

On October 4, 2008 ARA hosted a networking/fundraising social for Africans in Diaspora and Good will Non Africans in the greater Orlando area. This event was organized in order to serve three main purposes.

First and foremost, ARA sought to take an active step towards better serving Africans in Diaspora. One of the lessons learnt through the writing of From Dust to Snow: Bush faller and From Dust to Snow: The African Dream is the importance of being part of a community of people one can identify with. Sharing African food, with African music playing surrounded by African and Non African friends and family provided an opportunity for hard working, participants to unwind. Several door prizes were awarded as well to add to the festive atmosphere.

Part of the evening was used for purposeful networking facilitated by an activity that resulted in eager participation by those present, some of whom had never met before. There was hearty laughter, exclamations of surprise, and the exchange of contact information.

There was also an opportunity for participants to hear about ARA and the work ARA is doing as well as opportunities for involvement. Many indicated the desire to participate in future events organized by ARA. Participants made generous donations towards ARA's Founders' Fund and shared words of encouragement and appreciation with their hosts. Countries represented included Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, France and the United States. A variety of occupations were represented including research, wedding planning, catering, business, as well as several areas of study.

ARA plans to host and/or support others to host more of such events in 2009

