

**Board of General Ministries Reports:  
ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary and  
Associated Ministry Organizations**

**TREASURER'S OFFICE:**

Highlights of Treasurer's Office, Accounting, American Baptist Churches Information Systems, OTCP, Associated Ministry Organizations (AMOs) – **November 2019 – November 2020**

**ABCUSA:**

- Prepared proposed 2021 Budget
- Finalized 2019 Audit
- Annual insurance reviews/renewals
- Prepared and presented Analyses and Financial Statements to BGM/ABCUSA Finance Committees, BGM and BGM EC; staffed meetings
- Oversaw work of legal counsel in several areas
- Preparing for 2021 virtual Biennial Mission Summit
- Personnel supervision for Accounting, ABCIS and Building
- Secured \$620,000 from the Payroll Protection Program for ABCUSA
- **ABCIS** – Since the last board meeting, ABCIS staff have created 47 new reports, are working to assist the regions in their endeavor to get Annual Report membership counts from their churches, created and made available a HELP Workbook on using ABCIS for regional executives and their staff, and continue to work on upgrading/replacing ABCIS altogether with modern software.
- **Office of Travel & Conference Planning** - Since March 2020, many industries, especially the Hospitality Industry, have been affected by COVID-19. Over the last 8 months, meetings of the BGM Executive Committee, BGM, NLC, ABWIM, ABF and McKee Consultation all needed to be cancelled and in most cases, rebooked for 2021 by OTCP. Cancellations also affected our ABCUSA Partners. MMBB and IM contracts in place for 2020 had to be cancelled, rebooked, or are in the process of being rebooked by OTCP. Overall, this involved over 20 meetings. At this time, due to careful re-negotiations, communication, relationships with our Partners and Vendors, all meetings to date were successfully rebooked by OTCP without incurring any cancellation penalties. Work continues on the June 2021 Biennial Mission Summit. Potential Exhibitors will be e-mailed shortly to request their interest in participating in our Virtual Exhibit Hall.

**REGIONS:**

- Conferred with Regions and churches on financial and administrative issues
- Ongoing Receiving Units (collecting agency) responsibilities for 13 regions
- Providing Accounting Services for Philadelphia Baptist Association and Cleveland Baptist Association
- Secured \$32,370 from the Payroll Protection Program for PBA

**ASSOCIATED MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS (AMOs):**

(AB Historical Society, AB Women's Ministries)

- Completed 2019 Audits

Reports from ABCUSA and AMOs

- Accounting functions, ongoing consultations, insurance reviews, renewals, meetings with AMO executives re: financial and operational matters
- Secured \$58,295 and \$66,547 for ABWM and ABHS respectively from the Payroll Protection Program

**ROBERT A. ROBLEE BUILDING:**

- Prepared building for Covid-19-ready soft opening in accordance with State mandates (fumigated building, changed air filters, provided masks, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and hand soap to keep the staff safe and healthy.)
- Installed ABCUSA signage on outside of building, with approval by Condo Association
- Installed Robert A. Roblee Ministry Building sign in the lobby area
- Completed all construction work on the punchlist
- Exploring and planning landscaping work around the building

**588 ASSOCIATES:**

- Prepared 2019 Audits
- 2019 Tax Returns; accounting functions; leasing and building management; insurance reviews/renewals
- Sold Mission Center Building in March 2020. Worked extensively with partners, Mission Center consultants and legal counsel.
- Working on dissolution of 588 Associates

-- Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer

**November 2020**

**Communications Report**

In spring of 2020, we updated our website daily to offer coronavirus-related resources at [www.abc-usa.org/coronavirus](http://www.abc-usa.org/coronavirus). This page was used heavily by pastors, churches and regions, and many submissions were shared with us to include in the early months of the pandemic. We have continued adding resources to this page in more recent months.

The planning for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit and the change of the event from an in person to an online event has been a big focus, and planning is now well underway for a marketing plan with new communications strategies which will be used to let our audience know about the 2021 online event! We are meeting with national partners (members of the Staff Advisory Group and communications colleagues) as we work to plan the event.

Submitted by Bridget Lipin, Director of Communications, Mission Resource Development,  
American Baptist Churches USA

## **American Baptist Women's Ministries**

### **Update for ABC-USA General Board - November 2, 2020**

2020 has been a year of transformation for American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) in several ways. ABWM worked to establish mutually beneficial equitable partnerships with our national partners within the American Baptist Family. Drawing on the strengths and skills within each organization, so that collectively and collaboratively we achieve our mission and goals. Externally we enhanced our ministries through social media, developing new partnerships, and providing workshops, retreats, and camps virtually.

We responded to the pandemic and concerns within our American Baptist Family, by offering a domestic violence workshop, a three day AB GIRLS camp, and a special webinar series, Courageous Conversations. The Courageous Conversations webinar series addressed chaplain concerns, youth ministers, college admission, and other topics. This series complimented our Fall and Spring webinar series, Avenues to Wholeness, and our current 5-part webinar series on addiction. By the time we reach the end of 2020, ABWM will offer more than 20 free webinars and have touched thousands of lives. (Webinar recordings are available on our website at [www.abwomensministries.org/webinars](http://www.abwomensministries.org/webinars).)

Our building beloved community ministry and a partnership with New Baptist Covenant, has strengthened our relationship with local churches, enabling local ABWM groups to connect with women in their communities and build collaborative partnerships and new fellowship opportunities. This ministry has broadened our sisterhood by developing cultural competency through training and relationships. ABWM in our local communities are recognizing common ground and shared interest as sisters in Christ.

Our executive committee initiated a quarterly virtual prayer call that will continue into 2021. Look on our website ([www.abwomensministries.org](http://www.abwomensministries.org)) for information. Continuing a new tradition, in 2021 the executive committee and staff will enter into 60 days of prayer and fasting.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain  
Executive Director, American Baptist Women's Ministries  
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## American Baptist Women In Ministry (ABWIM) And Transition Ministries

### ABWIM

**Vision:** ABWIM seeks the full participation and full partnership of men and women in ministry in which both women and men are able to fully utilize their God-given gifts and fully live out their God-given call.

### **Celebrating Ministering Women: Radical. Redeemed. Ready.**

This past summer was to have been the conference celebrating the first all invitational gathering of women in ministry at Green Lake Conference Center, out of which was birthed the Women in Ministry Project. To celebrate this watershed event and ABCUSA's courageous, cutting-edge commitment to women in leadership, while also recognizing the challenges that still exist, we had planned a denomination wide gathering for June 16-19, 2020.

Given the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19, we had to postpone that event. The new dates are **June 15-18, 2022**. In many ways this is providential in that while the Women in Ministry Project was birthed out of the confluence of experiences shared as women seeking to live out their call came together from across ABC regions, the full launching of the Women in Ministry Project was not until June 1982 when Rev. Margaret Cowden began as the first Project Director. In June 2022, we will have the opportunity not only to celebrate the watershed event of the 1980 Women in Ministry conference but also to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the full launch of the Women in Ministry Project, which eventually became ABWIM (American Baptist Women in Ministry).

The Planning Team with co-chairs, Rev. Soozi Whitten Ford and Rev. Dr. Tom Wiles, has been hard at work. Key leaders who have confirmed for 2022 are Rev. Dr. Trinette McCray, Rev. Dr. Zina Jacques and Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri who will be serving in the special role of Poet Laureate. In addition, Rev. Dr. Priscilla Eppinger, Executive Director of the American Baptist Historical Society, has been named as Conference Historian. As part of that role and in partnership with the conference, two issues of the American Baptist Quarterly, which had been planned in conjunction with the now postponed conference have now been released, one focused on Lay Women and Missions and the other on the Women in Professional Ministry roles. Both issues are now available.

We have much to celebrate in ABCUSA's courageous commitment to and legacy of women leaders, such as (to name just a few):

- **Dr. Lulu Fleming** - first African American woman to be commissioned for missionary service in 1866
- **May Jones and Edith Hill** - two of the first women to be ordained (1892, 1894)
- **Helen Barret Montgomery** - first woman to be President of the Northern Baptist Convention (1921), or for that matter of any Protestant denomination.
- **Mayvis Shao-Ling Lee** – first American Baptist seminary trained Asian Pacific woman to be ordained, first woman ordained by the Northern CA Baptist Convention (1951)
- **Ruth Maldonado** – first woman to serve in an executive position (Director of Christian Education) with ABC of Puerto Rico (1960-1975)

**Celebrating Ministering Women:** *celebrating* the long legacy of women leaders, their myriad journeys into ministry and their many ways of ministering as well as celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Women in Ministry Project which eventually became ABWIM.

**Radical:** ABCUSA has carried out a **radical witness** *and radical witness is still needed*.

**Redeemed:** When all God's gifts in all God's people are fully accessed, embraced and utilized, churches flourish and our world is transformed. We are all **Redeemed!**

**READY! We are *READY*. Are you?**

**Mark your calendars now for June 15-18, 2022!**

### **TRANSITION MINISTRIES ABCUSA**

**The goal** of Transition Ministries ABCUSA is to partner with regions in resourcing churches during times of transition in a way which enhances their ministry and empowers them to journey into the future as vibrant missional congregations.

**Our mission** is to provide intentional interim ministers who are adept and experienced in leading churches through transitions. These interim pastors guide the congregation on a journey which involves celebrating their history, clarifying their identity, articulating their mission, and moving into a fruitful future.

**During COVID-19**, Transition Ministries has faced many challenges from church budgets, which have been severely impacted forcing interims to conclude assignments sooner than expected, to stalled search processes extending the interim period. In the meantime, interims have navigated through the challenges of social distancing and quarantining, which at times has kept them separated from their own families. Each situation has had its unique challenges. Through it all we have navigated with hope and faith for the future!

Especially in these extraordinary times, resources which strengthen our partnerships across our ABC regions are needed. **Transition Ministries** serves as the hands and feet of Christ, connecting with regions and congregations in ways that move mission and ministry forward.

### **American Baptist Network of Spiritual Directors**

Given the unprecedented times in which we are living, we are re-igniting an initiative that was initially begun as part of the Transformed by the Spirit movement. This initiative will be a way for those who are involved in the ministry of spiritual direction to resource, connect and network with each other as well as to invite people into practices that ground us in God, strengthen our interconnectedness, undergird our life together and deepen our faith

**In all of these ministry areas**—ABWIM, Transition Ministries, and the Spiritual Directors Network—I am thankful for the wisdom, grace, guidance and support of Interim General Secretary Jeff Woods, the ABCUSA Leadership Team, the ABWIM Advisory Team and the Board of General Ministries—without whom none of this could happen. **Thank-you!**

**Rev. Dr. Patricia P. Hernandez, AGS ABWIM & Transition Ministries ABCUSA**

**Report to the Board of General Ministries ABCUSA**  
**From Judith Christiansen, HR Consultant**

Dear Friends:

Since January, 2020, I have been consulting with the Office of the General Secretary on a variety of Human Resource issues.

My first big project at the beginning of the year was to review and update the Personnel Handbook for the staff of the Office of the General Secretary.

In March, when the Pandemic and subsequent shutdown occurred, I worked with a small team from the Office of the General Secretary to create a COVID Response and Return to Work Plan.

In the late summer and fall, I was pleased to assist with the hiring of the Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development.

Before the Pandemic, I planned to be in the office 2-3 days each month and to work approximately 25 hours per month electronically. Since March, all of the work has been virtual. I am looking forward to the time when I can return to the office and work with all of the OGS staff.

Blessings –  
Judith Christiansen  
H.R. Consultant

Report to the Board of General Ministries, November 2020  
Submitted by Tina M. Kiernan, United Mission Coordinator and Biennial Mission Summit Program Coordinator

### **ABCUSA Matthew 25 Grant**

As reported in November 2019, we have not received any gifts from the donor who has anonymously funded the ABCUSA Matthew 25 Grant. There were not any grants distributed in 2020. Since the inception of the Matthew 25 Grant process in Spring 2013, \$893,423 has been distributed through 545 grants reaching ministries which include providing clothing, free community meals, hygiene products and social services for homeless persons, supplies for after school care, diapers, resources for early education facilities, school supplies, scholarships to camps, weekend meals for school children, and many more. Some of these stories can be found on our website [here](#) (or by searching the ABCUSA website for Grant Funding Stories).

I am pleased to report that in recent weeks I have been in touch with the anonymous donor who has expressed interest in funding additional grants. I hope to have additional information to report in June.

### **United Mission**

Due to the coronavirus we expected a decrease in giving to United Mission. The September 2020 financials show a decrease of \$592,000, almost 12%, compared to the September 2019 total. With many church facilities closed, a promotional mailing has not been done in 2020. As has been our practice, the top 100 giving churches were recognized with a letter of appreciation and certificate in July.

In addition to sending a letter of thanks to these congregations, letters of appreciation were sent to 91 churches that are new United Mission-giving churches. Through other areas of my work I have been able to reach out to churches that have not supported United Mission and share the information available in our *What is United Mission?* resource. There are several congregations on this list that began to give after receiving the information. I look forward to working with Marie Onwubuariri to develop new resources and ways to encourage giving to United Mission.

Part of my effort to ensure our publications and giving materials reach every American Baptist church is to confirm that we have accurate church information. A request was sent to the regions early in 2020 to provide us with a copy of their church directory. Several regions have provided this information or let us know that they only use ABCIS as their primary database. Our part-time receptionist has been comparing the data from the region directories with the ABCIS system making updates as needed.

### **Biennial Mission Summit**

During the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee meeting in September, a decision was made to hold the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit online and seek to hold an in person event in Puerto Rico in 2023. Since that time we have been working on the logistics for both events.

In September, I assumed the role of Biennial Mission Summit Program Coordinator after having served as Assistant Coordinator this year.

Contracts for the in person event in 2023 are being renegotiated. This task is challenging because there are so many unknown factors in play right now. The Convention Center and Sheraton hotel are willing to hold the space for us while the negotiations continue.

The Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team met in September to discuss the switch to an Online Experience. We will continue with the theme "Imagine" which gives us the opportunity to develop



creative workshops at this time. Following is some information about the revised schedule. We are still working on details, so please consider this information to be a draft of the event schedule.

The schedule has been revised to begin the Biennial Mission Summit on Thursday, June 24, 2021 with a Welcome Session at 4:00pm EDT. There will then be time for the various Caucuses to meet if they choose to, followed by a worship service which includes communion. Friday's schedule will also begin at 4:00pm EDT with four concurrent workshop options, the required Business Session, International Ministries' Program Board report, concluding with worship at 7:00pm EDT. Saturday, June 26, 2021 will be the final day for the event, beginning at 4:00pm EDT with four concurrent workshops, followed by Mission Summit Conversations, then American Baptist Home Mission Societies' Program Board report, concluding with worship. We also expect to provide an on demand library of presentations that attendees can view at any time during the event.

Several of the sessions will include live components. A stage will be configured in the King of Prussia area where these will be broadcast. Jeremy Fackenthal, Biennial Mission Summit Producer, has been working to help us determine additional needs to assure we will have the best online event possible.

In addition to containing links to the sessions listed above, the meeting platform we are considering will give us the ability to have a virtual exhibit hall. Each organization that creates an online booth can add links and resources for attendees to view. All items included in the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit will remain available to registered attendees on this platform for 90 days after the conclusion of the event.

There will be increased audio, visual, and production costs associated with this type of event so a registration fee will be required to help offset some of these fees. We have not determined what the charge will be, but plan offer a registration options for Attendee, Delegate, and Watch Party. The Watch Party registration is intended to be used by a church that would show the virtual event to several people at their facility. This could be especially useful when cost is a factor, or when church members have limited access to computer and internet resources.

We look forward to the new challenges this online experience poses for us as we learn to adapt to this exciting format.

## **ABC Minister for Creation Justice Report**

**Board of General Ministries  
November 2020**

Like many, the ABC Creation Justice Network and the ABC Minister of Creation Justice have spent 2020 re-imagining ministry as we have transitioned from in-person events to virtual ones. Yet we have seen momentum in both local and national creation care ministries across the denomination. Below please find some this year's projects:

- Awarded the One Great Hour of Sharing Grant
- Submitted multiple articles to Ethics Daily, ABCUSA newsletter, ABC National Ministers Council newsletter, and others
- Accepted two guest preaching invitations (First Baptist Church, Attleboro, MA; Royersford Baptist Church, Royersford, PA): April; October
- Co-hosted Climate Ambassador Training with Blessed Tomorrow: May
- Welcomed first congregation (Royersford Baptist Church, Royersford, PA) into Creation Justice Congregation Program: June
- Hosted four-part webinar series, "Praying with Creation: Sabbath, Lament, Restoration/Resiliency, and Resurrection" with guest speakers from ABHMS and IM: July and August
- Sponsored and attended eco-America's virtual 2020 American Climate Leadership Summit: August
- Posted daily "Season of Creation" Facebook posts: September
- Led workshop for New York State Region's annual gathering: October
- Recording "Creation Justice Congregation Conversations" with local congregations exploring their creation justice ministries: October
- Continually updating the Creation Justice webpage's resources
- Planning material/resources for 2021 Biennial Mission Summit
- Planning potential domestic and international mission trips with ABHMS and IM focused on natural disaster relief and sustainable agriculture
- Creating a 2020 Advent devotional series
- Creating a 2021 Lenten devotional series

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Rebecca Driscoll,  
ABC Minister for Creation Justice  
ABC Creation Justice Network

October, 2020



Dear Dr. Woods and Members of the Board of General Ministries,

At the 2019 Mission Summit, the Ministers Council declared 2020 as a Year of Jubilee, waiving national annual membership dues for all American Baptist clergy. As the year unfolded, the Leadership Team was exploring deeper expressions of Jubilee as the COVID pandemic unfolded. The salient feature of the Jubilee was yielding control and depending upon God. This has been a prime learning during this pandemic.

Already conducting most of our business on a virtual platform, the leadership team continued its efforts to: *"... equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ..."*  
Ephesians 4: 12-13

In that spirit, we participate in denominational gatherings of the National Leadership Council and the Professional Ministry Team. Additionally, because many local chapters have switched to virtual gatherings, we have witnessed firsthand the creativity and resilience of many clergy as they seek to minister in this age of COVID. They are bringing to life Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 4:8 *"We are afflicted, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair."*

We continued to offer seasonal devotions and prayer groups in addition to sponsoring:

- MC Live – monthly web-casts on topics related to ministerial concerns;
- A month newsletter with wide distribution;
- Together in Ministry Grants to local collegial covenant groups;
- Excellence in Ministry Grants to local Ministers Council chapters;
- Honoring Excellence in Ministry Project – an annual roll-call - honoring and remembering those who have faithfully served.

Like many others, we have altered our three-day bi-annual business meeting to a virtual platform and will meet over the course of four Thursday evening in October and November in which we will advance a revised form of the Code of Ethics.

We give thanks to be a partner of the American Baptist family and join with you to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ, encouraging excellence in ministerial leadership.

Peace and All Good to you,

Rev. Dr. Randolph T Miller, President

Ministers Council ABCUSA  
221 S. High Street  
West Chester, PA 19382  
610-314-7837

Rev. Jacki Belile, Vice-President

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In the year of pandemic's many related delays and postponements, unfortunately the dates chosen to reschedule the National Leadership Council meetings were in conflict with a prior commitment scheduled over a year ago. Please receive the following report for your review.

As a volunteer men's ministry of service to others, ABMen USA has seen most of our regularly scheduled events for 2020 postponed or canceled due to closures or recommendations of safety protocols. Annual work party events at Bacone College, Greenlake Conference Center and Crow Community Baptist Church in Crow Agency, MT were all postponed as a result of the virus. As with others, most of our regional men's camps and annual meetings were postponed as well.

COVID 19 however did not stop the need for assistance from our Disaster Relief ministries which have remained engaged throughout the second half of the year following numerous requests for help.

- Jack Cobb, ABMen National Disaster Relief Coordinator participated in another trip to Puerto Rico from February 23 - March 3, 2020 along with 12 others from Illinois, West Virginia, Kansas and Nebraska. Additional planned trips for 2020 were either postponed or I have yet to receive reports due ongoing pandemic circumstances.
- Our West Virginia based ABMen USA shower trailer (#1) was setup to serve the homeless community in Wheeling, WV on March 26, 2020 following the arrival of the pandemic and remains serving that community today. It is estimated to have provided shower and laundry services to a community of 100-150 homeless in the downtown area.
- Our Kansas based shower trailer (#2) was moved to Lake Charles, LA during the second week of September to support the deployment of chainsaw teams from the Great Rivers Region sent following Hurricane Laura. Although the church's activities building that our teams used as its base of operation following Hurricane Harvey was effectively demolished by Hurricane Laura, the team of 6 men from Illinois and 2 men from Kansas were provided other quarters by the Greater Saint Mary Missionary Baptist Church in Lake Charles, LA.
- A second team primarily from West Virginia traveled back to Lake Charles October 12-24, 2020 and continued the work which remains. The team leader estimated that only 40% of the need has been met as of this date.
- Discussion of a December trip of college students is in the initial stages of planning.
- A full report on any of these activities may be available by written request.

Although a formal work party had been postponed until 2021, ABMen USA District Rep Cody Pollington has in conjunction with volunteers from First Baptist Church of Billings, MT worked to paint and make some minor repairs to Crow Community Baptist Church of Crow Agency, MT. A formal work party has been pushed back a year following concerns due to the COVID outbreak.

As the ABMen Executive Director I have been an active member of the COVID Recovery – Renewing Hope and Service National Emergency Roundtable virtual discussions throughout the year.

With so many disruptions to our regular schedules, retreats, gatherings etc., ABMen leadership has worked to encourage and engage men to effectively stay connected and conduct worship services, men's meetings, Bible study, etc., through an unprecedented number of technological tools at our disposal. To spend 2020 focusing on local regions and ensure that their men's fellowship continues to serve their church needs. ABMen USA will also be conducting our 2020 annual meeting virtually on December 5, 2020.

Finally, we wish to offer our appreciation to everyone who took the time to offer prayers and condolences following the recent passing of our past Executive Director Kenna "Lucky" Ray.

*Striving to be the hands and feet of Jesus,*

Bob Slechta  
Executive Director  
American Baptist Men USA



# Kachin American Baptist Association

American Jinghpaw Wunpawng Hkalup Ninghtan Hpung

3264 Townsend Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32277; (904) 442-5522



October 31, 2020

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To,  
Rev. Dr. C. Jeff Woods  
Acting General Secretary of ABCUSA

### *Re: Submitting A Report of Kachin American Baptist Association (KABA).*

Greetings on behalf of the Executive Board of KABA. By grace we, KABA accomplished the following ministries.

- (1) 4<sup>th</sup> KABA Youth Annual Camp with 120 campers at Kulaqua Camp, High Springs, Florida on December 29, 2019 to January 2, 2020.
- (2) Financial provided to the Zaiwa Bible Translation Project led by Kachin Baptist Convention in Myanmar since 2018.
- (3) Financial supported to Hope for Hilltribes Ministry in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- (4) Participated to the leadership trainings of Burma diaspora churches hosted by ABHMS.
- (5) KABA founded Foundations Ola Hanson Bible Institute (F-OHBI) with 12 faculties in 2019. It is partner with Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Shawnee, Kansas to offer a certificate program in ministry studies. F-OHBI nurtures students by Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason, and equips them for lives of ministry, leadership, and service. The programs of F-OHBI are designed to provide an introduction to important areas of Christian studies individuals who want basic theological education for ministry. The programs also integrate academic study with ministry experience to strengthen Christian knowledge and practice among the Kachin in America and the world at large. F-OHBI is running two programs called Level I and Level II. 36 students were completed their Level I and 31 students are joining at Level II.

In Christ,

Rev. Tu Lum Lamung  
Executive Minister of KABA



Associated Ministry  
Organization of  
ABCUSA

