeal especially to me as deserving help from the Foundation."*¹

Through his writings it is clear that Conrad N. Hilton's experience with Catholic Sisters was unique and profound in his life. He saw the work of women religious as vital to alleviating poverty and driving sustainable development among the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society. He attributed the first recognition of his success to his philanthropy to women religious as he states; "...in my own country of Socorro they have finally adjudged me a success, not because I bought the Waldorf, but because I was able to give as a memorial to Gus and Mary Hilton (my parents) a new school and convent to the Sisters of Loretto..."²

It is clear that Hilton's big dream for humanity blended so perfectly with the charism, spirituality and mission of the founders of ASEC. Today Sisters across the globe and specifically those in Africa, are beneficiaries of Hilton's last will and testament, through ASEC's educational programs. The Sisters owe it to the legacy of the Loretto Sisters whose dedicated missionary service touched the heart of Conrad N. Hilton so profoundly. ASEC sustains this legacy through its educational programs that build the capacity of individual Sisters and congregations to be authentic witnesses of the love of God through their own charism, spirituality and ministry to humanity. ASEC stands on the rock of its founders and the will and testament of Conrad N. Hilton.



Conrad Hilton

As a "Ray of Hope" to humanity over the last 20 years, ASEC's educational programs have unveiled potentials and positive outcomes of integral human development. You have all been and are part of this great "Ray of Hope" for Africa through ASEC and for this I thank you. *For more information visit asec-sldi.org/Rays19*

Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D.,
ASEC Executive Director



A GROWING SISTERHOOD IN AFRICA

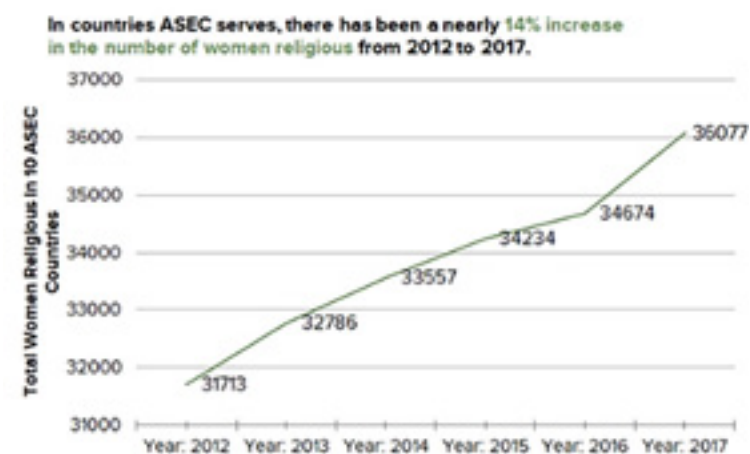
Across the world, Catholic Sisters called to the vocation of religious life dedicate their work to the greater good, in service of God. Through their apostolates, or ministries, Sisters address the needs of their local, regional and national communities, focusing on education, healthcare, infrastructure improvements, social services, environmental concerns, human trafficking and an array of other urgent human development needs.

Fortunately for communities in Africa, the sisterhood is growing³; between 2005 and 2015, the number of Catholic Sisters in Africa increased by 22%.⁴ As this growing number of Sisters continue to play a powerful, even if somewhat hidden role in serving millions of people across the continent, **the need for Sisters' access to higher education and professional training grows as well.** In order for Sisters to effectively carry out their important ministerial work, they must possess the knowledge, skills and resources that are relevant to their work.



The African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) seeks to address the need for higher education and professional training among Catholic Sisters in Africa, serving Sisters in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Approximately 80% of Sisters in these countries lack access to higher education and their numbers are on the rise.⁵ All ten countries saw increases in the number of Catholic Sisters in the five year

WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN ASEC COUNTRIES



Source: See, Holy (2017). Statistical yearbook of the church 2017. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana

period between 2012 and 2017, with the largest increases in South Sudan, Kenya and Cameroon.⁶

ASEC successfully serves more and more Sisters each year, striving to meet the ever-expanding educational needs of Sisters in Africa. To date ASEC has assisted 11.6% of the Sisters (across the ten countries it serves) in obtaining their secondary education, diplomas, higher education degrees and / or professional leadership training. Although significant progress has been made in increasing Sisters' access to education, there is still much work to be done. At ASEC we are ready for the challenge and we remain committed to our vision of ASEC as a sustainable organization with a proven capacity to collaborate, develop and deliver educational programs that strengthen the capacity of women religious in Africa. *For more information visit asec-sldi.org/Rays19*

By Jennifer Mudge, MSW, LSW, ASEC Assistant Director, Program Evaluation

Will you become a connecting bridge and help Sisters to cross? I invite you to join our efforts, give a gift of education through ASEC and be a Ray of Hope! We need your support!



SISTERS “BUILDING BRIDGES”

A friend of mine once sent me a great video posted online. The video was about two children, probably a brother and sister, walking along a concrete walkway around a house. They came across a gap with a water outlet underneath and the brother, who was a little taller, crossed over the other side. Seeing his young sister struggle to cross over, the boy devised a plan to solve the problem and help his sister. The brother covered the gap by laying on the ground across the water outlet and became “the bridge” which his sister used to “cross over” to the other side.

Catholic Sisters across the globe engage in social and human development, continually “building bridges” to address modern challenges and help others to cross. In sub-Saharan Africa, Sisters are at the forefront of addressing Africa’s challenges by initiating programs that serve the needs of their people, especially the most vulnerable and those living in the

margins. Most communities in the rural areas rely on the services offered by the Sisters who work tirelessly with determination to address their society’s challenges.

Education and connectivity across the world can have significant impact in our societies. Increasing use of the internet in sub-Saharan Africa has had a great influence on education access and rapidly transformed how Sisters communicate and access information. However, not everybody has access to the internet in Africa.

ASEC SUCCESS STORIES ARE POWERFUL TESTIMONIES OF HOW THE SISTERS IN AFRICA ARE USING THEIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO CONNECT, INITIATE PROGRAMS, DEVELOP NEW PROJECTS AND PROVIDE SERVICES THAT BUILD BRIDGES FOR OTHERS TO CROSS.

Because of you, Sisters in Africa receive training and education and become connecting bridges, relentlessly joining efforts that work to change the poverty trajectory in their communities. To improve the conditions of their people, Sisters in Africa are actively engaged in initiating new projects and mobilizing efforts that improve lives through education, healthcare, poverty alleviation and access to clean water, works of justice and human rights, care for refugees and immigrants, care for the environment, as well as pastoral and other social service.

*By Sr. Nancy Kamau,
ASEC Assistant Director, Development*



OUR PROGRAMS

SISTERS GO TO THE HARD PLACES

Our fight against extreme poverty happens in the most vulnerable communities across Africa. Sisters serve in communities that are geographically difficult to reach, lack adequate infrastructure for community development and suffer from harsh climates, war, natural disasters, disease and violence. Sisters courageously seek out the overlooked and advocate for the underserved. They are called to go to the hard places. We are called to give them the tools to make a bigger impact.

Our programs at African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) are always evolving; molding to fit the specific needs of Sisters working in the rural and poor communities of sub-Saharan Africa.

Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI)

SLDI provides Sisters with technology, administration and finance training through one month workshops over three years. Through SLDI, Sisters gain the practical skills and confidence to build strong networks and take up leadership roles in their congregations and communities (2007).

Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA)

HESA provides opportunities for Sisters to access diploma, undergraduate and master’s level education. HESA is delivered through partnerships with higher education institutions in Africa and online in the USA (2013).

The Scholarship Program

The Scholarship Program bridges the gap to higher education for Sisters in Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia by providing two-year scholarships to complete secondary school or certificates. Many of our scholarship recipients then pursue training in ASEC’s SLDI and HESA programs (2012).

Service Learning

Students and Sisters from ASEC founding institutions participate in annual Service Trips to Africa. Accompanied by mentors, U.S. participants travel to Africa for three weeks and are immersed in a wide range of volunteer opportunities, serving side-by-side with African Sisters (2008).



SLDI Alumna Sr. Veronica Dinla visits a deserted village in the Diocese of Mamfe, Cameroon. More than 200 families were displaced to nearby bushes for fear of stray bullets or harassment by patrolling military personnel.



ASEC Director Sr. Tryphina Buchard, STH (center) with graduates of HESA partner Saint Augustine University, Tanzania, December 2018.



Sisters receive instruction during SLDI V Basic Technology in Nigeria, June 2019.

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SISTERS IN AFRICA

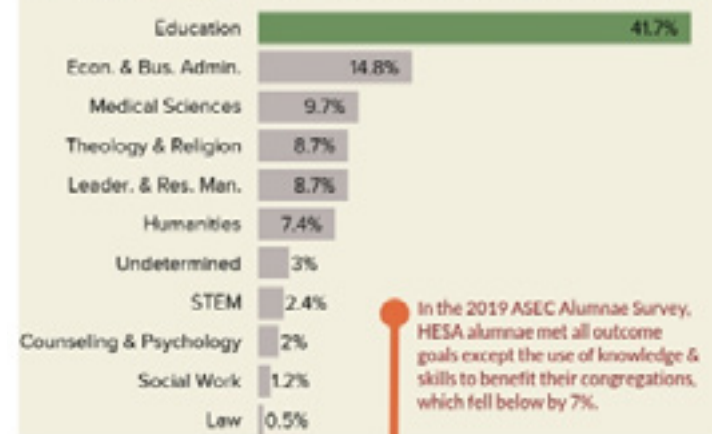
Through the Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) program, ASEC facilitates access to post-secondary education for Catholic sisters in 10 countries in Africa. Since 2013, more than 1,100 sisters have participated in HESA. ASEC delivers HESA in partnership with 24 universities in the U.S. and Africa.⁷ Sisters study in cohorts of 5 to 20 students and receive unique support to ensure their success as students and women religious.

HESA fills a gap in educational access for women religious in sub-Saharan Africa, where **9%** of the college aged population enters higher education and women are outnumbered **72 to 100**. In ASEC's 2016 survey, Superior Generals rated paying sisters tuition for post-secondary education highest among congregational challenges and the greatest potential benefit of ASEC. To meet this need, HESA sponsors sisters for traditional on campus studies, as well as in an online-onsite hybrid model.

Enrollments

In the 2018-19 academic year, HESA welcomed its largest class, with **331** new students enrolling at university

The field of education is by far the most popular amongst HESA sisters.



In the 2019 ASEC Alumnae Survey, HESA alumnae met all outcome goals except the use of knowledge & skills to benefit their congregations, which fell below by 7%.



CONGRATS TO THE 2019 HESA GRADUATES!

3-MAR-2019, VERITAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NIGERIA

4-MAY-2019, TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KENYA

24-MAY-2019, TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KENYA

partners. Another 200 sisters will join the program in 2019-20. Currently, 778 sisters are enrolled in the program in 10 countries, 80% of whom maintained higher than a B average. Sisters participating in the program study for college diplomas, bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in disciplines needed to enhance their congregations and the services they provide in ministry.



Graduates of HESA at Veritas University, Nigeria, pose for a photo, March 2019.

Graduations

HESA maintains a **96%** retention rate and more than 280 sisters have graduated from the program at ASEC's various partner institutions. In 2018-19, 135 sisters graduated from HESA, including 20 sisters who were the first master's degree graduates. Approximately **60** HESA students reported graduating with honors. Two sisters received awards as the overall best graduating students in their university. **Sr. Philomena Aboagye-Danso, FST**, graduated with a Bachelor of Education from the Catholic University College of Ghana; she began her studies online at Chestnut Hill College. **Sr. Sylvia Namuleme, DM**, graduated with a Diploma in Nursing from St. Francis Hospital Nsambya Training School, Uganda.



Recipients of the Best Graduating Student Award : Sr. Sylvia Namuleme (Left) and Sr. Philomena Aboagye-Danso (Right).



Sr. Evarista Kapwata, SOL, a Bachelor of Education student specializing in English at the Catholic University of Malawi received recognition during HESA Reflective Learning in June 2019. Sr. Evarista maintained the rank of top student at the Catholic University for five consecutive semesters.

Reflective Learning

Reflective Learning is an annual workshop that brings together HESA sisters studying at universities in a country for academic and professional development. In 2018-2019, **90%** of enrolled HESA students participated in **13** Reflective Learning Workshops. Workshop topics varied according to the needs or interests of each country and included academic honesty, self awareness, stress management, time management, research, effective communication, emotional intelligence and more.

Partnerships

In 2019, ASEC signed a new Framework of Reference (FOR) with the **Catholic University Institute of Buea, Cameroon** (March 2019) and a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with **The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya** and **Rosemont College, U.S.**, to expand an online-onsite hybrid program (June 2019). The FOR, between ASEC and **Veritas University, Nigeria** (August 2019) and the MOU between ASEC, **Rosemont College, U.S.** and **University of Kisubi, Uganda** (June 2019) were renewed.

Alumnae

HESA Alumnae make positive contributions to sustainable human development in their congregations, ministries and societies. Education enhances sisters self-esteem and their effectiveness as religious and organizational leaders. In June 2019, a team of ASEC staff visited HESA alumnae working in various fields in Uganda. Representatives from three of ASEC's founding members participated in the site visits - April Fowlkes, Director of Accelerated Adult Admission, Chestnut Hill College; Jim Sullivan, Dean of the College of Professional Studies, Marywood University; and Dr. Peter McLallen, Dean of the Schools of Graduate and Professional Studies, Rosemont College.

By Rosemary A. Shaver, M.Ed. Assistant Director, HESA Program and Tara Lopatofsky, Ph.D., CCLS Research and HESA Evaluations Manager



Students work in groups during HESA Reflective Learning at the University of Kisubi, Uganda, May 2019.



HESA students celebrate with Sr. Brigid on her birthday during the Reflective Learning Workshop in Cameroon, June 2019.

SISTERS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI) program offers Catholic Sisters in ten African countries the opportunity to enhance their leadership competencies and professional skills in the areas of technology, administration and finance. In the SLDI program, Sisters not only learn relevant skills that benefit their congregations and ministries, but also receive a laptop, mentorship, instruction and guidance to improve their ministry to the poor.

Upon completion of the program, Sisters enter into the alumnae network, allowing for new and exciting connections within a diverse network of Sisters. Our alumnae work in a wide range of ministries, are members of over 320 different congregations and represent more than 30 countries of citizenship. The SLDI program collaborates with partner consultants,⁸ congregational Superiors and National Conferences/Associations of Women Religious to develop and deliver this 3-year program.

Institutional Capacity Building Pilot

Through the SLDI program, Sisters develop their individual capacity and skills, which they use to positively impact their congregations and ministries. However, **there remains a need to further develop internal systems** within the larger institutions to which Sisters belong, including their congregations and their National Conferences/Associations. With this need in mind, ASEC has initiated a pilot Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) program to build capacity at the organizational and institutional levels.

The Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) program of ASEC is meant to support both the internal strength and the external service of National Conferences/Associations and congregations as they strive to positively impact human development. The internal and external strength of Institutions are mutually inclusive and reinforce each other in the ministry of the women religious. Building strong institutional systems within National Conferences / Associations and Institutes of Women Religious will ground the professional skills Catholic sisters in Africa have gained through ASEC's programs, for meaningful impact in the ministry of Sisters. In the ICB program ASEC recognizes the existing capacity of Institutions of Women Religious in Africa and collaborates in strengthening these systems to improve the vitality and vibrancy of Institutions of Women Religious.

in their personal and/or professional relationships. Alumnae also report taking up new leadership roles within their ministries (73.1%, $n = 517$) and outside their ministries (41%, $n = 507$).

At the congregational level, about 74% ($n = 567$) of SLDI alumnae have implemented or improved internal systems in their ministry and/or congregation in the areas of strategic planning, financial planning and management and/or human resources (HR) management. About 66% of alumnae are creating systemic change in both their congregation and ministry. Additionally, 97% ($n = 520$) of alumnae serve as mentors and their mentees include both religious and lay people.

Finally, at the ministerial, or societal level, ASEC alumnae and their mentees have secured more than \$16.5 million for human development projects across Africa, contributing to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Education and health focused projects receive the most funding; 51% of all funds support these two areas, largely in rural areas.

By Jennifer Mudge, MSW, LSW, Assistant Director of Program Evaluation and Jaime Herrmann, MPA, Assistant Director, SLDI



SLDI participants pose for a photo during the SLDI V Basic Technology Workshop in Cameroon, June 2019.



Participants engage in cultural sharing during the SLDI V Basic Technology in Nigeria, June 2019.



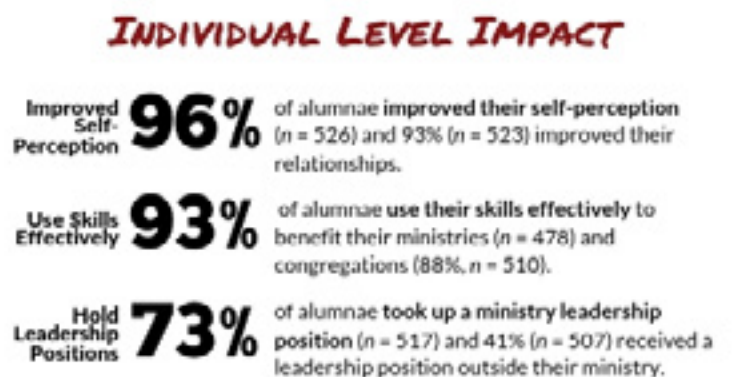
As of 2018, the SLDI program has served nearly 2,500 Sisters, empowering them to become more effective in their congregations and apostolates. Through additional activities, such as workshops for General Superiors and other trainings, the program has served 3,343 stakeholders since 2007. As the SLDI program concluded Phase IV this past year, there is ample evidence that Sisters complete the program with increased skills and leadership abilities, a desire to pursue higher education and the ability to create positive impacts on ministries, congregations and human development.

Transition into SLDI Phase V

After gaining valuable feedback and input from the SLDI partners during the 2018 SLDI Partner Workshops, ASEC staff successfully submitted a grant proposal to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, **awarding ASEC \$7.5 million for the continued implementation of the SLDI program.** The program projects it will serve more than 610 Sisters over the next three year period (2019-2021) of Phase V, with additional Sisters and congregations to be served through other activities built into the SLDI grant proposal.

Alumnae Impact

Program evaluation outcomes indicate that SLDI alumnae are able to translate the skills and knowledge they learn into action.⁹ Impact can be observed at three levels: individual, congregational (or organizational) and ministerial (or societal). At the individual level, sisters have consistently reported that they improve their self perception and relationships with others through participation in the program, as well as their leadership capabilities. The most recent data show that 95.6% ($n = 526$) of alumnae improved their perception of themselves and 93.3% ($n = 523$) saw improvements



SLDI participants rejoice after receiving ASEC journals in Malawi.



38 students graduated from Bigwa Sisters Seminary School on May 18, 2019 in Morogoro Tanzania. The 11 students pictured received sponsorship through generous donors of ASEC's Scholarship Program.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2019: A YEAR IN REVIEW

Inducted in 2012, ASEC's Scholarship Program provides secondary and post-secondary education in a variety of disciplines to Sisters reporting to ASEC offices in Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. The program has since given scholarships to 361 Sisters. In 2019, 115 Sisters total were enrolled in school through the support of donors and funders of the Scholarship Program.

Secondary School Scholarships

One of our partner schools, Bigwa Secondary School, located in Morogoro, Tanzania, sees the largest attendance of sisters participating in the program. Bigwa Secondary School allows the students to complete their high school level education. Forty students were served at this location in 2019, with 20 new and 20 returning scholarship recipients.

College Certificate & Diploma Scholarships

The Two-Year program, supporting Sisters completing secondary school or a college certificate/diploma at various schools/colleges, served 45 new recipients, with 25 Sisters admitted in Tanzania and 10 sisters in both Malawi and Zambia. There were also 30 returning students supported in the program. In 2019, Sisters were supported to study education, social work, accountancy, psychology/counseling, library sciences and medical sciences.

A Drive Toward Serving Others

A common theme that appears with Sisters participating in the scholarship program is the drive toward serving others. I am thankful to have the opportunity to work with such selfless women who utilize their education in such powerful ways. In addition, our recipients are very thankful and full of gratitude for their continued support. Letters are often received expressing thanks and a desire for further education to continue to aid their communities further. I enjoy working with everyone involved in this program and would like to thank everyone who has supported Sisters in the scholarship program. There is always a need for help to continue funding these Sisters' educational journeys.

By Kelsey Allison, ASEC Research Assistant

GHANA 2019: AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

Accra & Cape Coast, Ghana 2019 Service Learning Trip

In my short span of time in Ghana, I have seen and done so much that my perspective about what really matters in life has changed. I have seen first-hand what extreme poverty looks like. I have walked and talked with Ghanaians in their villages, homes and schools and gained a window into their world. Despite the harsh living conditions and meager resources many had, people were friendly and willing to share whatever they had with us.

Service Learning participants were tasked with providing educational service to two traditional schools in Cape Coast; **Mary Queen of Peace Catholic School (MQPCS)**, **Cornelia Connelly School of the Holy Child Jesus**. We also served children and adults at the **Padre Pio Rehabilitation Center** in Elmina.

At both schools, I worked with middle school students from 5th to 9th grade. As a former middle school teacher, I enjoyed having candid conversations with the students about their goals and dreams. Many of them want to work in engineering, science and finance. Trip mentor Dr. Jacqueline Reich and I taught lessons in math, geography, religious studies, poetry and science. We also taught the students how to play baseball.

I was also happy about taking part in a mural that was created at MQPCS. The mural encompassed the school, students and historical figures that represent some of what Africans and African Americans have contributed to the world. In the end, we were able to leave a visual token of our appreciation to the school.

I made valuable connections with the teachers and administrators. We spoke about some of the challenges they faced with lack of resources and proper training. I was able to offer them some websites and potential training opportunities. The impact that the group made on the school communities was evident and my experience at all service locations was enriching and amazing.

My reaction to my Service Learning experience is one of utter gratitude. I am so grateful for Marywood, Chestnut Hill and ASEC staff, group leaders and the other participants on the trip for making it fun and never making me feel like an outsider as the only guy in our group. **I will remember this experience for the rest of my life!**

*By Yerodin Lucas,
Marywood University 2019 Service Learning Participant*



A participant blowing bubbles for the students.



Yerodin, 2019 Service Learning Participant, serves as a positive role model for the students.



English as a Second Language (ESL) class session.

FIRST HESA PARTNERS CONFERENCE IN UGANDA

ASEC held its inaugural Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) Partners Conference June 19-23, 2019, in Kampala, Uganda. The conference brought together 68 representatives from higher education institutions, national associations of women religious and ASEC, in 11 countries for learning and networking on Catholic Sisters and the HESA program.

Prior to the conference, ASEC staff and United States (US) partners visited nearby HESA alumnae and partners. These landmark events created spaces for deepening knowledge about ASEC, HESA and Catholic sisters in Africa, as well as strengthening partnerships and addressing research interests.

“The ASEC programs raise the aspirations that the Sisters have for themselves and their country. With these aspirations, they undertake this work that is just so remarkable at such a basic level that I think ASEC has such a profoundly positive effect,” stated Jim Sullivan, Marywood University.

Participants, representing ASEC’s partners for HESA, praised the conference as a success, achieving its goals to:

1. Provide participants with greater knowledge about ASEC as an organization, its programs and specifically HESA.
2. Facilitate sharing among HESA partners for the enrichment of program delivery and evaluation and ultimately, for the benefit of HESA participants and those they serve.
3. Discuss and collect feedback on the HESA program structure, curriculum, alumnae engagement and program evaluation in preparation for Phase III of HESA.
4. Develop research questions on the impact of higher education for Catholic sisters in Africa.

Administrators, faculty and staff from partners in 11 countries - Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and the United States - participated in the conference. Representatives included vice chancellors, deputy vice chancellors of academic affairs, deans and HESA liaison officers from ASEC’s 24 college and university partners, as well as Secretary General of National Conferences/Associations in 10 countries in Africa. ASEC staff from the US and Africa were also present.



Pictured above: 68 representatives from 23 colleges and universities, 10 national associations of women religious and ASEC staff participated in the first HESA partners conference in Kampala, Uganda.

Guided by ASEC and facilitators from Christian Organizations Research and Advisory Trust of Africa (CORAT Africa), the conference provided a space for partners to learn about HESA, to discuss the program’s successes and challenges, network and to plan for improved program implementation in the future. Partners joined in learning and feedback sessions on ASEC’s historical background, HESA’s program structure, HESA evaluation outcomes, institutional linkages in higher education, quality assurance in higher education and research interests.

Alumnae of HESA also joined the workshop for an interactive panel session on their experience during and after the program. They discussed their successes and challenges in the program and in the workforce, as women religious and sisters.

An indirect outcome of the conference was the networking and relationship building among international Catholic higher education and religious institutions.

Representatives from higher education institutions highlighted the positive impact of Catholic sisters as students for their institutional missions and campus culture. Women religious leaders from national conferences and ASEC, addressed gaps in discipline offerings and educational opportunities for their sisters. Working together, these entities expressed a need for regional or national gatherings of their peer Catholic institutions.

ASEC hopes to continue to build on relationships and networks established at the conference to improve the delivery of the HESA program for students and alumnae.

By Rosemary A. Shaver, M.Ed. Assistant Director, HESA Program

THE LINK BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND HIGHER EDUCATION: WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

In 2015, Pope Francis made an apostolic journey to Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic. During this journey, Pope Francis addressed clergy,¹⁰ men and women religious and seminarians and reminded them that “when we let ourselves be chosen by Jesus, it is to serve: to serve the people of God, to serve the poor, men and women who are outcasts, living on the fringes of society, to serve children and the elderly...Letting ourselves be chosen by Jesus means letting ourselves be chosen to serve and not to be served.”

It is no coincidence that ASEC’s first and longest running program, the Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI), was built on a foundation of servant leadership concepts and ideals. Servant leadership is a philosophy, first proposed by Robert Greenleaf in 1970, that values social responsibility and the support of others’ growth and well-being above all else.¹¹ This philosophy stems from Christian religious teachings, having been traced by researchers to Jesus’ demonstrations and instructions to his disciples.¹² From an African perspective, servant leadership has been found to be positively correlated with leader effectiveness.¹³ Some suggest this is due to the parallelism between servant leadership and African philosophies such as Ubuntu meaning “I am because we are” and harambee, which is Swahili for “all pull together.”¹⁴

Specific servant leadership characteristics vary greatly within academic literature. Perhaps this variation is related to Greenleaf’s assertion that servant leaders cannot be defined by what they do, but rather who they are.¹⁵ Nevertheless, Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, Dierendonck and Liden (2019)¹⁶ suggest that servant leadership can be measured by assessing individuals on eight dimensions: standing back, forgiveness, courage, empowerment, accountability, authenticity, humility and stewardship.

In my dissertation entitled “Perspectives of Post-Secondary Education in Kenyan Religious Life: A Case Study,” I aimed to determine if participation in a post-secondary education program transforms Kenyan sisters’ understanding of their lives as women religious and if participation influences how they view themselves in ministry.¹⁷ I discovered that participation in a post-secondary education program can contribute to the development of women religious as servant leaders. Through the achievement of post-secondary education, sisters enhance their ministerial abilities, gain empowerment and are better enabled to relationally engage with others. These outcomes align with servant leadership characteristics, allowing women religious to fulfill their

roles with integrity and permitting them to serve those in need with precise skill and care.

I propose that post-secondary education programs provide sisters in Africa an opportunity to develop into influential servant leaders, who are more capable of carrying out their mission to spread God’s love through service.

The findings of my dissertation are particularly relevant for ASEC’s Higher Education for Sisters in Africa program. My study suggests that HESA sisters, studying across the African continent, have the potential to develop as servant leaders, who can make lasting positive change in their communities and can encourage the achievement of world-wide gender equality. Given these insights, it is especially important that the long-term impacts of the HESA program be evaluated, monitored and shared. The future is bright for HESA sisters and we are only beginning to see the wide-spread positive change they will bring to the people they serve. *For more information visit asec-sldi.org/Rays19*

By Tara Lopatofsky, Ph.D., CCLS, ASEC Research and HESA Evaluations Manager



YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION



Infrastructure

Many Sisters are addressing infrastructure problems in the communities they serve. In fact, Sisters have used their ASEC education to raise over \$1.7 million in funding for infrastructure improvements across Africa!

What does it mean to build hope in Africa, a continent plagued with poverty, chronic hunger, disease and violence? For an ASEC alumna, it means putting the skills she's learned into action by improving infrastructure in Africa... one brick at a time.

But, what you will find is that Catholic Sisters address Sustainable Development Goal

she serves as an accountant. **Sr. Stephany** and one other Sister remain the sole sources of hope for this desperate and forgotten community. She's now seeking funding for a nutritional unit at the clinic to care for malnourished mothers and their children.

Sr. Benedicta Anslem, MCEM, is using skills learned in ASEC's SLDI program to make significant upgrades to infrastructure in rural Tanzania. She's secured funds for several building projects, including a school, a chapel and even a solar pumping water station. It's not uncommon to find her on site, tool in hand, participating in the actual construction. Through her education and ambitious spirit, Sr. Benedicta is improving infrastructure and building hope in Tanzania, one brick at a time.

As Headmistress of Infant Jesus Preparatory School in Kumasi, Ghana, the safety of her 700 students is the number one priority for SLDI alumna **Sr. Irene Christine Oparku, SIJ**. That's why **Sr. Irene** used the skills from her ASEC education to obtain funding for improved safety features at the school. With the funding, she was able to construct a wall around the perimeter and install solar power street lamps in the surrounding community. She is building hope by creating infrastructure that improves the safety and security of school children.

Sisters are Building Hope, One Brick at a Time

Sisters graduating from ASEC's programs are using their skills to build hope and improve infrastructure in the poorest areas of sub-Saharan Africa. Sisters addressing infrastructure in Africa aren't just building, they are **#BuildingHope** in communities where hope does not exist. [Learn more by visiting asec-sldi.org/building-hope](http://asec-sldi.org/building-hope)

Nursing and Healthcare

Did you know the term 'Sister' was used to designate the nurse (historically, a Catholic nun) responsible for a hospital ward or operation theater? Now, nuns are also called 'Sisters' because of their helping tendency toward the poor and marginalized.

Many Sisters in Africa dedicate their lives to improving healthcare for poor and vulnerable communities. Through ASEC, Sisters have access to nursing education, which is improving health services to the poor and rural communities where they serve.

ASEC Alumnae Demonstrating the Healing Hands of Nursing

The pilot nursing student for ASEC's HESA program in 2013, **Sr. Esther Wairimu, LSOSF**, has accomplished unimaginable success, going from nursing student to hospital CEO in just one year. As person-in-charge of St. Francis Community Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, she recently facilitated the construction of a five-story hospital wing with four state-of-the-art surgical theatres to provide specialized services and improve the quality of care for patients. Through ASEC's HESA program, **Sr. Esther** is now studying for her master's degree in Business Administration and Healthcare Management (MBA-HCM).

For expectant mothers, the anticipation of welcoming a child into the world is joyful and exciting. But many women in sub-Saharan Africa struggle to get enough food to keep themselves and their babies healthy. That's why **Sr. Hellen Matchado, SS**, is using what she learned in ASEC's SLDI program to provide resources to new and expecting mothers. Mothers can enroll in positive parents classes while their children (ages 0-5) receive supplementary nutrition. This project has reduced malnutrition levels from 10% to 6% in the rural Ulongwe district of Malawi, where **Sr. Hellen** serves.



In Ulongwe, Malawi, SLDI alumna Sr. Hellen Matchado, SS, feeds a malnourished child and demonstrating positive parenting to new mothers.



Over 100 (~10%) of HESA Sisters study in the Medical Sciences field.¹⁶ So far, 7 students have graduated with nursing degrees through ASEC's HESA program.¹⁸

HESA student **Sr. Catherine Kabwe, SCJ**, is fulfilling her lifelong dream to become a nurse, studying Nursing and Midwifery in Zambia. She expresses her gratitude to ASEC, especially for the laptop that has made her presentations and internet research much easier. She adds, "I always wanted to be a nurse thank God, through ASEC, I have been accorded the chance."

"We all have something we can do to heal the world."

Sr. Maria Isaya, LSOSF, is a current student of ASEC's HESA program in Tanzania. She points out that the core goal of all congregation charisms is to save life, to heal and to bring hope to those who are hopeless. She adds,

"The same way one single tree can shelter so many people, so can your one single deed transform many lives. ...We all have something we can do to heal the World. Let us wake up and do something to heal the World."

The need for skilled nurses in Africa cannot be underestimated. [Learn more about the #HealingHands of Sisters at asec-sldi.org/healing-hands](http://asec-sldi.org/healing-hands)

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



9 (SDG 9): Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure in the most HOPEFUL and UPLIFTING ways. They are keeping children safe. They are creating more jobs. They are exploring sustainable energy sources. They are not just building... they are building hope.

ASEC Alumnae Building Hope in Africa

In rural Ordorme, Northern Ghana, poverty and malnutrition is so extreme it's caused stunted growth in nearly 33% of people who live there. That's why **Sr. Stephany Ayomah, SMI**, focuses her SLDI training on human development projects that improve health and nutrition for the people of Ordorme. Some of her projects include the construction of a bakery, initiating a women's empowerment group and acquiring access to clean water for the health clinic where

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION



SLDI alumna Sr. Beth Wamucii Kibe, SFMA, serves in a remote area of Kenya and is grateful for the skills she learned in Basic Technology to improve her ministry work. She says, “This is a hardship area that is poverty stricken such that at times the children go without even a single meal in a day. ...Before our Sisters (Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi –SFMA) established a school there, the children would walk for over 15 kilometers just to access a school. Thus, those who were not able to walk for that long distance stayed away from school.” She shared with us a photo of her smiling students, adding, “These children have become part of me and I feel that their struggles have become mine and so their joy is mine too.”

Education

Teachers can be some of the most influential role models in a child’s life, providing the skills, confidence and direction to be successful. Thankfully, we live in a country where education is guaranteed to all children K-12. But, what if our children did not... or worse... could not attend school? For many children in Africa, this is a reality. Parents must pay private school tuition for their children—and most families just cannot afford that luxury.

That is why it’s so important for Sisters to step in and fill the education gap for these forgotten children. Without the Sisters, thousands of students would not have schools to attend or teachers and books to learn from. They would be stuck in a cycle of poverty with no way out.

Sisters graduating from ASEC programs are using their newfound skills to ensure that more African children have access to education and the support needed to achieve their potential.

ASEC Alumnae that are Molding Minds through Education

Sr. Prema Anthony, PBVM, is a science teacher at Presentation Secondary School in the West Province of Zambia

where 75% of the population live below the poverty line of \$1/day. Her school lacked the resources needed to properly teach science. So, she used the skills she learned in the SLDI program to write a grant to purchase equipment and books for the school’s science lab. She says, “For the teacher as well as the students, time at the lab are treasured moments now.”

HESA Alumna **Sr. Mary Mukuha, FMI**, told us that 90% of her students at Fr. Anthony Pagani Primary School in Kenya did not have a desk. She obtained funding to provide desks to 300 students, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all!

HESA student **Sr. Lucia Nyamwija, OLG**, is providing holistic education to about 630 girls as Headmistress at Bon Consilii Secondary Vocational School in Uganda. Some families cannot pay tuition, so **Sr. Lucia** takes extra time to tutor at-risk girls and keep them in school. She’s also improved the school’s water access by acquiring funding for a water tank and a rainwater collection system.

SLDI alumna **Sr. Mary Mwangi, MSOMI**, also dedicates her life to teaching girls facing big challenges. She raised funds to build a classroom at Bishop Perlo Girls School, a school in Kenya that educates girls rescued from female genital mutilation (FGM) and early forced marriages.

Due to the large population and lack of funding, the literacy rate in Nigeria is only 60%.¹⁹ But SLDI alumna **Sr. Immaculata Njoku, EHJ**, didn’t want this to be a reality for students of their Nursery and Primary School in Kubwa. So, she acquired funding to build a library and fill it with books! Now, over 3,000 pupils and staff are benefiting from her efforts.

In Kenya, the Good Shepherd Sisters sponsor orphans and poor children who could not attend school. Through a grant acquired by SLDI alumna **Sr. Lucy Kanjira, RGS**, the Sisters provide the children’s school fees, uniforms, healthcare and counseling. The children are also given chickens and rabbits to rear for nutrition and finance purposes.

Support quality teachers for students in Africa

Sisters across Africa are providing quality education to youth, especially in the poor and rural areas where access to education is limited. They also give the students love, encouragement and a role model they can aspire to become. Your support changes the world by educating another Sister to continue with this life-changing work. *For more information visit asec-sldi.org/Rays19*

By **Amy Fedele**,
ASEC Media and Communications Manager

Learn more about Sisters #MoldingMinds at
asec-sldi.org/molding-minds



HESA student **Sr. Lucia Nyamwija** is Headmistress at Bon Consilii Secondary Vocational School run by Sisters of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Uganda which serves about 630 girls.



Of all regions, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion. Percentage of children not attending school: 20% of children ages 6-13 33% of children ages 12-14 and 50% of children ages 15-17.²⁰

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION



SLDI participant Sr. Bertha Chigowani teaches nearly 150 primary school students in Ntcheu, Malawi how to plant and care for trees and protect our precious environment.

Sustainable Agriculture

Sisters are practicing sustainable agriculture and farming to solve problems like malnutrition and food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), women make up about 50% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

The problem is many of these women do not have access to education that will help them improve their farming techniques. If women farmers had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30%, lifting 100-150 million people out of hunger.²

100 - 150 MILLION PEOPLE.

That's a lot of mouths who would no longer be hungry.

ASEC Alumnae are Growing Green to eradicate malnutrition and food insecurity in Africa

SLDI alumna Sr. Eulalia Capdevila Enriquez, CMS ministers at the Mother Earth Centre in rural Zambia. Here, she is improving the conditions of millions within her community, especially through their cultivation of moringa, a medicinal and nutritional plant. The Mother Earth Centre is sustained through renewable energy projects such as windmills, solar power, biogas and earth bags.

Sr. Veronica Nyambe, HBVM gained interest in farming after an SLDI field trip to Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre in Zambia. Inspired by what she learned, she started

a garden and her congregation is now rearing 100 chickens, 120 quails, 10 pecking ducks and 15 guinea fowls. She adds, "I will continue to extend my appreciation to ASEC for the time given to me [to] learn from other Sisters, facilitators and the field visits. As I go back, I want to start some bigger projects in order to empower women in our locality who have no source of income."

Sr. Yvette Sam, SUSC, an SLDI alumna in Cameroon, is another out-of-the-box thinker. She used the principles she learned in ASEC's SLDI workshop to initiate a closed loop recycling project to increase food production, manage waste and lift the economic burden her school was facing. The chickens receive high-quality, nutritional food made by the Sisters. Their droppings are added to the pig feed, providing extra nourishment. The pig manure, rich in organic material, becomes a valuable fertilizer for the farm's produce and the entire process begins again!

Sr. Seniorina Lucian, SCB, a HESA student in Tanzania, also knows that caring for the earth will improve life for our future generation.

"Each one of us plants at least two trees per semester and after finishing our studies, wherever we will be every member of our group will continue to do the same and advise others to do it also. No contribution that is little will remain the same forever; it is little by little that fills the measure!" -Sr. Seniorina

Learn more about Sisters #GrowingGreen at asec-sldi.org/growing-green



ASEC Executive Director Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D. visits Sisters in Nigeria in January, 2019.



HESA and SLDI alumnae pose for a photo during the ASEC Alumnae Workshop in South Sudan, January 2019.



HESA students in Tanzania inspect their new laptops, March 2019.



HESA participant Sr. Jane Perpetual Chitete teaches women in Malawi how to make sawdust briquettes as an alternative to walking long distances in dangerous conditions to gather firewood.



Sr. Albertina Nkunyane, a HESA student studying social work at National University of Lesotho does her practicals at Reitumetse Old Age Home. Here, she counsels the elderly and they knit, sing, dance, exercise and share their joys and sorrows with each other.

ASEC STAFF VISIT UGANDA ALUMNAE PROJECTS

In June 2019, ASEC staff and partners traveled to Uganda for the first Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) partners conference. While in Africa, staff and partners visited several ASEC alumnae projects in Uganda to learn more about how ASEC programs are helping Sisters in their ministry work and service to the poor and marginalized

- Kikyusa Primary & Secondary Schools
- Mapeera Bakateyamba Home for the Elderly & Sick
- Nkozi Hospital
- Cabana Sisters' Bread Bakery

Kikyusa Primary & Secondary Schools

- **Sr. Monica Auma, MHC** - Head Teacher of Kikyusa Primary, HESA Alumna (B.Ed.)
- **Sr. Imelda Namyanzi, MHC** - Head Teacher of Kikyusa Secondary, HESA Alumna (B.Ed.)

The Kikyusa Primary & Secondary Schools, run by the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross (MHC), have a reputation that brings them students from all over the African continent. The school serves over 350 students ages 6-13. Nearly 150 students board at the school.

Sr. Monica was appointed Head Teacher of the primary school after graduating from ASEC's HESA program. She used her skills from HESA to help raise funds for a school kitchen. She also implemented a small farm on the property where students are taught how to cultivate food.

Sr. Imelda is Head Teacher of the Secondary School. She learned how to make soap at a HESA workshop and has implemented this skill at the school. The children sell their soap to the community and local health centers to raise funds for the school. **Sr. Imelda** has also introduced an extracurricular program so students can develop holistically through dance, singing and sports.

Mapeera Bakateyamba Home for the Elderly & Sick

- **Sr. Lawrence (Regina) Nakiwu Nakyeeyune, GSS** - Bakateyamba Home Administrator, SLDI Alumna (Project Management)



Kikyusa Primary & Secondary Schools, run by the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross.

- **Sr. Elizabeth (Betty) Namagama, GSS** - Clinical Officer, Nurse, Midwife and Part-Time Laboratory Technician at Bakateyamba Home, SLDI Alumna (Administration)

Mapeera Bakateyamba Home is run by the Good Samaritan Sisters. The home's mission is to be the leading provider for hope, help and friendly services to the elderly, poor, destitute, disabled and neglected people of God without discrimination, following the example of the Good Samaritan. The home has 65 residents and 13 staff.

Three SLDI alumnae currently serve at the home. Many Sisters also live in the home with the patients in order to care for them in the night. Aspirant Sisters get basic first aid training and work in the home for their first year and return to working in the home just prior to their final vows. The Good Samaritan Sisters believe this is a way for a Sister to learn humility and the true value of service, as part of their understanding of their lives and charism as women religious.

Nkozi Hospital

- **Sr. Harriet Baker, IMHR** - Nkozi Hospital Nursing Director, HESA Alumna (Diploma in Nursing)

The Nkozi Hospital is a private nonprofit health facility run by the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix (IMHR) Sisters in Kampala, Uganda. The mission of the hospital is to provide high-quality health services and improve healthcare to their community, especially the vulnerable.

The hospital offers a variety of services including in-patient and outpatient services and specialized care for mental illness, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, dental, eye and more. 115 staff care for over 2,200 total patients, with a hospital capacity

for 70 inpatients. **Sr. Harriet** began her position as Nkozi's Nursing Director in February, 2019. She serves as a supervisor, administrator and human resources manager for nearly 100 healthcare workers.

Cabana Sisters' Bread Bakery

- **Sr. Maria Theopista Namigga, IMHR** - Cabana Bakery Manager, SLDI Alumna (Web Design), HESA Alumna (Diploma in Leadership and Resource Management)

Cabana Sisters' Bread Bakery is run by the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix (IHMR) Sisters and is also located in the same compound as the congregation's motherhouse. The bakery has 30 employees and supplies bread 70-80 loaves of bread per day for schools, hotels, supermarkets and the local community.

Sr. Theopista supervises bakery workers from her local community, including orphans and school dropouts who need to support themselves. Since implementing a savings scheme she learned through ASEC's programs, the bakery is able to run on its own. This has enabled Sr. Theopista to purchase a small bike and two vans as well as incentivize her employees by paying some of their school tuition.

SUCCESSES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During the 9-day trip to Uganda, ASEC staff interviewed 7 program alumnae (3 SLDI, 4 HESA). ASEC staff and partners also visited 2 partner institutions, the University of Kisubi and Uganda Martyrs University, to assist in strengthening these partnerships and developing institutional linkages.

During the interviews and site visits there was a lot of positivity surrounding the contributions of ASEC alumnae. Supervisors of ASEC alumnae cited them to be innovative in their thinking and problem solving which is transforming the services the Sisters are providing.

In the classroom, teachers and partners say that ASEC alumnae are bringing rationality and wisdom to campus, inspiring other students to help with activities. Many of the HESA sisters serve as counselors to their peers.

The interviewed Sisters say that ASEC programs have been beneficial to them. They are more confident and are benefiting from networking and workshops that bring Sisters from different areas together so they can learn from one another. Sisters have stated that they are implementing what they are learning from other Sisters and workshops in their own communities.

*By Amy Fedele,
ASEC Media and Communications Manager*



ASEC staff with employees of the Nkozi Hospital, run by the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix (IHMR) Sisters.



Dr. James Sullivan, Dean of Continuing and Professional Studies at Marywood University (Scranton, PA) enjoys a musical performance by Kikyusa students.



The Mapeera Bakateyamba Home for the Elderly & Sick, run by the Good Samaritan Sisters (GSS).

STAFF MILESTONES



CONGRATS DR. TARA LOPATOFSKY!

ASEC HESA Evaluator Tara Lopatofsky, Ph.D., CCLS defends her research on the impact of post-secondary education on Catholic Sisters in Kenya (March 29, 2019).

- Jaime Herrmann, Assistant Director SLDI Program, Master of Public Administration (MPA), Marywood University. Jaime was also accepted into Marywood's Ph.D. program and will be pursuing her doctorate in Strategic Leadership and Administrative Studies.
- Tara Lopatofsky, ASEC Research and HESA Evaluations Manager, Administration and Leadership (Ph.D.), Marywood University. Tara was also honored with the Melvin Medal for Excellence in Scholarly Investigation at Marywood's hooding ceremony in May.
- Briana Luppino, former ASEC Graduate Assistant, Clinical Psychology (Psy.D.), Marywood University.
- Sr. Lina Wanjiku Ndung'u, SE Regional Director of East & Central Africa celebrated 10 years of working with ASEC. She was also voted "Employee of the Year" by both the Sisters and Lay staff of the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK).
- Rosemary A. Shaver, M.Ed. Assistant Director, HESA Program celebrated 5 years of working with ASEC.

VISITING SISTER SCHOLARS

In 2016, ASEC partnered with Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) to initiate a Visiting Scholar program for African Sisters. A Sister who is well-qualified to conduct research spends 6 months working with researchers at CARA to develop her own research study focused on Sisters in Africa. So far, six Sisters have been selected for this program.



Sr. Margaret Dione Ajebe-Sone



Sr. Hellen Anthony Bandiho

Sr. Hellen Anthony Bandiho, is the fourth Sister scholar accepted for a six month research fellowship to learn applied research skills in the apostolate at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), Georgetown University. Sr. Hellen visited ASEC headquarters in Scranton, PA, from March 3-8, 2019.

Two Visiting Scholars visited ASEC's US office this year; **Sr. Hellen Bandiho**, STH, Ph.D., Tanzania visited in March and **Sr. Margaret Dione Ajebe-Sone**, SSTCJ, Cameroon visited in September.

Sr. Margaret Dione Ajebe-Sone, SST, Cameroon is the fifth Sister scholar accepted for a six month research fellowship to learn applied research skills in the apostolate at the CARA, Georgetown University.

TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BOOK

ASEC has reached yet another milestone with the publication of our newest book, *Transformative Partnerships: Role of Agencies, Foundations, Institutions in Promoting Strategic Social and Sustainable Change for Women Religious in Africa*. The book documents various collaborations and partnerships of sisters as well as their leadership training programs and the important role of spirituality in empowering sisters. The book invites us into an emerging field of research on women religious in the Global South.

The Transformative Partnerships book launch took place on Saturday, February 2, 2019 at 10am at the Tumaini Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. ASEC was represented at this event by **Sr. Lina Wanjiku Ndung'u**, SE, ASEC Regional Director East & Central Africa, **Sr. Joyce Rita Karambu**, NSA, ASEC Programs Coordinator, Kenya and ASEC alumnae and students from Nairobi, Kenya.

The event began with an opening prayer and a welcome address. Several Transformative Partnerships chapter authors then shared their writing experience:

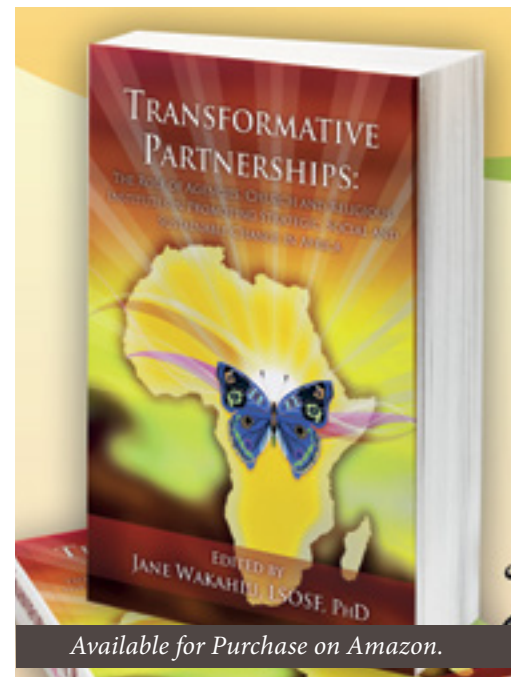
Sr. Mary Germina Keneema, MSMMC, ASEC Director, Uganda

Sr. Teresa Mulenga, TS, ASEC Programs Coordinator, Malawi

Sr. Helene Kisaka, LSMI, Zambia

Sr. Deusdedita Lutego, CST, Tanzania

Dr. Simon Kang'ethe, Kenya



Available for Purchase on Amazon.

The Transformative Partnerships chapter author speakers and several other chapter authors from Kenya were present for the signing, including **Rev. Fr. Gichure**, **Dr. Simon Kang'ethe**, **Sr. Esther Mwangi**, LSOSF, **Sr. Agnes Wamuyu**, FES, **Sr. Naomi Wangui**, SE, **Sr. Agnes Njeri**, SSJ, **Sr. Alice Anzoyo**, SHS, **Dr. Salome Nyambura**.

The book launch ended with a vote of thanks and final prayer by **Sr. Agnes Wamuyu**, FES.



ASEC Advisory Board members with ASEC staff (May 1, 2019).

2019 ASEC Annual Board Meetings take place at Marywood University

May 1-2, 2019: ASEC's annual Advisory Board and Board of Directors Meetings took place at ASEC USA headquarters located on Marywood University's campus in Scranton, Pennsylvania, USA.

ASEC's Advisory Board meeting began with an opening prayer by Sr. Lina Wanjiku Ndung'u, SE, ASEC Regional Director East & Central Africa and Sr. Francisca Damoah, SIJ, ASEC Interim Regional Director West Africa. Jennifer Mudge, Assistant Director of Evaluation and Tara Lopatofsky, ASEC Research and HESA Evaluations Manager presented evaluation data on ASEC's Sisters Leadership

Development Initiative (SLDI) and Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) programs. The presentation was followed by an interactive question and answer session.

Afterwards, Sr. Jane Wakahiu, LSOSF, Ph.D., Director, Catholic Sisters Programs, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation introduced ASEC Board and staff to Angelique Mutombo, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Senior Program Officer, Catholic Sisters Initiative (Africa). Angelique will be working closely with ASEC regarding Hilton-sponsored programs and grants. Sr. Jane also gave a comprehensive presentation about Hilton's Catholic Sisters Initiative.

THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING SUPPORTERS

Our gratitude goes out to you, our generous partners, donors and friends. What we do is not possible without you. Every single dollar you've given makes such a big difference. You are always in our thoughts and prayers.



ASEC Donors*

- Geraldine Akines
- Savannah Armijo
- Brigid Blake
- Gloria Bratz
- Mary Burns
- Melissa Cipollina
- Geoffrey Elterich
- Michelle Evans
- Jane Farr
- Amy Fedele
- Bobbi Fedele
- Vincent and Elaine Fedele
- Eric Fuchs
- Lynn Giacomi
- Amy Grocki
- D. Geoffrey Guese
- Paul Harvey
- Juanita Hogan
- Sharon Kestler
- Hong Soon and Kyung Ok Kim
- Brittany Lavelle
- Diana MacPherson
- Sr. Christine Martin, OSF
- Ashraf Megaly
- Nancy Miller
- Paul and Sandra Montrone
- Dennis O'Malley
- Susan O'Neill
- Bonnie Pastore
- Lauren Peet
- Jacqueline Reich
- Mr. and Mrs. Jose Reyes
- John and Theresa Rollins
- Howard Ross
- Kim Scalese
- Frances Shepherd
- Cheryl Spager
- Deirdre Spelman
- John and Elizabeth Stapleton
- Catherine Thomas
- Sr. Jane Wakahiu, LSOSF
- Michael Webb
- Abbey of New Clairvaux, Inc.
- Amazon Smile
- The Benedictine Foundation of the State of Vermont
- Conception Abbey
- Congregation of Bon Secours of Paris
- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes
- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph
- Diocese of Scranton
- Daughters of the Holy Spirit
- eBay for Charity
- Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph Clarence
- Glenmary Home Missioners
- The Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart
- Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
- Mount St. Francis, OSF
- Notre Dame Sisters of Omaha
- Nursing Sisters of the Sick Poor, Inc.
- PayPal Giving Fund
- Pontifical Mission Societies, Archdiocese of Newark
- Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Donaldson
- Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen
- Religious Of The Assumption
- Sinsinawa Dominicans
- Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross
- Sisters of Charity Halifax
- Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth
- Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine
- Sisters of Our Lady of Mt Carmel
- Sisters of Providence Inc.
- Sisters of St. Benedict, Crookston
- Sisters of St. Dominic of Racine
- Sisters of St. Francis- Assisi Heights
- Sisters of St. Francis Oldenburg
- Sisters of St. Francis of Holy Name Province
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia Associate Group
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange
- Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Quebec
- Sisters of the Humility of Mary

- Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton
- Society of the Holy Child Jesus
- St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
- Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign
- Thank you to supporters of our 2019 Ghana Service Learning trip participants.

Donors between 10/1/2018 - 8/31/2019

ASEC Charter Institutions

- Chestnut Hill College and the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Philadelphia, PA
- Marywood University and the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, PA
- Neumann University and the Sisters of Saint Francis, Philadelphia, PA
- Rosemont College and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Rosemont, PA

ASEC Associate Members

- DePaul University, Chicago, IL
- Sisters of the Redeemer, Meadowbrook, PA
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany, NY
- Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Mount St. Joseph, OH
- St. Leo University, Saint Leo, FL

Special Thanks

- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Agoura Hills, CA
- Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, IL
- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque, IA
- Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception, West Peoria, IL
- ASEC Board Members
- ASEC Partners in Africa



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charter Members

- Sr. Kathy Dougherty, OSF (Board Chair)
- Sharon L. Hirsh, Ph.D. (Board Vice-Chair)
- Chris Domes, Ed.D.
- *Sr. Maureen G. Erdlen, SSJ
- Sr. Carroll Juliano, SHCJ
- Sr. Ellen Maroney, IHM, MA
- Sr. Mary Persico, IHM, Ed.D.
- Sr. Carol Jean Vale, SSJ, Ph.D.

Directors

- Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D.
- Jane Farr, Ph.D.
- Sr. Margaret Gannon, IHM, Ph.D.
- Sr. Florence Hee, OSF, Ph.D.
- *Sr. Kathleen Lunsman, IHM
- *Sr. Kate McCarron
- Sr. Kathryn Miller, SSJ, Ph.D.
- Pius D. Ojara, Ph.D.
- *Sr. Regina M. O'Neill, OSF
- *Jacqueline C. Reich, Ph.D.
- Marcia Sichel, SHCJ, Ph.D.
- Barbara Spears, SNJM
- *Sr. Regina Zoot, SHCJ

Associate Members

- A. Gabriel Esteban, Ph.D., DePaul University
- Sr. Anne Marie Haas, CSR, Srs. of the Redeemer
- Sr. Mary Anne Heenan, CSJ, Srs. of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany
- Sr. Louise Lears, S.C., Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati
- Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D., St. Leo University

*Welcome new Members

BOARD HONOREES

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank all of our Board Member Honorees for your service and dedication to ASEC. We will miss each and every one of you.

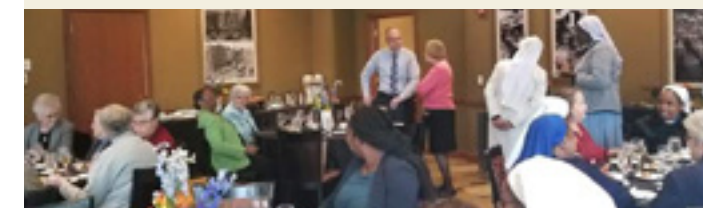


Left-Right: Sr. Carol Jean Vale, SSJ, Ph.D. (former Board Chair), Honoree Brigid Blake, Honoree Jane Farr, Ph.D. (elected to rejoin Board as a special term), Honoree Sr. Anne Myers, SSJ, Ph.D., Honoree Sr. Marijane Hresko, OSF, MA, Honoree Sr. Florence Nwaonuma, SSH, Sr. Kathryn Dougherty, OSF (Board Chair), Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D. (ASEC Executive Director). Honorees not in attendance: Sr. Carol Ann Knight, SHCJ, MA, Sr. Anna Mary Henrietta Nyangoma, MCEM.



JULIBEE CELEBRATION

A celebratory dinner was held for Sr. Jane Wakahiu's Silver Jubilee (25 years in religious life) on May 1, 2019. Attending the celebration were ASEC Board Members and ASEC staff, along with many friends, former colleagues and members of her congregation, Little Sisters of St. Francis (LSOSF). Sr. Jane Wakahiu, LSOSF, Ph.D., is the Associate Vice President of Program Operations and Head of Catholic Sisters Initiative, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and former ASEC Executive Director (2011-2017).



REP. KYLE J. MULLINS VISITS ASEC HEADQUARTERS

On Friday, May 24, 2019, African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) staff were delighted by a visit from **Hon. Kyle J Mullins**, the representative from 112th District, Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Rep. Mullins took time to meet with ASEC Executive Director **Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D.** of Uganda and ASEC Asst. Director of Development Sr. Nancy Kamau, LSOSE, of Kenya. Marywood University, one of of ASEC's eight founding institutions, hosts the nonprofit's headquarters on their campus in Scranton, PA.

Sr. Draru and Rep. Mullins met briefly at Marywood University's Sixth Annual Community Leadership Celebration on Thursday, May 2, 2019. In a friendly follow-up visit, Rep. Mullins toured ASEC headquarters and extended his help and guidance to Sr. Draru. Rep. Mullins also posed for several pictures with ASEC staff.



ASEC Executive Director Sr. Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Ph.D. of Uganda (left) and ASEC Asst. Director of Development Sr. Nancy Kamau, LSOSE, of Kenya (center) pose with Hon. Kyle J Mullins (right) at ASEC's headquarters, located on Marywood University's campus in Scranton, PA.

MORE WAYS YOU CAN HELP

HERE ARE SOME OTHER WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR ASEC SISTERS.



 <p>FUNDRAISE</p> <p>It only takes a minute to set up a campaign on Facebook to raise money for our important cause.</p>	 <p>SHOP AMAZON SMILE</p> <p>Select ASEC as your charity of choice and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases to ASEC.</p>	 <p>SHARE</p> <p>When you like, comment and share our social media posts, you help us get our story to more people.</p>	 <p>EBAY FOR CHARITY</p> <p>Sell your unwanted items on eBay and donate a portion of the sale (up to 100%) to ASEC! In addition, any items you purchase from our eBay charity page will result in a donation to ASEC.</p>	 <p>VOLUNTEER</p> <p>Sign up on our website to learn about our volunteer opportunities and how you can get involved.</p>
--	---	---	---	--

Visit asec-sldi.org/get-involved for more information!

ASEC PARTNERS IN AFRICA AND USA



- Nigeria**
 - The Catholic University of Malawi
 - Association of Women in Religious Institutes of Malawi
 - Management and Organization Development Resources
- Cameroon**
 - Monze Registered Nurse and Midwife Program
 - Zambia Catholic University
 - Zambia Association of Sisterhoods
 - Global Telecom
- Ghana**
 - The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
 - Chemchemi Ya Uzima Institute
 - Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya
 - Advantech Consulting Limited
 - Christian Organizations Research and Advisory Trust
 - Enterprise Management Development Center
 - Tangaza University College
 - Viffar Consulting Ltd.
- Southern Sudan**
 - Catholic University of South Sudan
 - Religious Superiors Association of South Sudan
- Kenya**
 - Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences
 - Jordan University College
 - Mwenge Catholic University
 - Saint Augustine University of Tanzania
 - Tanzania Catholic Association of Sisters
 - Water and Environment Management Consultants
- Tanzania**
 - St. Francis Nsambya Hospital
 - Training School
 - University of Kisubi
 - Uganda Martyrs University
 - Association of Religious in Uganda
 - Profiles International Uganda Limited
- Malawi**
 - National University of Lesotho
 - Conference of Major Superiors, Lesotho
- Zambia**
 - Catholic University Institute of Buea
 - Catholic University of Cameroon Bamenda
 - Conference of English-Speaking Religious
 - Pan-African Institute for Development- West Africa
- Lesotho**
 - Catholic University College of Ghana
 - Holy Family Nursing and Midwifery Training College Berekum
 - Ghanaian Conference of Religious
- USA**
 - Associate Member
 - DePaul University, Chicago, IL
 - Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Mount St. Joseph, OH
 - Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany, NY
 - Sisters of the Redeemer, Meadowbrook, PA
 - Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, FL
 - Charter Member
 - Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia, PA
 - Sisters of Saint Joseph of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
 - Marywood University, Scranton, PA
 - Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, PA
 - Neumann University, Aston, PA
 - Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia, Aston, PA
 - Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA
 - The Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Rosemont, PA
 - Research
 - Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University, Washington, DC



African Sisters Education Collaborative
2300 Adams Ave, Emmanuel Hall
Scranton, PA 18509

TODAY IN AFRICA...

-  A child will be saved, thanks to the education a Catholic Sister received.
-  That same Sister now dedicates her life to using that education to keep her community healthy through many local projects.
-  A village has food to feed their previously starving population, thanks to the education a Catholic Sister received.
-  That same Sister now dedicates her life to building sustainable farming practices so the villagers never have to worry about going hungry again.
-  Orphaned boys are rescued from the streets and are receiving an education, thanks to a Catholic Sister.
-  That same Sister now dedicates her life to giving orphaned and abandoned kids the best start in life possible so they can grow to become productive leaders in the future.



Donations support ASEC's Scholarship Program, which bridges the gap to higher education for African Sisters in Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia that need secondary school education. Will you become a Ray of Hope and help educate women who are serving the poor communities across Africa?

THE IMPACT OF YOUR DONATION:

- ♥ \$3 - You help train a Sister for 1 day
- ♥ \$20 - You can help train a Sister for 1 week
- ♥ \$85 - You can help train a Sister for 1 month
- ♥ \$250 - You can help train a Sister for 3 months
- ♥ \$500 - You provide training for a Sister for 6 months
- ♥ \$1,000 - You provide training for a Sister for 1 year

We are committed to alleviating poverty in Africa through the education of Catholic Sisters... Sisters who are already working where help is needed most. Will you join us? Donate today and make a difference for years to come. Your impact is a great blessing!

Mail checks made payable to
African Sisters Education Collaborative
to 2300 Adams Avenue, Scranton, PA 18509

Or simply make an online donation through our secure system by visiting asec-sldi.org/donate