

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR CONDUCTING TRANS-  
NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH:  
**LESSONS LEARNED FROM  
THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
PROJECT**

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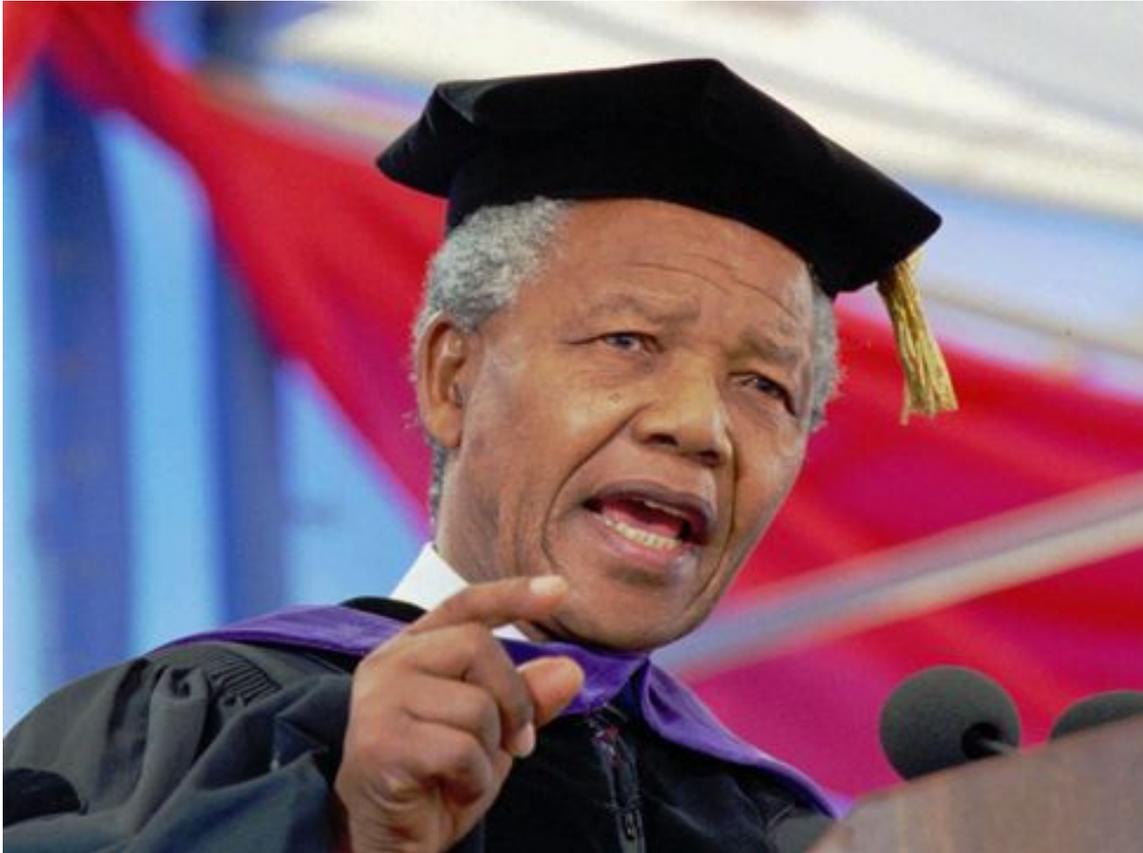
**Professor Jean Bailey, Ph.D.**  
Graduate Professor and Chair,  
Howard University Republic of  
South Africa Project (**HURSAP**)





HURSAP

**Lessons learned in implementing  
Trans-National Collaborative Research  
from the Howard University Republic  
of South Africa Project (HURSAP)**



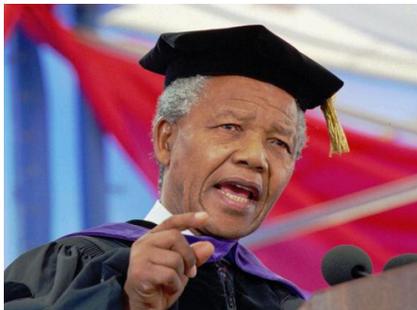
Nelson Mandela:  
Honorary Law Degree  
Howard University  
1994



# Nelson Mandela...



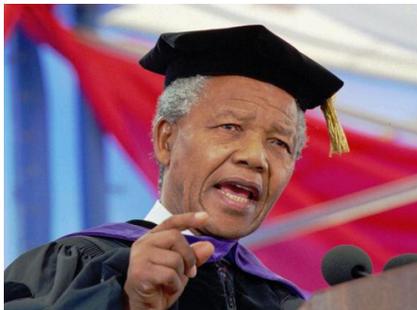
*“It is with gratitude that we remember the way in which Howard University embraced and supported the liberation struggle in South Africa. Our cause became your cause, and so shall it remain . . . for us to work together to improve the quality of life of black people, especially, and other disadvantaged communities in South Africa, in Africa, in the United States, and other parts of the world.”*



# Nelson Mandela...



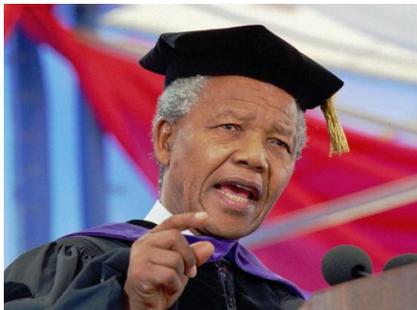
*“However, this new-found and long-awaited freedom would be hollow if it did not attain fundamental socioeconomic changes. The old order cannot be allowed to live on in the form of mass unemployment, disparities in income and opportunity, lack of housing, inadequate health care, and poor education.”*



# Nelson Mandela...



*“Despite the goodwill which unites our nations, and the profound changes in attitude which are taking place, there are still some areas of life in which discriminatory habits are slow to die out”....*



# The beginning of HURSAP

HURSAP

- Howard University organized a delegation of Trustees, Administrators and faculty who came to South Africa in 1996.
- HURSAP formed as a result.

# HURSAP



- An interdisciplinary project consisting of scholars, primarily faculty, from disciplines throughout the University, including:

- Medicine,
- Allied Health,
- Pharmacy,
- Psychology,
- Community Health,
- Psychiatry,
- History,
- Social Work,
- Education,
- Economics,
- Mathematics,
- Sociology,
- Chemistry,
- Physics,
- Engineering, and,
- Computer Sciences



# HURSAP Goal



- The goal is to **establish linkages for collaborative research and educational activities** to address problems of mutual concern for African Americans and South Africans.
- Such as:
  - Cultural Identity
  - Visual History
    - (textbooks, tours, media, impact on self-esteem)
  - Poverty
  - Use of appropriate technology

# Accomplishments



- **2012 Conference on “Historical Challenges, Contemporary Solutions: The Role of HBCUs and HDIs in Addressing the Effects of Racism and Apartheid”**
- **MOU among University of Pretoria and Kara Heritage Project, 2010** - Including Connecting African Heritage to Contemporary Atmospheric Sciences
- **South Africa Research and Archival Project (SARAP)**



# Accomplishments



- **Scholar in Residence Program** (August 1997-present) - Initiated the Howard University Scholar-in-Residence program (HURSAR) with the appointment of Dr. Joseph Harris, Distinguished Professor.
- **HURSAP Town Meeting:** Expanding U.S African Partnerships (May 6, 1998) - HURSAP produced the highly successful, televised "Town Meeting on Expanding U.S./Africa Partnerships" featuring **Howard University faculty and several of the delegates** who accompanied President Clinton on his recent trip to Africa.
- **Conference on "Substance Abuse, Crime, Violence and HIV/AIDS as Consequences of Poverty:** Strategies for Prevention, Intervention and Treatment in the U.S. and South Africa, Cape Town July 1-5, 2000 (Funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse)



# Accomplishments



- **International Development Partnership with the University of the Western Cape (UWC) 1998-2002**
- **Developed first set of engineering textbooks for post apartheid South African Blacks**
- *And many more...*



# Mutual Concern



- **Substance Abuse, HIV and other consequences of Substance Abuse.**
- Led to Two Conferences:
  - Washington, DC (1998): “Epidemiology and Prevention of Substance Abuse in the U.S. and South Africa in the Washington, DC in
  - Cape Town (2000): “Substance Abuse, Crime, Violence and HIV/ AIDS as Consequences of Poverty: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention and Treatment in the U.S. and South Africa.”



**the doc**

Department:  
Communications  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Major Objective:

- To build capacity of historically disadvantaged South Africans, at Universities, Research Institutions and also in Government.



# Outcomes:



- **Establishment of a Southern Africa initiative** by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- **Research collaboration** between Black South Africans and U.S. researchers throughout the United States
- **Enrollment at various higher education institutions** in the U.S. and attainment of doctoral degrees
- **Joint publications, and**
- **Research grants**

# Outcomes



- **Attendance and participation** in scientific conferences in the U.S.
- **Adaptation of best practices/intervention programs** for implementation in South Africa
- **Ongoing collaborations** with major research and implementation programs

# Core Values



- **Reflect cross-cultural sensitivity** from conceptualization to instrument design to data analysis and interpretation
- **Mutual respect** for Howard University as well as the South African cultures and values
- **Research** conducted would have intellectual or material interest to the population rather than academic colonialism

# Core Values



- The Howard University team was committed to **participatory decision making** with clear delineation of responsibilities.
- **Utilize existing infrastructures** such as NGOs and Universities to implement programs.
- **Focus on the strengths** as well as the weaknesses of the populations served.
- **Mutual benefit** to Howard University and the South African Institutions.
- **Cross-cultural research methodology** should be appropriate to the population served.



# Cross Cultural Sensitivity



- **There is a need for individuals from both groups to be knowledgeable** about the cultures and research methodology for both populations.
- **It is important for the investigators to spend time reading and participating in the respective cultures** to develop a level of cultural sensitivity.
- **Mutual staff knowledge** of cultural beliefs, myths, expectations and morals is crucial to effective communication.
- **Instruments should be translated and back translated** to ensure that accurate meanings and interpretations are being transmitted.



# Staff Sensitivity



- **Staff sensitivity to the cultural nuances** including family structure and cultural healing and spiritual beliefs including for example, polygamous vs. monogamous structure would have influence on sexual practices, i.e., number of sexual partners, as it relates to HIV transmission.
- For example,
  - Beliefs regarding traditional remedies for prevention and treatment may influence practice regarding substance use, e.g. dagga use among Rastafarians or the belief regarding sex with a virgin as a cure for HIV.

# Cultural Stigma



- Cultural stigma attached to alcoholism, psychiatric care, psychotherapy, counseling, and/or substance abuse treatment may invoke fear of losing status and of being judged a failure by the family and the community, and may thereby influence responses to interviews as well as participation in intervention.
- **Involvement of individuals from the different cultural groups is essential** from the initial conceptualization to the design of the instruments to the data analysis to the interpretation of the results.

# Prison Project



- Example:
  - a lot of discussion from two investigators, neither of whom was from the culture. Resolved when brought in perspective from the participants, although they were not trained scientists, they could add a lot to the interpretation of the data.

# “CAGE” Instrument



- ...used to screen Alcoholism.
- While it is widely used in the U.S., many South African researchers do think the 4 questions are not appropriate for South Africa.
- Scales for coding responses may not apply in all languages
- Participation by both collaborators is essential for developing code categories



# Mutual Respect



- There are mutually existing attitudes and perceptions about the respective groups. These attitudes result from stereotypes.
- This was largely influenced by media and other stereotypes promulgated.
- There are also assumptions about research skills and capabilities.
- There is a need for mutual respect for the intellectual approaches and professional knowledge of the researchers.



# Material Interest to the Population rather than Academic Colonialism



- A strong motivation for U. S. researchers is to advance science and test a basic academic hypothesis.
- Information would advance science and treatment in the U.S., however, it is important that such research relate to practical concerns and outcomes for the target population.
- A major recommendation from our initial conference in 1998 was that interventions and treatment programs should follow from the basic research.

# Participatory decision making with clear delineation of responsibilities



- There is a need to avoid an “imperialistic” style of research in which the Western investigator makes all of the important decisions and receive the lion’s share of both the financial and academic rewards.
- 
- Collaborations should involve joint participation throughout the course of the project.
- Priorities for the both countries should help guide and shape the research.

# Utilize Existing Infrastructures



- Linking with existing infrastructures is a practical and cost-effective way of conducting research.
- Linking with established institutions also permit both institutions to share in the cost of implementing projects of mutual benefit.

# Appropriateness of Cross-cultural Research Methodology



- U.S. researchers must be flexible in their design of research projects as randomized control field studies might not be consistent with the needs and priorities of the population.

# Focus on Strengths & Weaknesses



- When conducting research studies of populations different from the U.S., there is a tendency to use the deficit model and view different behaviors as somehow deficient.

# Mutual benefit to Howard University and the South African Institutions



- Collaboration can be mutually beneficial in that it provides an opportunity for U.S. Researchers to advance science and also internationalize curriculum and opportunities for students.
- Opportunity for South African researchers to conduct research that had been planned and conceptualized but not implemented due to lack of human and financial resources.
- Capacity and knowledge of cross-cultural research is enhanced for both partners.
- Reputations of both partners are enhanced through publications in journals.

# Thank You.



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