



Embassy of the United States of America Bujumbura, Burundi

**Speech by Ambassador Dawn M. Liberi
On the Occasion of the Official Opening of Rosa Parks American Corner
University of Burundi, Kamenge Campus
June 5, 2013**

It is a great pleasure to be here with you today for the official opening of the Rosa Parks American Corner on the University of Burundi, Kamenge campus. I know the center has been open for some time and many of you are already making good use of its resources. But we wanted to have an official ceremony today to formally recognize the great partnership between the U.S. Government and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research that is making this possible.

Rather than having one American Center in one place, we are placing American Corners (Coin d’Americain) in many places so that more can be served. To do that we look for partnerships with universities, the government or private initiatives who will have a stake in making the Corners a success. Our partners help insure that the Corners do their job and meet the needs of those they serve.

This American Corner on the Kamenge Campus is our second. It joins the American Corner in Kinindo, which we will officially open next week, and our recently opened Information Resource library in our New American Embassy. In the coming months, we will be opening another corner in Gitega at the Gitega Cultural Center. In the future we hope to add even more Corners in places like Ngozi and Rumonge.

Every American Corner provides free internet and the computers to access it. They are filled with English books and magazines. They show American films and host American speakers. They serve as a location for English discussion tables and book clubs. They offer a quiet place to read, to write to reflect. And they are a place to practice English and to hear English spoken in those strange American accents.

They also provide – and this is especially important on a University campus – access to ELibrary, which connects you to the collections of the greatest research and academic libraries in the United States. And because we are on the medical and psychology campus, we will be developing a larger selection of books related to science and medicine at this campus.

We are especially pleased to have Polycarpe Nintereste as the coordinator of this American Corner. Polycarpe was a participant in the State Department’s Fulbright Exchange Program and studied library science at Columbia University in New York City.

The American Corners are part of the commitment by the U.S. government to help develop English capacity in Burundi. We know that English is an important ingredient to Burundi’s

success in becoming a full-fledged partner in the East African Community and we are working at several levels to assist in that process.

In addition, the Embassy is supporting English learning through the services of Jodi Mikalachki, an English Language Fellow who serves as a full-time member of the English faculty of the University of Burundi. We offer regular training programs and English teaching resources for secondary and university English faculty and support English Clubs through activities and resources. And we have exchange programs that send Burundians to the United States to study a variety of topics.

We are honored to be a partner with the Ministry of Higher Education and Research in opening this American Corner. We share a belief in the power of knowledge and a commitment to making that knowledge accessible to all.

As they say in Kirundi, « Ubwenge burarahugwa ».