

## AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT

Africa University ended 2016 poised to celebrate its Silver Jubilee and eager to embrace new opportunities for transformative ministry over the next 25 years.

**The university community acknowledges, with heartfelt gratitude, the faithfulness and generosity of the Virginia Conference in helping Africa University to realize its mission. The Virginia Conference maintained its strong support, investing 82.13 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2016.**

Overall, the AUF achieved a high level of support within The United Methodist Church in 2016. A total of 34 of the 56 United Methodist annual conferences in the United States invested 100 percent or more of their asking to the AUF.

The ongoing support of the Virginia Conference is of vital importance to Africa University because the university draws its mandate, energy and capacity to transform lives from The United Methodist Church.

Therefore, we invite each of you, as members of the Virginia Conference, to set aside time in 2017 to celebrate your journey with Africa University. Encourage your congregation to remain steadfast and aim to invest 100 percent of its asking to the AUF and other general church funds in 2017. Engage in a season of daily prayer for Africa University. Join Africa University's honorary alumni association. Consider hosting a special "AU@25" event or an Africa University Sunday in your local church or area. Use your event to increase awareness of Africa University's ministry and invite attendees to each give \$25 each in honor of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Celebrate your role in making Africa University all that it is today and all that it will be in the future. Remember that regardless of the challenges that arise, United Methodists sustain this ministry together — praying, loving and sharing our blessings — and there is no other way that we could do it!

Great things are on the horizon for Africa University in the next quarter century. Your Africa University is continuing to evolve and serve by:

- Restructuring its academic units in order to remain relevant and provide a broader-based education to meet new demands in the African workforce.
- Providing leadership formation experiences and learning for more than 1,400 full-time students each year.
- Generating new knowledge and capacity to support peacebuilding and to improve food security, human rights, and leadership for the African continent.

Thanks to your generosity, the mission of the global United Methodist Church is alive in the contributions of the Africa University's 7,000+ graduates. More than 90 percent of these graduates are still in Africa, serving communities in 32 countries. Currently, more than two dozen Africa University graduates are missionaries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, under the auspices of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

Without Africa University, “I am sure that I would not have the mental maturity and spiritual growth that I have now,” said Albert Wakili, an AU graduate who is a Global Mission Fellow. Wakili is currently serving as a youth and children’s worker at Blanchardstown Methodist Church in Dublin, Ireland, one of the newest and most ethnically diverse congregations in Irish Methodism. Wakili plans to return to Nigeria later this year, when his two-year term with the GBGM ends.

Thank you for your unwavering witness in response to the call to faith, hope, and renewal in the world. We pray that blessings continue to abound for all who lead and serve in ministry in the Virginia Conference.

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