



## **FIRST PANAFRICAN FORUM ON OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES (OER) and OPEN ACCESS (OA)**

**Hosted by:** The MERLOT Africa Network (MAN), eLearning Africa (eLA) and the Africa Virtual University (AVU)

**Program Chair, Dr. Moustapha Diack** – Southern University, Baton Rouge (SUBR), LA - USA

**Program Co-Chairs:** Dr. Bakary Diallo, Rector, Africa Virtual University, Nairobi, Kenya – East Africa; Dr. Solomon Negash, Kennesaw State University (KSU), GA-USA; Dr. Laura Franklin, Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), Alexandria Campus - USA

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**THEME 1 - OPENING EDUCATION RESOURCES (OER) FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEPLOYING E-LEARNING SOLUTIONS IN AFRICA**

**TIME: 9 AM TO 10:00 AM**

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**PRESENTER 1: *Catriona Savage, UNESCO Education Sector, Paris, France***



**Presentation Title - A Way Forward for Open Educational Resources: Deliberations of an International Community**

**MORE: PRESENTATION ABSTRACT AN SPEAKER BIO**

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### **Presentation Abstract:**

In 2005 UNESCO launched a project to increase awareness, and support capacity building and informed decision making with respect to the provision and use of Open Educational Resources (OER). This was achieved through the creation of an international Community of Interest, which today numbers almost 600 members from 98 countries – including almost 100 members in Africa.

The presentation will begin with a brief overview of the rationale behind the project, in particular how it fits with UNESCO's commitment to its Member States to support Education for All and the development of Knowledge Societies.

The topics for discussion in the community were determined through a polling of members, following a first Internet discussion forum. The outcomes of these

discussions – on developing a research agenda for OER, exploring the idea of a "do-it-yourself"/"do-it-together" resource for capacity development, and identifying FOSS tools for OER and lessons learned from the FOSS movement – will be summarized. All have resulted in "living" resources that can serve as a base for further work – the outline of the DIY/DIT resource is currently being used, for example, to structure the content of an OER toolkit.

After 18 months of intense reflection, it could be expected that the community would have formed a considered opinion on the priority issues to advance the OER movement and the stakeholders that should take action. The results of that consultation exercise, which forms a "way forward" for the fledgling OER movement, will be shared during the session, with a particular focus on the agenda identified by members of the community in Africa.

### **Speaker Bio**

Catriona Savage joined UNESCO in 2002. The current focus of her work is Open Educational Resources, in particular support to UNESCO's international community on OER, first at the International Institute for Educational Planning, and since November 2007 in the Education Sector. She is responsible for maintaining the OER website and created the community wiki – a first for UNESCO. She also supported IIEP's community on Free and Open Source Software for education, and the evaluation process for a project to develop regional knowledge bases to support decision making for open and distance learning. Catriona Savage holds a Master's degree from the University of Cambridge (United Kingdom).

**We Googled Catriona and here is what we found:**

[Catriona Savage](#)

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**PRESENTER 2: *Bakary Diallo, Rector of the African Virtual University, Nairobi, Kenya – East Africa***



**Presentation Title - The *African Virtual University: Raising awareness through its OER Architecture***

**MORE: PRESENTATION ABSTRACT AND SPEAKER BIO**

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### **Presentation Abstract:**

In line with this mission, the AVU sought to have a collaborative and coordinated strategy for the creation, organization, dissemination and utilization of OERs in order to resolve a problem that has affected learning, teaching, research and collaborative intellectual activities on the continent for many years. Open Educational Resources are content/materials that assume an alternative form of copyright and therefore can become more widely available. The AVU believes that OERs are not just about

having digitized information, but about having collaborative partnerships that develop methodological approaches and mechanisms for OERs that focuses on the four main elements of the OER evolutionary process: Creation, Organization, Dissemination and Utilization (Pence, 2005). The purpose of the AVU OER Architecture is to lay out the basic building blocks or elements of the OER movement within the AVU network and on the African continent. The constituent parts (or 'elements') of the AVU OER Architecture (Creation, Organization, Dissemination and Utilization) are supported by 'scaffolding' in the form of the following activity sets: Capacity Enhancement, Sensitization, Technological Infrastructure support, Policy formation, Research, and Collaboration

The AVU targets policy makers and managers of the universities as the initial practitioners to be sensitized on the OERs. The AVU OER awareness raising strategy aimed to foster not only awareness of the potential benefits of OERs to enhancing access to education in Africa, but also to promote policy development and research in the creation of OERs. The AVU has so far spearheaded and participated in several OER activities: The MIT-OCW, WSIS 2005, the TESSA Project, the Development Gateway – OER Topic Guide, the AVU OER Seminar, the AVU Vice Chancellors' Conference, the UNESCO IIEP OER Online Forum, 2006 ICDE Conference, the AVU AfDB/UNDP Teacher Education (TE) Program, the AVU Sabbatical Fellowship and the MIT Linc Symposium. This Pan African Forum on OER is the fruit of collaboration between MAN, ELearning Africa and the AVU. In October 2007, the AVU and the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the aim of carrying out joint activities to improve the efficacy of teaching and learning by expanding the quantity and increasing the quality of online learning materials and services that can be easily incorporated into educational programs. The AVU recognizes that there are issues that need to be addressed in order for the OER Movement to progress in Africa. The most crucial of the issues include the following: OER sensitization, technological infrastructure, policies and licensing of OERs, and quality assurance. The activities initiated by the AVU are first steps towards full participation in Africa's growing OER Movement. Despite the relative newness of the OER Movement, there is still need to mainstream the challenges in order to maximize the benefits that institutions stand to gain from OERs. Even with its achievements to date, the biggest challenge at the AVU is now human and financial resources. The AVU is actively working with partners such as UNESCO, MAN, eLearning Africa and others to spread its OER achievements on the continent.

### **Speaker Bio**

Dr. Bakary Diallo is currently Rector of the African Virtual University (AVU), an Intergovernmental Organization based in Nairobi Kenya and specialized in Open Distance and Electronic Learning. He has been working in the education sector for the last 19 years as a secondary school teacher, an academic, a consultant, a project administrator and a researcher. He assumed part-time lecturer at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Education in Canada and served as Consultant of Integration of ICT in Education at the Center for University Teaching. His research activities focus on the use of ICT in higher education and international development.

**We Googled Bakary and here is what we found:**

**[Bakary Diallo](#)**

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## COFFEE BREAK & THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

**TIME: 10:00 – 10:30 AM**

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### THEME 2 - OPENING ACCESS TO SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN AFRICA

**TIME: 10:30 – 11:30 AM**

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**Speaker 1: *Moustapha Diack*, Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA – Director, MERLOT Africa Network (MAN)**



***Presentation Title - Supporting Research and Education through the Adoption of Free and Open Access Publications***

***MORE: PRESENTATION ABSTRACT AND BIO***

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#### ***Presentation Abstract:***

The cost of licensing academic research journals and acquiring instructional books has increased considerably in recent years resulting in many educational crises. Such crises have forced libraries and educational leaderships, especially in developing economies to cancel journal subscriptions and reduce library holdings. The problem challenges many institutions of higher education and policy makers to begin supporting a so called “Open Access Movement” (OAM). The OAM advocates the free and immediate access to electronic publications directly downloaded from networked institutional repositories and a model of publication that offer open online access to full text contents. The movement believes that OA can significantly contribute in removing financial barriers that prevent scholars in developing economies from accessing full text quality journals and publications. There are currently an estimated 761 registered open access repositories in the world. The OA Model has been adopted by many international and governmental organizations such as the World Summit in the Information Society (WSIS), for disseminating full-text publications to online communities distributed around the globe.

This presentation intends to raise awareness about the potential afforded by OA and the advantages and opportunities for African universities to join the OAM and receive free or discounted electronic subscriptions to scientific journals and books to support their institutional education and research agenda.

#### **Speaker Bio**

Diack is professor of Science/Mathematics education at Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA. His specialty is in e-learning Technology and Design. He currently

serves as President of the LA Academy of Science (LAS) and Director of the MERLOT Africa Network (MAN). He represents the State of Louisiana to MERLOT and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Technology Cooperative. He is a member of the eLearning Africa Conference Advisory and is founding Chair of the Pan-African Fora on Open Education Resources (OER) and Open Access (OA), that are held as part of the eLA Conference. His research interests are in the areas of (a) Open Access and Open Education, (b) Assessment of Web 2.0 Technologies and Virtual Communities of Practice (VCP); (c) Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) design and assessment of VLEs in training, teaching and learning.

**We Googled Moustapha and here is what we found:**

[Moustapha Diack](#)

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**Speaker 2: [Mr. Vikram Savkar](#), Senior Vice President and Publishing Director at Nature Publishing Group, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.**



***OA CASE STUDY - Discovering the new science portal deployed by nature education to support global education***  
**MORE: PRESENTATION ABSTRACT AND BIO**

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### ***Presentation Abstract***

Nature Education ([www.NatureEducation.com](http://www.NatureEducation.com)) is the new science education division of Nature Publishing Group, the world's premier science publisher. Nature Education is committed to providing accessible, high quality science education resources to the global tertiary education community. In late 2008, the division will launch its first education portal

### **Speaker Bio**

Since 2007 Mr. Savkar has been Senior Vice President and Publishing Director at Nature Publishing Group, responsible for designing and launching Nature Education. Prior to his current position, he held a number of leadership roles at Pearson Education, among them responsibility for developing and implementing digital growth strategies, and evolving custom publishing capabilities. Before joining Pearson, he worked for three years as the assistant to Maestro Benjamin Zander, conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Savkar graduated from Harvard University with degrees in Physics and Classics. He currently resides in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

**We Googled Vikram and here is what we found:**

[Vikram Savkar](#)

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## ROUND TABLE – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH PRESENTERS

Chair: Dr. Solomon Negash

TIME: 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

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## LUNCH BREAK AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

TIME: 12:00 – 2:00 PM

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**Key Note Speaker 2: *Gerry Hanley, Executive Director of MERLOT - California State University, CA - USA***



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS - MERLOT: More than OER – Open Services to Support Education**

**MORE: PRESENTATION ABSTRACT AND BIO**

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### ***Presentation Abstract***

**MERLOT as OER:** MERLOT has been developing and sustaining its collection of OER for over 10 years, providing access across a full range of academic disciplines (e.g. art to zoology). Having free access to educational resources over the web is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the dissemination and transformation of the educational enterprise across nations, cultures, economic and social environments. Users can be faced with the challenge, “I found something terrific, now what do I do?” Users need free, web-based services to create learning/teaching curriculum from OER.

**MERLOT: Delivering Open Educational Services (OES).** MERLOT provides free building blocks for a simple learning management services that combined the library of OER and the Open Educational Services into a single, free, and easy-to-use system. The following use case describes how MERLOT’s currently available OES can be used for free to support educational transformation.

Bineta is a secondary school science teacher at the “Pedagogues” high school located in the suburb of Dakar, in Senegal, West Africa, that has Internet access at the local “Internet Café” and library. She wants to develop curriculum for her 10th grade biology class using open resources. She’s heard about MERLOT and goes to <http://www.merlot.org> to build her course for her students. She clicks on “Join for Free”, and completes the registration process within 1 minute. She browses through the biology collection, reviewing the peer reviewed learning objects as her first choice for quality materials. Each time she finds a free learning material she feels is right for her students, she clicks on “Add to my Personal Collection”. By doing this, Bineta is provided a webpage that lets her add information about how she wants to use the material in her course. For example, for “DNA from the Beginning”, she writes,

“This material is part of Bineta’s 10th grade biology course for the “Pedagogues” high school. This material will be covered in week 6 of our course. Your assignment which is to be handed in on May 6th can be found in MERLOT. The assignment will describe the learning objectives, the instructions on how I want you to use “the DNA from the Beginning” website to write a report on DNA.

Bineta is able to personally add this type of annotation for each of the materials she finds in MERLOT and organize them into a “Personal Collection” that Bineta names “Pedagogues’ 10th Grade Biology – 2008-2009”. Bineta’s personal collection contains 10 learning materials with their associated learning assignments. She has also contributed 2 new materials into MERLOT that she found on the web. She took the 5 minutes to add the new materials into MERLOT so she can integrate the new OER into her MERLOT curriculum. She realizes that MERLOT has substituted for a “Learning Management System” that she’s heard about but is too costly or too difficult to install and maintain in her suburb.

Bineta has her students become members of MERLOT and write about how they learned using the materials in her course. Doing this lets her students develop some information literacy skills and her students can read what their peers are learning.

### **Speaker Bio**

Gerry Hanley is the Executive Director of MERLOT and Senior Director of Academic Technology Services at California State University Office of the Chancellor. He is also a Professor of Psychology at California State University. Gerry also serves as the Director, for the Center for Usability In Design and Accessibility (CUDA) at California State. Dr. Hanley received his Ph.D., MA, and BA from State University of New York at Stony Brook. He has also served as Program Manager for Merlot and the Assistant Chair for the Department of Psychology at California State. Dr. Hanley is associated with the CSU Noyce Scholars program and a member of Cal State University Teaching Business (CSUTB).

**We Googled Gerry and here is what we found:**

[Gerry Hanley](#)

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## AFTERNOON WORKSHOP

**TIME: 2:00 – 5:00 PM**

**Making the MERLOT Repository and Community part of your eLearning endeavors:  
Opportunities for Higher Education in Africa**

**Workshop Hosts:** Dr. Laura Franklin, Dr. Solomon Negash, Dr. M. Diack , Dr. G. Hanley



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**Workshop Participants will** become familiar with how to use the MERLOT eLearning repository and how to become a part of its Community. A primary aim of this workshop is to enable participants to develop plans to integrate MERLOT in their institutional/organizational eLearning programs

- **Workshop Participants will** become familiar with (1) the MERLOT repository and how to use the search tools to discover free learning resources for designing online course and eLearning programs, (2) use federated search engines to search and find resources across various repositories. Our primary expectation is to enable participants to develop plans to integrate MERLOT in their institutional and organizational eLearning programs.
- **Workshop Participants will receive a free full license of the LodeStar learning software.** Thanks to our sponsor, Robert N. Bilyk, Director LodeStar Learning Corporation.

LodeStar™ Learning is proud to release a full single license of LodeStar™ 5.x academic license key to you for your participation in the Pan-African Forum on OER and OA, eLearning Arica 2008, Accra, Ghana. LodeStar™ enables instructors to develop engaging interactive educational resources for their students that can be uploaded to a learning management system or used in the classroom.

- **Participants to the Pan-African forum on OER/OA will receive Professional Development Certificate (PDC):** PDC will be signed by the organizations (MAN, eLA and AVU) attesting of their contribution to the PAN-AF Forum on OER and OA 2008.
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### **MERLOT Africa Network (MAN) Partners:**

Southern University in Baton Rouge - [SUBR](#), LA – USA; Southern University System – [SUS](#), LA – USA; Kennesaw State University - [KSU](#), GA – USA; MERLOT Africa Network - [MAN](#); African Virtual University-[AVU](#), Kenya, East Africa; eLearning Africa Conference – [eLA](#) ; MERLOT Organization and Community – [MERLOT](#); UNESCO Open Training Platform - [OPT](#); The National Repository of Online Courses – [NROC](#), USA; Qedoc Interactive Educational Resources ([Qedoc](#)); [Connexions](#) ; Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa - [ERNWACA](#); Global Textbook Project - [GTP](#); Association Senegalaise des Expatries Consultants - [ASEC](#)

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### **MORE ABOUT Elearning Africa (eLA) Conference 2008**

Visit the [eLA Web Site](#) and see the [Conference Site](#) with information about Accra and Ghana. We have also discovered an excellent resource about Ghana, [Culture Talk Ghana](#) , from the MERLOT Repository (resource kindly shared by Dr. Laura Franklin)



Accra International Conference Centre (AICC)

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Program prepared by M. Diack  
Program Approval: [MAN Executive Council](#)