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(A Constituent College of the University of Dar es Salaam)
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Date: 11th October, 2006

Dr. Joyce Jarrett, Provost
Hampton University
Hampton, VA 23668 USA

Dear Dr. Jarrett,

I understand that architect and assistant professor Shannon Chance is applying for tenure and promotion at Hampton University. I would like to support her in this endeavor by explaining the nature and success of our past collaborations.

I believe that Chance's work has contributed significantly within the field of architectural education by providing rare opportunities for American and Tanzanian architecture students and faculty to work together and to explore architectural and cultural issues. I started working with Shannon Chance when she traveled to Tanzania in 2002 to investigate ways Hampton University could collaborate with the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam. I was part of the committee that worked with her to formally amend the Memorandum of Understanding between HU and UDSM, so that it now includes architecture. Chance was very interested in learning about our teaching methods, design programs, and research concentrations; we initiated a very productive on-going dialogue.

For instance, she and I discovered some shared research interests at that time, and we subsequently co-authored a paper on "methodologies for culture-specific design" as they related to the changing form of housing complexes in a specific region of Tanzania. Chance worked to get this paper accepted, and she took the lead role in editing it and working with the publisher. We presented the paper at the 2003 National Meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture in Louisville, Kentucky.

Chance's efforts were instrumental in helping to disseminate my own research to an American audience. This venue allowed American architecture professors (as well as readers of the publication) to gain exposure to African architecture traditions. By participating in this ACSA conference, I discovered that very few American architecture professors had any prior exposure to African architecture. I believe that it is imperative to inform this audience of our rich heritage and traditions.

Our paper was also part of the body of research I submitted to receive my doctorate from the University of Kuleuven, Belgium in 2005.

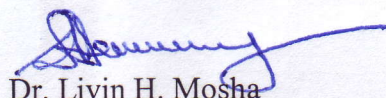
In 2005 Chance returned to Tanzania with a team of 25 American Fulbright scholars to conduct collaborative architectural studies with the Architecture Department of the University of Dar es Salaam. A total of 60 Tanzanian and American architecture students worked together over five weeks to investigate architectural issues and to generate design proposals for the Keko Magurumbasi informal settlement of Dar es Salaam.

I would like to emphasize that few study abroad programs offer the type of hands-on experience and close cross-cultural contact that we were able to provide through this program. In fact, study abroad programs between the U.S. and Africa are quite rare. The cost of airfare between the U.S. and Africa (\$1900 per person in 2005) renders these programs financially infeasible without external funding. Grant funds allowed us to take all 60 students to Zanzibar, Bagamoyo, Arusha and to two national safari reserves in 2005 – which served to inform the students' design work.

Ultimately, the 2005 collaborative "Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad" program would not have been possible without the dedicated labor of Shannon Chance. It is true that producing this program required intense team effort from eight American and Tanzanian faculty members. However, Chance's work to secure a \$75,000 from the U.S. Department of Education, as well as to recruit and coordinate travel for the American group, was instrumental in delivering this program.

I applaud Hampton University for supporting this type of work and encourage you to continue forming and strengthen such connections between American and African universities. Both sides gain a tremendous deal from communication and collaboration. I hope the HU-UDSM architecture collaboration will continue to flourish, and that Tanzanian scholars will have opportunities to travel to the United States as part of this on-going collaboration. I also hope that Hampton University will also endorse this work by advancing Shannon Chance.

Sincerely,



Dr. Livin H. Moshia
Head of Architecture
UCLAS