Some 50 of the Most Important African Americans involved in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) were honored at the first Innovation and Equity Symposium held in San Francisco, California (15 January 2015).

The Consul-General was invited to participate as both speaker and panelist. The event paid tribute to African-American innovators in the early stages of the Silicon Valley, and celebrated the success of the African Americans particularly in the field of Biotechnology, STEM and R & D.

Amarantus Biosciences, Ramsell Corp and Aphios Inc. were among the honorees for their breakthrough medicines and research for Alzheimer’s, Parkinson Disease, Cancer and more.

Mr. John Templeton, President of Venturata Economic Development Corporation as well as others expressed significant interest in the advancement of R & D enterprise in South Africa.
The year 2014 ended on a very high note for the mission in LA in its quest to place the African continent in its rightful place on the United States, West Coast map. We have hosted, amongst others, a high-level KZN Trade and Investment delegation in its roadshow to showcase the Province. The delegation was introduced to Bankers, Industrialists, Venture Capitalists and Corporations operating in LA, Portland (Oregon), San Francisco and the Silicon Valley. We were equally honored by a short visit by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, whom we introduced to our interlocutors in the creative arts, STEM as well as to the Consular Corps and the leaders in the African American communities. Also visiting our shores was the Executive Director of UN Women and the former Deputy President of South Africa, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Last but not least, this Mission can look back with pride that we finally prevailed in pushing the City of Los Angeles to declare the 18th of July as the Mandela International Day. The Mission had also succeeded in having the City of San Francisco pass a similar proclamation in July 2013.

We aspire to raise the African flag even higher in 2015. In this regard, we have joined hands with our African American friends in the Silicon Valley in a movement that aims to recognize the innovative achievements in Research & Development and STEM work by Africa’s own Sons and Daughters in the sixth region.

Regards,
Ndaba
There is without a doubt an unshakeable fraternal bond between Tanzania and South Africa. Cousin sisters, Ms. Moza Mjasiri-Cooper and Ms. Maryam Ibrahim have always associated themselves with the struggle for liberation and social justice in South Africa. Ms. Moza Mjasiri-Cooper served as a volunteer for four years at the ANC office in New York under the late comrade Mr. Johnny Makhathini (the then ANC Chief Representative to the UN in New York). She has continued to be a Cde. sister over the years and has always identified herself with the struggle for a just, free, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist dispensation in South Africa.

This Mission continues to work with Ms. Mjasiri-Cooper and her network of “friends” of South Africa. Ms. Maryam Ibrahim recently visited her cousin sister, Moza and met Consul-General Ndaba at the funeral of Cde. Amanda Wash whose obituary appears on the last page of this newsletter. Comrade Maryam requested the CG to extend her greetings to some of our comrades who were in exile in Tanzania but who are still alive.

Maryam worked at the Palm Beach Hotel which was frequently used by ANC leaders and cadres like the late Joe Modise, Chris Hani, Thomas Nkobi, Stan Mabizela all of whom she knew very well. Maryam looked after our people so well that she always found accommodation for them at very short notice, without complaining or moaning.

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The KwaZulu Natal MEC for economic development, tourism and environmental affairs, Mr. Mike Mabuyakhulu lead a high-level delegation comprising of the former MEC for finance Mrs. Ina Cronje, CEO of Trade and Investment KwaZulu Natal Mr. Zamo Gwala, HOD of Department of Economic Development, Mr. Desmond Golding and the CEO of the Richard Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone, Mr. Pumi Motsoahae.

The delegation visited Los Angeles, Portland and San Francisco where it participated in business, trade and investment seminars.

In the words of the great American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt,” Walk softly but carry a big stick,” the Walkers do exactly that.

Born in New Orleans, Professor Hal Walker is a pioneer in the field of electro-optical technologies. Mr. Walker has earned fame as an innovator and collaborator in the realm of energy-related technologies using lasers in the fields of scientific, industrial and military applications.

True to the words that “behind every successful man is a woman,” in 1991 Hal along with his wife, Dr. Bettye Walker, founded the non-profit corporation African American Male Advisors Network, Inc. (A-MAN) as well as the International Sciences Discovery and Learning Center (ISD&L) in Inglewood, California. Hal’s many innovative projects and collaborations include:

- Participation in the first global telecoms U.S. Satellite research program (RELAX)
- Plasma fusion projects such as TOKOMAT which took place at Princeton University and Los Alamos Lab.
- The Apollo XI mission that adopted a multi-state K1500 laser ranging system.
- The first laser-targeting systems for the U.S. Army (1981-)
- Worked in collaboration with, Physicist, Lee Stephens on the Battery Exchange system
- New and Advanced laser optical technologies to the National Immigration Facility at Laurence Livermore Laboratory.

Professor Walkers’ photograph is now on permanent exhibition at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in the section “Science in American Life– The New Moon. Continued on next page
The Walkers are no strangers to South Africa. Their relationship with the country began way back in 1998 dubbed, “The year of Science and Technology in South Africa,” when they took a group of young African American students to South Africa. The Walkers and the group of students were granted an audience with the Founding President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Having briefed President Mandela on their mission in South Africa the Walkers were commanded by the President to assist students in South Africa who come from previously disadvantaged communities. Since that “Madiba” command in 1998 the Walker’s have never looked back. They have been involved in various STEM projects, in Mamelodi and Khayelitsha. The Mission in LA also assisted them in acquiring permanent residency status in South Africa. The Walker’s now spend 3-4 months of each year, visiting their projects in South Africa. The Mission was instrumental in having the Walkers introduced at the official release of KZN Matriculation results in January 2013, which was attended by the Premier of KZN, Dr. Zweli Mkhize, the then MEC for Education Mr. Senzo Mchunu and the Superintendent General of Education, Dr. Nkosinathi Sishi. The Walker’s have become international collaborators for STEM education in KZN as envisaged in the La Mercy Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Academy. The Mission in LA prides itself in working closely with the Walker’s in advancing the gateway STEM education, not only in KZN, but the whole of South Africa.
The LA Mission has been privileged to collaborate with brilliant men and women, one of whom is Mr. Hugh Molotsi, Vice President of Intuit Labs Incubator. Mr. Molotsi, a fellow South African, is an accomplished Computer Engineer; having worked his way up through established corporations. He is one of the top executives in his industry. Hugh graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Mississippi and continued his studies at Santa Clara University where he participating in a Graduate Fellowship. Mr. Molotsi has over 24 years of experience beginning as a software engineer at Hewlett-Packard, and moving up the ladder at Intuit as Director of Small Business Group & Director of Engineering. Mr. Molotsi’s leadership and innovation led him to assume the position of Vice President of Technology and currently holds the position as Vice President of Intuit Incubator Labs.

Leading the way in innovation Mr. Molotsi has received several awards including the Sam Cook Innovation Award in 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2009 as well as the Excellence in leadership Award (2005/2006). Mr. Molotsi was also a recipient of the Intuit Founder’s Innovation Award in 2011. Mr. Molotsi’s work speaks for itself; having a passion for creativity, innovation and leadership continues to drive him forward as he trains and develops emerging leaders in his sector.

Hugh has expertise in developing innovative new solutions for small groups, running lean groups and launching new products. Among many skills he has a passion for grassroots innovation, and is an expert in developing easy-to-use software. Mr. Molotsi uses his knowledge in diversity and inclusion as he develops frontline leadership and practices team building.

Understanding the importance of social responsibility Mr. Molotsi, has participated on several boards including Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY), Qualys (a cloud IT security and compliance company) and AT&T Engineering Advisory board to lend support to the College of Engineering.

“Long hidden from our eyes & reach in the Silicon Valley has been the success story of one of our own, Cde. Hugh Molotsi. SA has a good reason to celebrate the discovery of one of her own, who has shown his talents in far off lands in the US and in Asia. I believe the KZN is on the right track in connecting with Intuit Lab incubator, of which our Hugh is the Vice President.”

~ CG Ndaba
The Mission has been working together with the San Diego Zoo in highlighting the plight of the rhino in South Africa and beyond her borders. It was in the light of this narrative that the mission introduced Ms. Sjoroos, President of Precision Diagnostic Laboratories in California into this project.

Ms. Ursula Sjoroos, has been instrumental in assisting SAN Parks to raise funds in the United States to fight against the decimation of the rhino population in the Kruger National Park. She now wishes to join hands with Ezemvelo Provincial Wildlife Parks in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN).

The Consul-General of Chile, Mr. Tagle, paid a courtesy call on Consul-General Ndaba. He was given some orientation on the importance of the Los Angeles County, the Bay area and by extension California in the economic well-being of the United States. This same was done with the Honorary Consul of Tanzania, Mr. Ahmed Issa and the Consul-General of Angola Mr. Martinho Codo in 2013 and 2014 respectively.

Consul-General Ndaba was recently interviewed by Ms. Thami Ngubeni in her one hour radio talk show. The interview took place in Ms. Ngubeni’s studio in Los Angeles and was broadcast live in South Africa by the SAFM radio station.
The Consul-General is mobilizing the two musicians, Mr. Guyon Gaynair and Mr. Remi Kabaka to participate in the African Cultural connection event on 28 July 2015. This event is part of the Special Olympics (25 July – 2 August 2015), whose honorary patrons are President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama. The Mission is currently working with the conductor of the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles, Mr. Charles Dickerson and the Ladysmith Jr. Mambazo in a joint participation to produce a blend of acapella music, (unique to South Africa) and orchestral music, the fusion of which would be the first of its kind in the world.
Forging New Relationships

Professor Jack Birmingham representing Highline College in Washington Seattle, Professor Boatamo Mosupyo representing Cal State University of Sacramento, Mr. Don Taylor representing Cal State University of Sacramento, and Dr. Richard Soyombo representing the Center for International Trade Development and Skyline College in Oakland have a common interests. They are among academic leaders who have bought into the idea of making their academic institutions and organizations aware of Africa and opportunities in the continent as it moves into full integration. They are partnering with the Mission in LA in its quest to fly the African flag on the West Coast of the United States.

At the reception hosted by Senator Kevin De Leon, pictured with the Consul-General, the latter was honored to meet with a Sacramento based Neuroscientist, Dr. Debra Cooper (PhD. Neuroscience), also pictured with the Consul-General. The CG plans to expand the Mission’s outreach with Dr. Cooper and the pioneers in STEM and R & D based in the Silicon valley. Her name and credentials have been submitted to Mr. John William Templeton for her inclusion at the next event to honor Black Scientists and R & D Specialists to be held on 20 April in San Francisco.

BRICS countries will soon be making their presence felt on the West Coast of the United States. At the behest of the CG, Consul-General Serge Petrow of Russia will be hosting a working dinner in San Francisco on 18 March 2015. The CG’s of China and India, who were not present at the CSIRF, have also been invited to join in the dinner.
Bishop Clyde Ramalaine, a good friend of the Mission in LA, visited Los Angeles recently to pay his respects to a departed close friend of his and our struggle in South Africa, Pastor Andrae Crouch. Reverend Crouch was a well-known gospel singer, arranger, producer and song writer. Pastor Crouch wrote his first award winning hit song at the tender age of 14, and went on to become a legend in his own right, even being honored with his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The Mission took advantage of Bishop Ramalaine’s presence and introduced him to some of our interlocutors such as Pastor Kevin Saul, the Walker’s and many others. Bishop Ramalaine does not need any introduction as he knows all the players that matter in this region. The Consul-General hosted the Bishop and his wife at the Official Residence.
Amanda Mae Earl Wash was born of John Lewis and Louis Earl on August 13, 1928, the third child of seven, in Birmingham, Alabama. Shortly after her birth the family moved to Detroit Michigan. Amanda was educated in the Detroit public schools and became a nurse. She married Edgar J. Wash in 1948, and daughter LaVerne Thorpe was born to this union. Amanda moved to Los Angeles, California in 1960 where she lived until her recent move to Arizona due to illness. Amanda accepted Christ as her savior at an early age.

In 1972 Amanda joined the Peace Corps and worked in Niger for two years as a nurse. The time spent in Africa changed her life. She was deeply touched and inspired by the plight of African children. She spent the majority of her life working to improve the children’s condition in some way, working with other nurses and doctors to gather medicines, medical equipment, clothing, books, school supplies and other needed items to send overseas. Every year she would send a shipping container full of supplies to Africa using donations of space on cargo planes and ships to send supplies. Kalafong Hospital in Tshwane, SA has also been a beneficiary of Amanda’s largesse.

Amanda was the first person of color to serve on the board of Sister Cities International and is an honorary member of that board today. Amanda has been recognized for her civic work and her work to benefit the children of Africa. She is an honorary citizen of Zambia, and a hospital ward was named in her honor in the city of Lusaka. She started A Foundation For African Children Today (AFAFCT) in 2002 to carry on these good works. Amanda has traveled extensively to Africa and Europe, to China and Cuba and Costa Rica, to name a few.

Amanda had a generous spirit, and was always trying to help others, volunteering for Salvation Army LA and YMCA Ketchum. She was guided by strong Christian values and lived life fully.

Excerpt from the Consul-General’s Eulogy

“In closing I would like to paraphrase the words of Abraham Lincoln, “The world will little note, nor long remember what we said here, but it will never forget what they did here.” May Amanda be at peace in her eternal rest. May she enjoy the rewards she has earned in her lifetime. May the family and relatives of Amanda derive some measure of comfort in the knowledge that we, who knew Amanda as a friend, share with them their grief. May they find solace in the inspiring memories of the exemplary life that our sister and friend Amanda lived.” ~CG Ndaba