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# US-AFRICA LITERARY FOUNDATION

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NEWSLETTER NO 1.  
SPRING 2004

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## FOUNDATION NEWS

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### US-ALF Launches Newsletter

The US-Africa Literary Foundation has come up with a newsletter. The Newsletter is issued quarterly by the Foundation's headquarters in Decatur Georgia.

Although this information medium is coming out a little later than the initial plan of Fall, 2003, the President of the foundation, Vid Beldavs, expressed happiness at its debut. According to him, 'this (The Newsletter) is a bold step toward a better management of information among members and friends of the foundation'.

Commenting on the Newsletter, US-ALF Executive Director, Chimdi Maduagwu,

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said: 'At least more people will get to know who we are, what we stand for and what we do'.

The Newsletter is expected to reach more than 120 people who have officially registered as members of the foundation and several others who are interested in participating in the programs of the foundation.

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### US-ALF Sponsors Panel at ALA Conference.

The US-Africa Literary Foundation initiated a panel at the concurrent sessions of the last Africa Literature Association Conference hosted by the African Studies Program, Departments of African Languages and Literature and English of University of Wisconsin at

Madison from 14-18 April, 2004. It is panel 15 which came up on Sunday, April 18, 2004 at 8:30 a.m. the panel's focus: LITERATURE AND PROSPECTS FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT, formed a sub theme within the larger theme: VERBAL PERFORMANCE AND VISUAL CULTURES. The panel was chaired by Chimdi Maduagwu, who also presented a paper. Other panel presenter were; Vid Beldavs of AuthorHouse, Bloomington Indiana and Alfred Kisubi of department of Education and Human Services, University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh.

[See website for details : [http://bowwave.org/African writer.](http://bowwave.org/African_writer.) ]

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## AUTHORHOUSE WOOS AFRICAN WRITERS

AUTHORHOUSE, the largest print-on-demand publishing concern in the United States of America, has opened its doors to existing and prospective African writers. In a letter addressed to members of ALA, the publishing house regretted that writers from Africa have not had a smooth sail in the waters of publishing. It is against this background that the publishing company proposed a friendly package for African authors. Details of the package are contained in a letter addressed to virtually all the members of ALA by the

house.

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## MACAULAY AKINBANMI'S NEW BOOK!!!

Macaulay Akinbanmi, a Nigerian poet and co-founder of US-ALF, has published a new collection of poems. His new book of poems is one of the most thought provoking volumes of poetry from Africa today. The volume touches on several issues of interest to the contemporary Africa society. It is expected that readers and other lovers of poetry will be excited by this collection. The price has not been stated by the publishers, First Books of Indiana.

Macaulay Akinbanmi currently lives in Ghana and coordinates the works of US-ALF in the sub region.

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## NaCAW AND US-ALF TO COLLABORATE

North American Center for African Writers and the US-African Literary Foundation are currently working out ways to jointly build up ways through which Africa writing can re enter the pool of 21<sup>st</sup> century world literature. The focus is actually, African literature that can be meaningful and capable of making relevant contribution to world literature.

This was the major issue deliberated on at the first NaCAW conference and poetry reading held in Landham Maryland on November 28, 2003. The keynote speaker, Mr.

Vid Beldavs, of 1<sup>st</sup>. Books (now AuthorHouse), and president, US-ALF, highlighted the untapped qualities of indigenous African literary arts which have eventually turned out to be the main source of 21<sup>st</sup> century entertainment as they provide materials for the film, television and other types of information and entertainment.

Elvis Hallowell, founder and the Executive Director of NaCAW, expressed willing by his organization to join forces with US-ALF towards achieving the common objectives of both organizations.

Prof. Dipo Kalejaiye, who chaired the plenary session of the conference, was pleased with the objectives of both organizations and encouraged them to continue exploring ways of co operation.

Dr, Chimdi Maduagwu emphasized the need to promote the interest of writers of African origin especially in helping them overcome barriers they encounter in publication of their works and in making their works better known through out the world. He was passionate about getting more writers involved in the common objectives of the organizations.

After a period of cross fertilization of ideas, the two organization agreed in principles to collaborate.

In a very engaging performance session, Chimdi Maduagwu, Dipo Kalejaiye, Jane kamau, Tuesday Irby and host Elvis Hallowell, as well as some high school students made public reading of poems and creative story passages.

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## THE US-AFRICA LITERARY FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE WORKING COMMITTEE

US-AFRICA LITERARY FOUNDATION instituted an executive working committee to effectively run the activities of the organization. This committee was set up in November 2003 and consists of the following people:

Mr. Vid Beldavs  
Mr. Macaulay Akinbanmi  
Ms Agnes Cowan  
Mr Don Kirkpatrick  
Prof. Bode Osanyin  
Dr.Chimdi Maduagwu

The inaugural meeting of the committee was held at Ramada Hotel, New Carrollton, Maryland on November 27, 2003.

At the first meeting, two more people were admitted into the committee. They were:

Dr. Hope Eghagha  
Mr. Elvis Hallowell.

In April 2004, the EWC considered the expansion of membership of the committee in order to cover up the increasing responsibilities of the foundation and the following people have been suggested for special invitation:

Prof. Alfred Kisubi  
Ms Mary Kimani

Mr. Yinka Craig.

The Executive Working Committee is the higher functional arm of the foundation. The committee fashions out projects and programs of the foundation. Members of the committee will eventually be assigned to different projects and programs and will work with the program officers/coordinators and volunteers attached to such programs .

At its last meeting in Madison, Wisconsin on April 18 2004, the committee made an interim resolution to meet, either physically or by conference call quarterly.



Members of the Foundation; left is Chimdi Maduagwu, middle is Vid Beldavs and right is Alfred Kisubi. They are all members of the Executive Working Committee and panelists at the last Africa Literature Association Conference in Madison Wisconsin.

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## THE US-AFRICA LITERARY FOUNDATION BOARD OF INTERNATIONAL ADVISERS

A board of International Advisers has been proposed by the foundation. Nominations into the board were made by members of the Executive Working Committee and other active members of the foundation. The following renown academics, technocrats and professionals made the list:

Prof. Ali Mazrui  
Prof. Aliko Sangolo  
Prof. Ngugi Wa Thiong'O  
Prof. Wole Soyinka  
Prof. Tanure Ojaide  
Mrs Chinyere Asika  
Ms Claudia Anyanso  
Prof. Bernth Lindfors  
Mr. Vid Beldavs

The Executive Director of the Foundation

The Foundation is yet to come out with a decision on who the chairman will be. A number of reputable persons have been nominated and are currently being considered. It is expected that in the next edition of the newsletter, the name of the chairman will be made public.

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## NEW AFRICAN WRITING

The US-Africa Literary

Foundation encourages young African and Black writers in their creative endeavors. As part of the initial efforts, a series, known as 'New African Writings' was developed. Many young talented writers have had their writings, mostly poetry either published or previewed in the Foundation's working website. The series affords the new and unpublished writers the opportunity to hit the world of publishing. In the mean time, works are being published electronically and it is hoped that in the near future, anthologies of poems, stories and drama sketches will emerge in hard copies.

Interested members and other writers are hereby encouraged to send in their works for consideration.

Works to be considered should be poems, Short stories, drama sketches and essays etc. they must be well written in a single genre. Typed doubled spaced and mailed together with a 3mm diskette to:

The Series Editor,  
New African Writing  
US-Africa Literary Foundation  
1681 San Gabriel Ave  
Decatur, GA30032

Or send electronically to:

[Uself@bowwave.com](mailto:Uself@bowwave.com)

**WHAT HAPPENED SO FAR!**

### Memory line...

2002....

Based on difficulties encountered by a young Nigerian poet, Macaulay Akinbanmi, as he desired to publish his collection of poems, a specialist in author services /publisher, Vid Beldavs joined forces with him to establish African Writers' Foundation. Later, the thoughts on this organization expanded and the name changed to US-Africa Writers Foundation. The main objective of the organization continued to be 'helping African writers overcome barriers in the world of publishing'.

2003... (early)

The new organization established communication with the USA ambassador to Nigeria, Howard Jetta, who made it possible for a meeting to be scheduled between the Lagos members and the Public Affairs Officer of the Embassy of USA in Lagos, Mr. Atim George,

.... Subsequently...

Dr. Hope Eghagha, Bode Osanyin and Macaulay Akinbanmi started poetry workshop in Lagos, where writers felt free to read their works and some of the first poems that were published in our website came from that endeavor. The same workshop gave birth to 'New African Writing' , a new series that has long gathered

momentum and is, at present, almost exploding.

....Later...

Elvis Hallowell identified with the work of the foundation with his new North American Center for African Writers (NaCAW). At a conference in Maryland, USA, the foundation reorganized. There was a change of name to US-Africa Literary Foundation, an Executive Working Committee and Board of International Advisers came into being and activities enlarged.

2004.....

Vid Beldavs become the first President of the Foundation while Chimdi Maduagwu was named Executive Director.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all writers and avid readers of African Writings irrespective of race, creed, gender or age. All who are interested in various shades of Literacy programs are also eligible for membership.

Memberships are to be paid up by check or money order, written in US dollars and drawn on a US bank made out to

US-Africa Literary Foundation  
Members are advised to send in brief data on themselves

which include:

Full addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, just as they will want such to appear in our directory. The addresses should also be where our newsletters and other publicity documents can be sent.

make a cash or kind donation to the programs and projects of the Foundation.

#### RATE

Active membership  
(Individuals) \$30

Institutional membership \$50

Sponsors \$100

## MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS

### REGIONAL/ZONAL SECRETARIATS AND LITERACY CENTERS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Five zonal offices in Africa require funds and materials to support establishment of their zonal secretariats and Literacy Centers.

Ghana \$2000

Nigeria \$2000

South Africa \$2000

The Maghrebs \$2000

East/Central Africa \$2000

In addition, equipment in form of books, computers, printers, audio and video sets and tapes, television sets and other visual supports materials are needed in these zones.

Be a partner of US-ALF and