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THE BATTLE OF THE SACRED TREE
By Kenyan Filmmaker Wanjiru Kinyanjui
Dinner, Movie and Dialogue presented by
The Center for African Studies and
The Office of Academic Engagement and Programs
Date: Tuesday, October 9, 2007
Time: 7pm Dinner (International Lounge)
8pm Film (Center Hall)
Place: Busch Campus Center

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**Summer Internships in Africa**

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This summer, three undergraduate scholars had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to live, work, and study in Ghana. Chosen by a faculty committee from a competitive field of over twenty students, Jessica Akunna, Karina Martinez, and Marta Zuleta worked with three women’s organizations in Accra, the capital.

Jessica, a Public Health/Africana Studies double major, sought a placement in a health organization. For Marta Zuleta, who is interested in becoming a doctor and eventually working with Doctors Without Borders, the summer in Ghana would deepen her knowledge about African culture. She is an Anthropology major minoring in Women’s and Gender Studies. Karina Martinez, a Criminal Justice major with minors in Africana Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, used her internship to learn more about how the legal system works for women. Under the supervision of Professor Abena P.A. Busia (English and Women’s and Gender Studies; Editor of the four-volume collection *Women Writing Africa*), students studied the history and culture of Ghana. They each took an Africa-related course in spring 2007 to prepare for their summer experience. The students lived together in Accra and worked four days a week at their internships. They met once a week with Professor Busia, who took them on several trips to other areas of Ghana. This experience was structured to teach them about how African women are working to solve social, economic, political and legal issues. They also explored African feminist thought.

The internships were made possible by a generous donation from Wendy Lee, a graduate of Rutgers College and member of the School of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Council. Lee notes, “It is an increasingly important educational experience for students to spend time abroad living and working among peoples of different cultures, ethnicities, and religious beliefs. I am delighted to provide the opportunity for students to travel this summer to Africa. I have been fortunate enough to visit this continent with its rich history, natural beauty, and warm and welcoming people. I wish our three young students – Jessica, Karina, and Marta – an enriching experience that will have an enduring influence over the course of their lives.”

*Look for narratives written by Jessica, Marta and Karina about their Ghana experience in the Spring 2008 issue.*

**Gordon H. Sato Receives Doctor of Humane Letters at 2007 RU Commencement**

A lifetime of achievement in the sciences—as an accomplished research biologist and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, author or coauthor of more than 150 scientific papers, faculty member at such institutions as the University of California, and director of the W. Alton Jones Cell Science Center—helped prepare Dr. Gordon H. Sato for one of the most rewarding projects in his life: cultivating mangrove trees along the coast of Eritrea, a drought-stricken African nation. There, in one of the world’s poorest and driest nations, sustainable, affordable agricultural practice is a constant struggle, and famine is frequent. Sato recognized that mangrove trees, already growing along some of the country’s coast, could be made to tolerate and even flourish in the brackish tidal wash of coastal Eritrea. Beginning in 1988, Sato and his nonprofit Manzanar Project—named after the camp in which he, his parents, and many other Americans of Japanese ancestry were interned during the early days of World War II—have planted thousands of mangroves. The leaves of the plants provide fodder to raise enough animals to feed several thousand people. Local Eritreans use the mangrove branches for fuel, and the roots of the plants create the perfect natural environment for fish farming. There in the shallow water, crab, shrimp, and fish all thrive on the plankton, algae, and organisms that grow among the mangrove roots. Since 1988, Sato has invested more than $500,000 of his own money in the Manzanar Project. A 2002 recipient of the prestigious international Rolex Award for Enterprise and the 2005 Blue Planet Award, Sato has created one of the world’s most remarkable humanitarian projects and is working to help impoverished, coastal Eritrean communities develop a low-technology, sustainable agricultural economy.