

AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT

Greetings and thanks to you, the members of the Virginia Annual Conference, for your love of Africa University! Your love, lived out in the local church, and across every level of The United Methodist Church worldwide, is a source of hope and of dreams brought to life.

Africa University's students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni are deeply thankful to local congregations of the Virginia Conference for their generous 2024 investment of 82.1 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment.

As the 2025-2028 quadrennium unfolds, Africa University is urging the members of the Virginia Conference to:

- **Continue investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) at the 2016 budget level and strive for 100% investment to the AUF each year.**
- **Explore the possibility of their church becoming a “Keystone Congregation” for Africa University by journeying alongside an undergraduate student with prayer and encouragement and making a multiyear commitment of \$7,000 a year to provide a scholarship for that student.**

Through their prayers and gifts in support of the ministry of Africa University, United Methodists of the Virginia Conference nurture servant leaders with ethics, empathy, and an audacious, can-do mindset. Currently, Africa University has more than 2,490 students from 24 African countries pursuing professional and leadership training in four colleges and one school.

More than 12,000 graduates are at work in 32 African countries, serving in pivotal roles within and beyond The United Methodist Church. Among them are three recently-elected bishops of The United Methodist Church in Africa—chosen to help build a vibrant future where our love of God embraces, heals, and draws new people into lives of fruitful discipleship.

Having experienced God's grace through your love in action, Africa University students grow in faith and spiritual maturity, embrace new, shared possibilities, and become more effective in their witness. Here are 2024 highlights of the impact of Africa University students, faculty, and administrators:

- Africa University start-up, Reagan Technologies, earned a [semi-final finish in the Hult Prize Global Accelerator competition](#). Known as the ‘*Nobel prize contest for students*,’ the Hult Prize judges were impressed with the three-student AU team's innovative concept for generating electricity from footsteps. The team's climate-smart pavement tiles stood out against the competition from more than 60 universities.
- Another AU trio is transforming education by bridging the digital divide in Africa. Three students majoring in computer science won the [top prize at the UbuntuNet Alliance Women's Hackathon](#) with FUNDISA. It's a chatbot that delivers instant, curriculum-aligned explanations to students who lack internet access, but have phones with SMS functionality. The chatbot enables students to simply send a text to a short code to receive educational support.
- Africa University's Doctor of Ministry program, a first for the continent of Africa, was accredited by the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education, with options for specialization in Mission and Evangelism, Liturgical Theology, Church Administration, Church and Society, and Chaplaincy Ministry. A pioneer group of 10 senior officers in the military, prisons and policing from Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have completed the program, thanks to a collaboration between Africa University and Wesley Theological Seminary. Their doctoral research projects generated new knowledge that addresses deployment trauma, reducing drug abuse among officers, and the use of Psalms of lament for facilitating healing in families of inmates.

This is the global transformation story that Virginia Conference United Methodists are shaping as partners in mission and ministry with Africa University. Your prayers encourage and your generosity equips solution-finders and world-changers. Thank you for showing up, so that promise, calling, and a just future can be fully realized. Let us push forward together, to finish the work. Thank you.

James H. Salley, President/CEO of Africa University (Tennessee) Inc. and Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Africa University.