**Press Kit**

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**Southern African Community USA**

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# **Our Story**

*Southern Africans have been have been migrating to the U.S for a shorter time then other Africans and therefore are fewer in numbers and are less visible then other Africans. In recent years, the number of Southern Africans migrating to the U.S. to stay has increased. Many countries have formed associations and groups over the years at the national level but no regional organization has been formed.*

*In 2013, Rachel Nghiwete from Namibia, decided that it was time to formalize relations within Southern African communities through concentrated efforts. As such, she began to seek out like-minded Africans from Southern Africa whom were also interested in bringing these communities together in a more formal way. By June of 2013, a group of individuals had come together to organize the “Southern African Union” Picnic and Party to bring the communities together. This August event was the first Southern African event that was truly representative of all Southern African communities. Southern African Reunion 2014 is the second year that SACU is organizing a weekend.*

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN COMMUNITY USA**

Southern African Community USA (SACU) is a registered non-profit incorporated in the state of Maryland. The communities we represent include the countries of: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. We are a membership organization with membership open to both individuals and organizations affiliated with Southern Africa.

**SACU’s Mission Statement.** “The mission of the SACU is to unite all citizens, descendants and friends of Southern Africa in the USA through various activities and events, and to increase the visibility of Southern Africans in the USA whilst contributing to the overall development of the Southern African community.”

**SACU’s Vision Statement.** To be the leading voice and resource on Southern Africa.

**SACU’s Long-Term Goals.**

* Promote Southern African countries and communities.
* Inform, educate and create cultural awareness about Southern Africa.
* Provide a platform for economic empowerment of Southern Africans in the USA.
* Contribute to philanthropic and social welfare projects.
* To build and encourage community amongst Southern Africans (community building).
* Provide culturally enhanced entertainment.

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# **WHAT WE DO**

One of the primary goals of SACU is to create and awareness of Southern African cultures by increasing the visibility, participation and representation of Southern African communities in the USA. This is reflected in the type of projects we undertake:

### **Southern African Reunion**

A weekend that brings Southern Africans together to celebrate Southern African heritage. During the long Labor Weekend in the USA, SACU hosts activities promote the Southern African heritage. Activities include Fashion Show & Entertainment, Sports Tournament & Braai (Picnic), Business-Networking and so forth.

### **Southern Africans for American Immigration Reform (SAFAIR)**

Africans are being left out of the immigration debate. This is an effort to keep our communities, informed, engaged, and represented in the immigration debate.

Partnering with other organizations interested in or working in the area of immigration reform to bring a Southern African perspective to the debate.

### **Community Outreach, Partnership & Advocacy**

Partnering with other community organizations to organize Africans in the DMV area.

Working with local state & county government, to advise on needs & concerns of Southern Africans and other African communities. We have members working with the African Affairs Advisory Group, Montgomery County, Maryland and the African Immigrant Committee (AIC), and Panafest.

### **Southern African News (online)**

A project that aims to keep Southern Africans aware of what is going on in the Southern African region through the use of social media platforms.

### **Southern African Connection (TV Show)**

Southern African Connection is a community television show with a mission to provide a platform where Southern African issues, events and information can be communicated through innovative programming both on air and online.

### **Southern African Business Expo (SABE)**

SACU’s SABE event takes place during Africa Week event which takes place the last week in May (Memorial Weekend). The Business Expo brings together people and companies who are interested in doing business with Southern Africa and her people. This event is coming in spring.

# **LEADERSHIP**

Founder(s): Nadine Gauldino (Angola), Sitinga Kachipande (Malawi) Rachel Nghiwete, Founder - (Namibia), Henri Marolen (South Africa) Siyanda Masiza (South Africa), Lisa Netha (Namibia), Rachel Nghiwete (Namibia), Margaret Perakis (South Africa) Mimmy Polan (Botswana), Cassandra Sibanda (Zimbabwe), Omega Tawonezvi (Zimbabwe). Founding Member: Matthee Mutale (Zambia)

Advisory Board: Nkope Hayford (South Africa), Connie Mann (Namibia), Mwiza Munthali (Malawi), Daniel Koroma (Sierra Leone), Victor Miller (South Africa)

Current Directors:

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| [Bio - silhouette_woman haic cut](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-silhouette_woman-haic-cut.jpg)  Naidine Gualdino Finance & Fundraising Country: Angola | **Nadine Gauldino, Director**  *Originally from Angola, Nadine is dedicated to providing cultural awareness for the people of Angola living in the United States; Nadine is a founding member of Kudissanga, the association of Angolans in America. She has organized and hosted the Miss Angola United States for the past three years. In Addition she also organizes and coordinates the Angola Peace Conference annually for the past three years. She is a banking professional who an Assistant Bank Manager at United Bank.  She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Sitinga Kachipande](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-Photo-Kachipande-2_Memory.jpg)  Sitinga Kachipande Marketing and Public Relations Country: Malawi | Sitinga Kachipande, Director *Kachipande**is currently a PhD student and Graduate Teaching Assistant in Sociology with a specialization in Africana Studies and the Global Political Economy at Virginia Tech. She has worked in the non-profit healthcare sector for several years. She has also worked as a social media intern for “Africa Now!” radio show/Transfrica and Consultancy Africa Intelligence. She served on the board of the Malawi Washington Association and is the current President of the organization. She has a BSc in Anthropology and Sociology from Truman State University, a Masters in Pan African Studies from Syracuse University and an MBA in Marketing from Hood College. She was Marketing Director of the National Association of Women MBAs at Hood College. At Truman, she was the co-founder of the African Students Association and served as its President. She was also President of the International Club and member of the Photography Club. Kachipande is a blogger who blogs on African issues at “*[*Africa on the Blog*](http://www.africaontheblog.com/)*, “*[*Rebrand Africa*](http://www.rebrandafrica.org/)*”, and* [*Mail & Guardian (South Africa)’s Voices of Africa*](http://voicesofafrica.co.za/)*. She has contributed news analysis and opinion pieces to Pambazuka News, Think Africa Press, The Guardian (UK) Africa Network, and other pan-African media. She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Bio - silhouette_woman haic cut](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-silhouette_woman-haic-cut.jpg)  Siyanda Masiza Finance & Fundraising Country: South Africa | Siyanda Masiza, Director *Masiza received her BA in Studio Art with a concentration in Graphic Arts. Then went on to the University of Maryland University College graduated with a Global MBA degree. While in school she worked as personal assistant and worked at Total Wine & More, Mclean, Virginia as Front End Team Member. She has done some intern and consulting work at; the Embassy of South Africa, Brand South Africa (USA), Total Wine & More Store Support Center and Genpact (India). She is currently a consultant in web-content development. She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Bio - silhouette_woman haic cut](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-silhouette_woman-haic-cut.jpg)  Lisa Netha Event Coordination & Social Relations Country: Namibia | Lisa Netha, Director *Lisa Netha is passionate about Africans accepting each other regardless of the African country they come from. She is contributing to ensuring this happens as a Co-founder of the Southern African Community in the USA. She has been involved in poverty alleviation projects in the USA and in Namibia. Some of her projects include the collection and distribution of clothing for the underprivileged in Namibia and feeding the hungry at two shelters in Washington DC. Lisa is an active member of the Namibian community in the USA. She has a Bachelor’s in Business Administration from the University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa. She also has a Master’s degree from Middlesex University in United Kingdom. She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Bio - Nghiwete_Autumn](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-Nghiwete_Autumn.jpg)  Rachel Nghiwete Finance & Fundraising Country: Namibia | Rachel Valentina Nghiwete, Director (Executive Director) *Nghiwete is a business woman who was born in Angola by Namibian parents, and raised in England and the USA. She attended American University in Washington, DC, where she attained a Master’s Degree in Health Promotion Management. She is passionate about Southern Africa and is a founder the non-profit organization, Southern African Community USA (SACU). She is also the founder of Southern African News (online newspaper). She hosts the Weekly social event: Southern African Nights in Washington, DC She’s the Producer of Southern African Connection TV Show in the DMV area. She is the author of Valentina: The Exile Child, a historical book about Apartheid in Namibia. More information about Rachel and her work can be found at* [*www.chezadance.com*](http://www.chezadance.com) *and* [*www.theexilechild.com*](http://www.theexilechild.com)*. She is also a Founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as the Executive Director and Director.* |
| [Bio - silhouette_woman haic cut](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-silhouette_woman-haic-cut.jpg)  Mimmy Polan Event Coordination & Social Relations Country: Botswana | Mimmy Polan, Director *Polan initiated the establishment of a Botswana community in the USA. For the past six years, she has coordinated various events aimed at bringing the community together. Mimmy’s main achievement was coordinating the 2008 West Coast Conference for the BaTswana in the Diaspora aimed at addressing the scourge of HIV/AIDS that has effected and affected Botswana. Mimmy also organizes the annual Botswana Independence Day celebrations with the purpose of uniting the BaTswana and the friends of Botswana in America. She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Bio Photo - Sibanda Autumn Croppped](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-Photo-Sibanda-Autumn-Croppped1.jpg)  Cassandra Sibanda Marketing & Public Relations Country: Zimbabwe | Cassandra Sibanda, Director *Rhoda Cassandra Sibanda is a community organizer for the Zimbabwe Diaspora Community in the DMV area, a Software Engineer at a fortune 500 Engineering-construction company, secretary for the Love Sisters Christian Group, board member of Women of Dominion International and a chef at Cassandra’s Kitchen. She finds joy in using her talents to serve God and others. She is a computer science graduate of Geneva College and Strayer University. She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |
| [Bio Photo - Tawonezvi Memory Cropped](http://southernafricancommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Bio-Photo-Tawonezvi-Memory-Cropped1.jpg)  Omega Tawonezvi Administration & Human Resources Country: Zimbabwe | Omega Tawonezvi, Director *Tawonezvi is interested in economic development and improved healthcare access & outcomes for Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. She works with established groups in her native Zimbabwe to promote micro-enterprise and health wellness programs. She is the assistant producer of Southern African Connection, a southern Africa centric weekly TV magazine show in the DC metro area.  Omega has over 10 year’s operations management experience in various industries including financial services, telecommunications, and drug development services and currently works for a healthcare consulting firm in DC. Omega holds an MBA & Masters in International Management from the University of Maryland system and a BBA in Economics from Austin Peay State University. She tweets about all things southern African @africasoequator and blogs on* [*www.padare-indaba*](http://www.padare-indaba/) *and on* [*www.Africaontheblog.com*](http://www.africaontheblog.com/) *a Guardian Africa Network affiliate.  She is also a Co-founder of SACU and currently serves on the board as a Director.* |