



Varsity roots for peace

MKU hosts international conference, helps establish African Consortium for Peace (AC4P). ..Page 2



Mount Kenya University gives Africa's quest for peace fresh impetus. Releasing doves during the official opening of the MKU organised International Peace, Security and Social Enterprise conference (from left to right) are Prof John Struthers of the University of West of Scotland, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination of National Government Major General Joseph Nkaiserry, MKU Founder and Board Chairman Prof Simon N. Gicharu, Rwanda's High Commissioner to Kenya His Excellency Ambassador James Kimonyo and Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) Chair Francis Ole Kaparo.

Teacher honoured for exemplary work. Full story on page...4



Why teachers will learn more at MKU. Page...11



Varsity researchers shine in the region. Stories on pages ...22



Government audit gives MKU clean bill of health. Page...3

Double fortunes for 14 GEA beneficiaries

Apprentices commissioned by Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) in April discover that fortune favours the bold.

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Varsity celebrates new crop of entrepreneurs as it commissions 14 Graduate Enterprise Academy apprentices. Cutting the cake (from left to right) are MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudo, Family Bank Chief Executive Officer Dr David Thuku, MKU Council Chair Prof David Serem and MKU Co-founder Madam Jane Nyutu.

Close to 3,000 government-sponsored students this year chose Mount Kenya University as their preferred academic destination. Read full story on page...7



Some of the new students pose with Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudo after he addressed them during orientation.

Peace Conference

Varsity roots for peace

Mount Kenya University (MKU) has given the drive for peace in Africa a major fillip. This is after hosting an International Conference on Peace, Security and Social Enterprise, which established a think tank named African Consortium for Peace (AC4P).

The university donated Ksh5 million towards the consortium's establishment. AC4P is a platform to deliberate and promote a peaceful future for Africa. MKU sponsored the conference to the tune of Ksh10 million, and teamed up with several partners to make it a huge success.

Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination of National Government, Major Gen. (Rtd.) Joseph Nkaisser, the chief guest at the May conference, termed the conference as important and timely, owing to the fact that it came just ahead of Kenya's 2017 General Election, to be held in August.

He added that the meeting was also "timely because the idea of engaging in dialogue on peaceful interventions for sustainable development in the contemporary society and especially in Kenya today cannot be gainsaid".

The CS emphasised that because peace and security were central requirements

for social and economic development as well as for effective governance, the discussion of their interconnectedness with social enterprise as the main agenda of the conference was highly commendable.

The conference brought together diverse academia, government officials, representatives of faith-based institutions and many other individuals from all over the world to deliberate on ways of promoting sustainable peace.

The conference chairperson, Dr Vincent Gaitho, said AC4P, the first of its kind in Africa, will among other objectives seek to implement the outcomes of the conference for the greater common good of Africa.

According to MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudu, threats to peace include political and economic uncertainties, climate change and its adverse effects, poverty, hunger, diminishing natural resources, wars and civil strife, social inequality, environmental degradation, diseases, corruption, radicalisation, fanaticism, racism and xenophobia, among others.

The MKU Management promised to spend a maximum of \$10,000 to award the best three papers presented during the conference.



Prof John Struthers of University of West of Scotland (centre) greets Mount Kenya University Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudu.



Mount Kenya University Founder and Chairman Prof Simon N. Gicharu introduces Dr Vincent Gaitho, the Chair of the International Peace, Security and Social Enterprise Conference who is also MKU Council Vice-Chair, to Major General Nkaisser, Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination of National Government.



MKU Founder and Chairman Prof Simon N. Nyutu (second right), assisted by other varsity staff, launches the Africa Consortium for Peace (AC4P).



Rwandese students from MKU Main Campus in Thika entertain guests during the conference.



MKU students and staff participate in an interdenominational peace walk.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Government audit gives MKU a clean bill of health

The committee that Education Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, tasked to conduct a quality audit in all Kenyan universities released the final report in February 2017.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Stanley W. Waudu, says the university welcomes such audits, as they help to monitor and evaluate quality. "The audits reveal areas of strength and weak areas that require strengthening," he says.

Prof. Waudu is delighted that the Commission for University Education (CUE) audit affirmed that MKU had, in mounting its programmes, firmly stuck to the letter of the law.

The February quality audit came after CUE had carried out a mandatory inspection of MKU processes and quality systems last November that gave the institution a clean bill of health. This was in line with the requirements of

the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012. All MKU programmes are compliant with the legal framework governing universities.

MKU was awarded its charter in January 2011. According to the Act, CUE was to inspect the university after four years.

When MKU received its charter, the legal framework governing public and private universities was different. Public universities were established through Acts of Parliament, while private higher learning institutions were established via Letters of Interim Authority (LIA).

"All new universities in Kenya are now established under the same legal framework," Prof. Waudu points out. "Also, all universities are subjected to the same audit requirements."

He says the CUE inspection focused on the university's governance and management systems, quality aspects, teaching and learning process, and research.

"The university was found to be com-

pliant," the VC asserts. "We were given recommendations on areas to improve. This fits well with our quality policy that emphasises continuous improvement."

He adds: "The MKU Charter was signed by the President of Kenya. It stated that the University Senate would approve and mount programmes and send the Senate approved programmes to CUE for review. This is a requirement we have complied with ever since."

Before MKU was awarded its charter, it could not mount any programmes without the then regulator, Commission for Higher Education (CHE), approving them.

Prof. Waudu recalls that between 2008 and 2010, before the University Charter, MKU presented eight programmes to CHE and the commission approved all of them.

"When the 2012 Act came into existence, we complied with its requirements," says the VC. "For example, in



Prof Stanley W. Waudu, Ph.D,
Vice-Chancellor

2014, we sent 68 programmes to CUE for review and continued to send sets of others in the following years."

STAFF PROFILE:



Prof. Tuikong D. K. Serem, Ph.D

Why he is a gem to MKU

Prof. Tuikong D. K. Serem, 66, is the new Mount Kenya University Council Chairman. He was, prior to his appointment, an Adjunct Professor at

MKU. His appointment was out of his vast knowledge and experience in education training, leadership and management.

Varsity appoints Prof Serem as new Council Chair

Prof. Serem is a pioneer teacher who acquired his initial training at Eregi Teachers College in the 70s, and now holds an education doctorate degree in administration of higher education. The alumnus of Kapsabet Boys High School has therefore spent his entire professional life teaching and imparting knowledge, enriching this with diverse research and extensive exposure of more than 43 years.

His areas of academic interest include Educational Management and Administration; Leadership in Education; Organisational Development and Management; Effective School Research in Education; Comparative Education; and Financing of Education.

Prof. Serem has held numerous leadership positions in a number of higher education institutions, and sits in the board of various other

organisations, among them those involved in education, research and management.

These include serving as head of department, dean, principal, deputy vice-chancellor and Ag. Vice-chancellor in various Universities in Kenya, and being a member of various professional institutions. He is, for instance, a council member of the Kenya Institute of Management – the premier management professional body in the country.

He has also been a board member of Kenya Airways and the National Housing Corporation. Currently, he sits on the board of Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI).

He currently serves as Chairman of Kipkeino High School. He is also on the Board of Management of Kapsabet Boys and Kapsabet Girls secondary schools in

Nandi County.

Prof. Serem is credited for having steered Maseno and Narok university colleges to full university status at different times in his career as education administrator.

He was the pioneer Principal of Narok University College, which he nurtured until it was awarded university charter in February 2013.

In 1990, he was among the pioneers of Maseno University College. "As its first Dean," he writes in his curriculum vitae, "I assisted in establishing the Faculty of Education at Maseno University College and in the identification and recruitment of academic staff; development of courses, teaching and evaluating them in line with laid down university regulations."

He rose to serve as Acting Principal of Maseno University College from 1999 to

2001. For his role at this institution, then President Daniel Arap Moi awarded him the Order of the Golden Warrior of Kenya (OGW) in the year 2000.

The teaching value that Prof. Serem has brought to MKU includes extensive experience in supervising post-graduate students. He has to date supervised more than eight Doctorate students, and a long list of others pursuing Masters. In total, he has so far examined more than 40 PhD and Masters theses.

Prof Serem is the author of three books: *Staff Development Model – A Focus on Secondary School Teachers in the Republic of Kenya*; *Understanding Research – A Simplified Form*; and *Perceptions of High School Principalship – A Comparative Study of Traditional and Outcome-Based Environments*.

MKU Rwanda Library

Rare twist of academic fate gives MKUR library a befitting name

Threads of destiny have spun a rare, yet heart-warming, East African academic tale.

In a quirk of fate, an impressionable young man who imbibed knowledge from a Rwandan refugee teaching in a Kenyan high school nearly four decades ago has paid homage to his tutor in a befitting manner.

Way back in the early 1980s, a humble teacher and his equally modest student met at Gathiru-ini Secondary School in Kiambu County, Kenya. They had no inkling of what destiny had in store for them. But what a tale that particular encounter has spun!

Decades have passed since that initial contact. But that student, Mount Kenya University Rwanda (MKUR) Founder and Chairman, Prof Simon N. Gicharu, advanced to university, was employed as a teacher, later transformed into an entrepreneur and founded the university.

In a poignant gesture, the MKU Rwanda Management resolved to name the library after the late Mwalimu Peter Claver Nyombayire. This is in his honour for educating thousands of Kenyan students in Biology, says Prof Gicharu, who learnt so much from Mwalimu Nyombayire.

The Rwandan was one of the teachers who moulded Prof Gicharu into a scholar of note during his formative years – and gave him the foundation to excel later in life.

When the two met, no one would have imagined that the Kenyan student would later establish a university in his former teacher's homeland, Rwanda. Even more surprising, no one would have foretold the touching finale of this edifying encounter.

As it were, in teaching Prof Gicharu, the late Mwalimu Nyombayire planted an academic seed that would sprout in his homeland in the form of MKU Rwanda, and, in a way, sustain his teaching legacy. Thousands of Rwandese students are forging their future at this university.

This unique teacher-student encounter has bequeathed the East African region a giant institution of higher learning: MKU. It is also a reminder that teachers mould the world by teaching young people who go on to become great, yet they (the teachers) largely remain unsung heroes. Ordinarily, students spend as much time with their teachers as they do with parents. It is no wonder then that so many have vivid memories of their teachers years and even decades later, and how



Students seek guidance on reading materials at the ultra-modern Mwalimu Peter Claver Nyombayire Library in Mount Kenya University Rwanda.

The Rwandan was one of the teachers who moulded Prof Gicharu into a scholar of note during his formative years – and gave him the foundation to excel later in life.

those teachers influenced their lives.

A gifted teacher, Mwalimu Nyombayire left a lasting mark on his former students at Gathiru-ini High School and the other schools where he taught.

He passed away in 1992 during the struggle to liberate his country, which later slid into a genocidal pit that cut short more than a million lives in 1994. But his memory lives on. He played a big role in the liberation of Rwanda, enabling thousands of Rwandese to enjoy quality education to date.

While in Kenya as a refugee, Mwalimu Nyombayire also taught at Muhoho Secondary School in Gatundu. The school was set up by the Kenya's first president Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, the father of the country's current president, Uhuru Kenyatta.

Many of the students Mwalimu Nyombayire taught in Kenya now hold big positions in government or are in private business. They include Prof Gicharu and John Thenge Kiarie. The latter is an established agro-businessman in Thika town.

Mr Thenge credits Mwalimu Nyombayire for his attainment of a Distinction One in biology, emerging as the best student in his class in 1982, in Murang'a County, and also among the best in the country.

He recalls: "Mwalimu was a handsome man of good physique and an inspiring



The late Mwalimu Peter Claver Nyombayire

teacher with a good sense of humour. Unfortunately, other than hastily written cards on the last day of term, we don't always get to say thank you to those amazing individuals; and sometimes we don't realise fully what they taught us until years later. His dedication and maverick approach to teaching in a rural school that could not measure up with national schools such as Alliance High was amazing. Because of his dedication, I was able to score good grades and ended up at Njiris High School, one of the best schools in Murang'a County."

"It was a daunting task for teachers in rural schools during my days as a secondary school student in the early 1980s, as most schools lacked teaching aids," Prof Gicharu adds.

Gathiru-ini was no exception. The



MKU Founder and Chairman who was taught by the late Mwalimu Peter Claver Nyombayire, lays a wreath on his mentor's final resting place.

school lacked laboratories, but Mwalimu Nyombayire would go out of his way to fabricate makeshifts to enable his students to carry out practical lessons.

"Unlike other teachers, Mwalimu Nyombayire was never late. He was committed to work and taught even beyond class time. I remember him visiting our home many times and struggling to communicate to my mother in English to establish if I studied after school," says Prof Gicharu.

It was during his visit to Rwanda in April this year that Prof Gicharu learnt about Mwalimu Nyombayire's death through an article quoting his brother in the newspapers.

"It was a shock to learn of the loss of someone who gave us great wisdom to believe in ourselves. While he is unquestionably a son of Rwanda, he will always be embraced as 'Mwalimu' of the world. As Mount Kenya University Rwanda fraternity, the library in our new premises will be named after him," Prof Gicharu says.

"In any institution of higher learning, the library is the treasury of knowledge," he continues. "The Peter Claver Nyombayire Library will be a fulfilment by us whom he left behind, of his wish to see a liberated, prosperous Rwanda. It will aid in the delivery of quality education, and we fully dedicate the library to his memory."



1. Prof. William Bazeyo, Dean, School of Public Health, Makerere University College of Health Sciences receives a gift from Dr. Bibianne Waiganjo-Aidi, MKU DVC Academic and Research Affairs. This was during the maiden visit by the Makerere team to MKU.
2. Kenya's Chief Justice David Maraga (left) in discussion with Abdirazak Mohamed, a student from Mount Kenya University School of Law. This was at the Supreme Court in Nairobi where 144 new advocates were admitted to practice law. The Chief Justice urged the advocates to be role models for the profession. He added that as Kenyans ready themselves for the 2017 General Election set for August, the judiciary is ready to hear and expeditiously determine any cases that may arise.
3. Gospel artist Daddy Owen performs with the Mount Kenya University Christian Union Creative Ministry during Sunday worship at the university.
4. MKU Board member Madam Jane Nyutu gives her remarks during a customer care training session at the varsity's main campus in Thika.
5. Mr Bernard Muluka, a political analyst, share with high school students during a National Public Debate hosted at the varsity.
6. MKU staff with delegates from Lincoln University College - Malaysia during a visit to MKU.
7. Members of TIT Sacco at a previous Annual General Meeting.
8. The MKU DIC dancers entertain during the student leaders' inauguration ceremony.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scalis Altitudines Educationis

Mentorship

French billionaire donates books to MKU

French billionaire businessman Mohamed Altrad has donated 3,000 books to Mount Kenya University (MKU).

The books, worth Ksh4 million, are a set of the world's first English version of Badawi, an autobiographical novel that is part of the literature curriculum taught in French schools.

The book tells the inspirational story of a nomad boy born in the desert sands of Syria. The boy raises himself by the bootstraps to earn a PhD in Computer Science, and later becomes one of the richest men in the world.

Badawi reflects the life of Mr. Altrad, the CEO and Founder of Altrad Group, Europe's biggest dealer in scaffolding and an assortment of construction materials.

Born to a single mother in the desert, Mr. Altrad was dissuaded from going to school but struggled through, earning a scholarship to study in France before venturing

into entrepreneurship.

His company has annual revenues of 1.6bn Euros (Ksh1.7 trillion) and employs over 17,000 people, according to Forbes magazine.

In 2015, Mr. Altrad won the coveted EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award. MKU Chairman Prof. Simon Gicharu, who represented East Africa, was inducted into the World Entrepreneur of the Year Hall of Fame at the same ceremony held in Monaco.

"Knowledge is universal and this story teaches us that everyone can be successful in spite of their humble beginnings," said Prof. Gicharu.

Badawi was first published in 1994, and updated in 2012. The English version was published this year. Françoise Nyssen, the director of ActesSud, the publisher, said: "Mr. Altrad is smart enough to realise that life is about something deeper than just making money, and modest enough to



Prof Simon N. Gicharu, Founder and Chairman, Mount Kenya University, issues donated books to MKU students and encourages them to cultivate their entrepreneurial potential

know that literary success can't be bought." MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof. Stanley Waudu, who received the books at Thika Main Campus, thanked Mr Altrad for the donation, saying Badawi will go a long way in encouraging university students to

become entrepreneurs, and impart in them attributes such as determination.

"We will also share the books with other universities and public libraries in Kenya," Prof. Waudu promised.

MKU Don leads African sports management scholars in writing book chapter

The World Association of Sports Management (WASM), established in 2013 and headquartered in Taipei, Taiwan, published its first sports management text book in December 2016 titled "Global Sport Management: Contemporary Issues and Inquiries".

The book was edited by Professors Brenda G. Pitts and James J. Zhang.

Prof. Peter Wanderi, the Director, Quality Assurance and Linkages at MKU, led a team of Kenyan and Uganda scholars in contributing the 3rd chapter of the book. They wrote on, "The Role of Globalisation, Partnership and Technology in Enhancing Sports Excellency in Africa".

Co-authors of this book chapter are Prof. Kihumbu Thairu of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Andanje Mwisukha, the Acting Registrar, Academics, at Kenyatta University, and other sports science scholars from Kyamboga University, Uganda. The new book, priced at US\$119.96 (Ksh11,996), is presently selling at 20 percent discount.

Prof Wanderi is a founder executive committee member of WASM and the Africa Sports Management Association (ASMA), established in 2013 and 2009 respectively.

Poems @Wahupat

IT IS A NEW DAY

Every sunrise gives you one day more to hope
Every day new day is a new beginning
Treat it that way!
Stay away from what might have been
Look at what can be
Make this day count, for you will never have it again

We put off a lamp
Not because the lamp is tired
But because dawn has come
The daylight takes charge
For even in the most cloudy day
The light of day remains significant

Just as seashells reminds us
That every passing life leaves something beautiful behind
The challenges we face along the way
They may leave indelible imprints in our memories

But also makes us stronger, braver and wiser
For even the finest gold passes through fierce fire to be refined

Stay put forthwith
Put on the armour of courage
Deep roots are not reached by the frost
Grow through what you go through
Sing the idea of a new hero for a new day to yourself
With every rising of the sun
Think of your life as just begun



The poet, Sarah Wahu (Wahupat), is an Administrative Assistant at the School of Clinical Medicine

Looking back from the view of the hill
The rising sun was wearing a warm smile
That gave getting up a worthwhile impression
But suddenly the sun scorched hot
In an alternate moment the rain was freezing

Sited with my soul at my side
Perhaps having a moment of reminiscence
Wearily, wondering and wandering
Moments of serrated truths and reality
Some beginnings quickly run to endings

As birds fly heading home
To take a rest in their nests on the tall trees
And to take refuge from the cold nights
Clouds of confusion mist the sky
Whether to cut the tree or water it

Life is a circular wheel
With turning tides engulfing in moments of desolation
Thirsting for my inner self rest in solitude
The sun and the rain all start and fade from my face
Am left not knowing what to do when the bulb is off

In an atmosphere of disarray
Sometimes laughing may be as necessary as crying

Wishing away the paranoia state
Struggling not to sink lower and construe what transpired
Here, the night comes again; the moon and the stars territory

LIFE'S UNFOLDING

In the erratic corridors of life
The crowds move back and forth
Everyone going by their daily business
For even with assorted encounters
The sun rises and sets rhythmically

In the rarely taken pavements
Travellers who are labeled brave
Fear not to take hazy lamps
In an effort to light up the world caves
The lighting from a distance full of hope

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Government-Sponsored Students

MKU admits close to 3,000 government-sponsored students



Last year's Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination saw 88,626 candidates scored C+ and above to qualify for university admission. The Government of Kenya admitted them all in local universities, making history in the process.

Public universities were allocated 71,089 students while private institutions will absorb a record 17,368.

Among private universities, Mount Kenya University (MKU) attracted the highest number of Government-sponsored students: 2,905. This is more than double the 1126 that the university took in last year.

Here the government-sponsored students are seen reporting to MKU.



Vice Chancellor Prof Stanley Waudu, with 2017/2018 government-sponsored students during orientation



MKU staff from Nairobi during registration

Varsity band leads walk to celebrate 100 years of Rotary movement

The Rotary Club of Thika hosted a colourful celebration of the Rotary Foundation centennial anniversary in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Thika West and the Rotaract clubs of Mount Kenya University (MKU), Thika, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and Thika Technical.

The celebrations also involved Rotary beneficiaries from Muranga School for the Visually Impaired, Joytown primary and secondary schools, Mugumoini Primary School, Technical and Agricultural Training Institute (TATI, Juja), Kilimambogo Hospital and Tulia Community Water Project for Kitui County.

The event started with a walk in Juja town. It was

led by the MKU band. The walk ended at TATI, where the participating Rotary beneficiaries shared moving testimonies.

The Rotary Club of Thika has dispensed close to Ksh100 million in community projects since its inception.

The Rotary Foundation is a non-profit corporation that supports the efforts of Rotary International to achieve world understanding and peace through international humanitarian, educational, and cultural exchange programmes. It is supported solely by voluntary contributions from Rotarians and friends of the Foundation who share its vision of a better world.



MKU Nyeri Centre staff and students help clean up the town.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scalis Altitudines Educationis

Entrepreneurship

Double fortunes for 14 GEA beneficiaries

As 14 apprentices commissioned by Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) in April have found out, fortune favours the bold.

Family Bank, through its Chief Executive Officer, Dr David Thuku, offered to further mentor them for another year – for free.

Dr Thuku, the Chief Guest at the commissioning ceremony on 27 April 2017, announced that, the 14 apprentices would enjoy free membership in the bank's Business Club for a year. The club offers a networking forum for small and medium enterprises.

This additional mentoring is on top of the nurturing and handholding GEA has taken them through for a year – also for free.

These young graduates of MKU are reaping the fruits of daring to establish own businesses soon after graduating.

The entrepreneurial bug bit some like Huron Mobegi slightly earlier. He sold an innovative idea before proceeding to establish Skymobi Ltd, which develops mobile analytics solutions that help businesses see and understand their data.

"I sold my university final project to a car hire company," Mr Mobegi recalls. "It was a system for reducing loss of revenue and time taken in report preparation, and for security enhancements. There and then I discovered a business niche."

Mr Mobegi, a Bachelor of Business Information Technology graduate, adds that Skymobi has been growing rapidly. "I've enjoyed the entire process," he declares.

Japhet Mwendwa Naomi, the proprietor of Umoja Stores, describes entrepreneurship as requiring "passion, commitment and falling in great love with your business".

Ms Japhet started the business in 2012. She applied to GEA in 2014 and was called for an interview in 2016. She qualified, and together with his 13 colleagues, joined in April of the same year. They then underwent comprehensive training through boot camps.

Ms Japhet, a Bachelor of Special Needs Education degree holder, declares that he has "learnt a lot in GEA, especially on financial management and also good managerial skills on how to run my business."

Mr Dismas Kiplagat, the owner of



Jubilant Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) apprentices just commissioned by MKU take a selfie as an enduring reminder of their successful journey.

“**Strive for excellence and success will come knocking at your door.**”

Eldoret-based Quantum Analytics Limited, says: "I was referred by a former classmate (Mr Kevin Agala) to the GEA website. He knew the passion I had to own a company and the struggles that I was going through in the running of mine, at that time one year old."

Established in February 2015, Kiplagat's firm provides software solutions to both individuals as well as organisations. His clients include Joyful Women Organisation (JOYWO), Payconnect Limited and Premium Shuttle Sacco, among others.

Mr Kiplagat's advice: "With the high levels of unemployment, unlimited numbers of persons chase limited job vacancies. So, rather than being job seekers, why can't we, Mount Kenya University alumni, be the game changers and pave the path for other university graduates as job creators?"

He adds that what MKU is doing through GEA should be emulated by other universities so that the culture of graduates thinking that employment is the only way to go can be changed.

Mr Khan Lelei, the founder of Cruise International, concurs. He credits GEA with "guiding us towards realising our vision through networking with various stakeholders across our construction industry."

Mr Lelei is a holder of a Bachelors of Business Management (Entrepreneurship and Innovation Option) degree from MKU. He also graduated last December from the same institution with a Master of Science in Procurement Supplies degree.

Joseph Musembi's Benplast Investments commenced operations in October 2015. It deals in bottled water. The sole proprietorship has seven permanent employees and five casual workers.

Musembi studied for a BSc in Medical Laboratory Sciences at MKU.

On his part, James Mativo Nzyuko graduated from MKU with a Diploma in Banking and Finance. He later founded Mars Property Developers – a real estate company – in January 2015.

He saw a gap in properties search in

Kenya. "That spurred me to start my company," he says.

According to him, the lessons learnt at GEA will help him take his business to another level.

Mr Mativo would like to thank Prof Simon Gicharu for choosing to be an entrepreneur and establishing MKU, which brought GEA to life. "GEA has helped me to become who I am today," he says.

Jackson Onywera's Tunacare Health Services Providers, a registered health based company operating in Kiambu, offers a wide range of health care services. Currently, it has 10 employees.

His advice to students back at MKU: "Strive for excellence and success will come knocking at your door."

Mr Mobegi lauds GEA for bringing in "great mentors", whose advice he says he will put into practice. "I can't forget the Image Horizon Ms Ann Kiongo's advice that etiquette will fly you high if you wish to strike deals with big companies and government tenders."

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

When life gives you joblessness, create a job —Prof Waudo

Interventions against unemployment should promote entrepreneurial potential. And given their position in society, universities should facilitate and catalyse the spread of an entrepreneurial culture.

That is the view of Mount Kenya University (MKU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley Waudo. He said this during the commissioning of 14 Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) apprentices at the university's main campus in Thika on 27 April.

The VC observed that GEA was doing exactly that – facilitating and catalysing the creation of an entrepreneurial culture among graduates.

The initiative is also supported through MKU's partnership with Wadhvani Foundation and by the university's common unit on entrepreneurship.

The Academy recognises that youth unemployment is heading to crisis levels unless action is taken to show youths how to create decent jobs for themselves and other.

Stressing how deep unemployment was in Africa, Prof Waudo quoted former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo, who once said: "Everywhere we turn in Africa, the story is the same. Unemployed young people are in huge numbers."

The don also quoted from a statement in a 2012 UNESCO report, especially



MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudo addresses May intake students during orientation.

the part that read: "One young person in eight across the world is looking for work. Young populations are large and growing. The well-being and prosperity of young people depend more than ever on the skills that education and training can provide."

Prof Waudo joked that because people handed lemons in life are advised to make lemonade, "when life gives you unemployment, create employment".

However, the VC acknowledged that employment creation was not as easy as making lemonade.

Creating jobs, he said, required

knowledge, skills, creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, commitment and making of choices.

The VC appreciated the role of the GEA trainers as well as sponsors, such as Family Bank and Stima Sacco, in the implementation of the GEA's mission and objectives.

Prof Waudo congratulated the 14 apprentices for having successfully completed the training, and urged them to take advantage of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, Women Enterprise Development Fund and Uwezo Fund which all support enterprises.

We've got no choice but to jointly deal youth unemployment a heavy blow—Prof Serem

To build more stable, prosperous societies, Africa must empower its young people. Leaving large numbers of unemployed or underemployed youth idle is a recipe for social unrest.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) Council Chairman Prof David K. Serem expressed these sentiments during the colourful commissioning of the second cohort of the MKU Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) apprentices at the main campus in Thika on 27 April.

"An empowered youth will get more opportunities for self-employment as well as becoming more employable to offer their services," he stressed.

Decrying the unacceptably high level of unemployment among graduates in Kenya, Prof Serem called on the government, the academia, the private sector and civil society to collaborate and deal unemployment a blow by empowering young people.

Kenya, noted Prof Serem, has a largely youthful population, with 80 per cent comprising people aged 35 or below.

He reminded his audience that while a 2016 Commission for University Education (CUE) report showed that more than 120,000 persons graduated from Kenyan universities between 2012 and 2015, the country had no guaranteed employment for these



Sicily Kariuki, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs joins MKU graduates who are ready for employment, job and wealth creation during a recent graduation

graduates.

Through GEA, Mount Kenya University inculcates skills and knowledge on innovation and entrepreneurship. It equips students with a set of skills that enable them to identify viable business ideas. It provides them with a practical approach to entrepreneurship.

Prof Serem congratulated Prof Simon Gicharu for establishing GEA. He also lauded all those serving at GEA for a job well done.

He appreciated the various partners, especially Family Bank, for walking

along with the University "on this unique and successful journey".

Prof Serem congratulated the 14 beneficiaries of the GEA programme, all of them MKU alumni. He applauded them for having chosen the university, which has mentored them for free after they graduated.

"Every achievement comes with a responsibility. I advise you all to strive to be the best that you can be in business," Prof Serem told the GEA beneficiaries.

GEA doing well to change views on employment, says bank CEO



Dr David Thuku, Family Bank chief executive officer and chief guest during the commissioning of the second cohort of GEA apprentices.

The days of educated young people graduating into white collar jobs are long gone. Arming young people with job creation and leadership skills as well as preparing them for life-long learning are a necessity in today's world.

So argues Family Bank managing director and chief executive Dr David Thuku, who asserts that "these are the qualities that will positively impact our communities, our country and the world at large".

Dr Thuku was the chief guest at the commissioning of the second cohort of Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) at the institution's main campus in Thika. The event was held on 27 April.

"I'm greatly encouraged to note that the knowledge and skills they acquired are being put to some good use in the different business ventures they chose to pursue," he said of the GEA beneficiaries.

He noted that GEA was created to nurture graduates who have set up business ventures and require the skills and networks necessary to weather the initial, usually stormy, stages of business.

Dr Thuku said he was most impressed with the progress the Academy had made in the past two years, adding that he believed it was on course to redefining the societal narrative around employment.

"This great programme produces graduates who go

out to create employment," he stressed.

Dr Thuku praised lecturers for having done their utmost to help the apprentices by instructing, encouraging and motivating them. He also had a kind word for parents for having provided enabling environments at home to the budding entrepreneurs, in addition to material and moral support.

Dr Thuku had had the opportunity to mentor the first cohort of the apprentices when they were admitted in 2014. He even participated at their graduation. He is thus well acquainted with GEA.

"The Academy has prepared you not just on the academic front, but also to play your part in helping communities improve their quality of life. This is a quality that you must build on," he reminded the 14 apprentices.

The Family Bank CEO urged the young people to acquire the right attitude and choose role models who are morally upright and individuals whose claim to fame is hard work and genuine pursuit for success in the areas of business, governance and leadership.

"This country needs your positive input and hence you must at every stage of your life play your part in positively impacting humanity through your words and deeds," said Dr Thuku, a long-time friend of MKU.

Women in Science

At the forefront of drive to train more women scientists

Mount Kenya University (MKU) is a leading higher education institution with a strong bias for science programmes. Now, through partnerships with global institutions, it is strengthening the training of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). **DR NANCY CHESETO**, a lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology, is a beneficiary of mentorship by TechWomen, an initiative of the United States' Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. In this interview, she highlights a visit by a TechWomen delegation to the university in February and argues why Africa needs to train more women scientists.

Q: Please introduce yourself and explain what you do at Mount Kenya University.

Dr Cheseto: I am Dr. Nancy Cheseto, a lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology. I am a PhD holder in Educational Psychology from Kenyatta University, and received post-doctorate training in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from Entrepreneur Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad. I am also trained in Intellectual Property Protection from South Africa and the United States of America (USA).

The TechWomen programme under which I trained in the USA is an initiative of the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

I have also attended and presented papers in numerous international conferences including in Israel, Geneva, Switzerland, USA, India, South Africa, Ghana, and Somaliland among other countries.

Q. How did you come to be selected for the US TechWomen programme?

Dr Cheseto: The selection was very competitive. My expertise in Innovation and Intellectual Property Protection was key. My knowledge in psychology came in handy on issues of social innovation. I also had a very strong point on Community Service, which USA values a lot. I am also a widely published scholar. This is a Global Award, and I got to visit the White House and the US State Department to make presentations.

I also visited Global Tech Giants, including, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, among others.

Q. What did the programme entail?

Dr Cheseto: TechWomen empowers, connects and supports the next generation of women leaders in science,



Mount Kenya University staff receive a certificate from the United States' TechWomen in recognition of their support towards the American group's trip to Kenya.



Dr Nancy Cheseto, Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology

technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) from Africa, Central and South Asia and the Middle East by providing them the access and opportunity needed to advance their careers, pursue their dreams, and inspire women and girls in their communities.

The foundation of the TechWomen programme is the four-week professional mentorship at a company, organisation or institution in the San Francisco Bay Area or Silicon Valley. During the mentorship, strong bonds are formed that inspire a rich exchange of ideas and expertise. Prior to arriving in the United States, each Emerging Leader and her Professional Mentor design a collaborative project based on the Emerging Leader's professional goals. Four days per week, for four weeks, the Emerging Leader and Mentor work together on the project at the Mentor's company. Projects vary depending on each Emerging Leader's areas of expertise and interests,

as well as on the needs of the host company.

Q. What did you learn from the programme? Did it help make you a better professional?

Dr Cheseto: I was based at Juniper Networks, a large USA company. I was in the Legal Department. I was mentored on Intellectual Property Protection by Meredith McKenzie, a world renowned expert on Intellectual Property Protection.

Q. How are you using the knowledge you gained from the programme?

Dr Cheseto: I am using the knowledge by sensitising fellow MKU staff on various intellectual property issues, especially pertaining to academic research and publications. I also advise young innovators on how to protect their innovations.

Q. How much of a positive impact did the programme have on you?

Dr Cheseto: As a complement to the professional development programme, each participant has the opportunity to get to know Cultural Mentors to ease the transition of working and living in a new country and explore the Bay Area together. Cultural Mentors serve as ambassadors and expose participants to local attractions, special events, community service opportunities and cultural experiences.

This also gave me an opportunity to showcase Kenyan Culture.

Most importantly, the programme emphasised the value of giving back to community. We have to improve the lives of people around us. Community Service is a key pillar of MKU.

Q. Do you believe it is necessary to

encourage African women to take up STEM courses?

Dr Cheseto: The disparity between African men and women who are taking up STEM courses is huge. More women need to take up STEM courses to bridge this gap. This is good for development in the continent.

Q. Do you have evidence that having more African women in STEM will positively influence development in the continent? How?

Dr Cheseto: Through mentorship and exchange, TechWomen strengthens professional capacity, increases mutual understanding between key networks of professionals, and expands girls' interest in STEM careers by exposing them to female role models. This will lower the need for African countries to hire expatriates to do jobs that can be done by Africans. This will definitely affect the GDP.

Q. How well has MKU performed in encouraging women to participate in STEM fields?

Dr Cheseto: MKU is doing well. We have several STEM female lecturers who are role models to the girls. The top most female administrator, deputy vice-chancellor academic and research affairs (DVC ARA), Dr Bibianne Wai-ganjo, is also a STEM professional and therefore leads by example and strongly supports STEM academic initiatives in the University. Our Chancellor, Prof. Victoria Wulsin, is also in STEM.

Q. Any other comment?

Dr Cheseto: MKU was privileged to have been selected from the many Kenyan universities and visited by a high powered delegation of over 15 ladies from the USA and other African countries visited MKU on 8th February 2017 under the banner of TechWomen. The delegation only visited two universities in Kenya: MKU and USIU.

MKU has already established professional networks with these mentors. The high powered delegation held meetings with women faculty at MKU who are in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). They met with the Vice Chancellor and mentored close to 800 female students enrolled in STEM areas of study.

Some, especially those in software engineering, have already expressed interest in coming to MKU for a short exchange programme.

The delegation donated several STEM books and flash disks to MKU.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Why teachers studying at MKU will learn more

Mount Kenya University (MKU) has revamped its school-based learning programme for teachers and transformed it into a blended mode of delivery. The new approach combines institution-based study with distance learning, offering students more contact hours. It is known as "Distance and Institution-Based Learning (DIBL)".

Using face-to-face delivery during school holidays (April, August and December) augmented with online learning in between, the university exceeds the student-lecturer contact hours recommended by the Commission for University Education (CUE).

Dr Bibianne Waiganjo-Aidi, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academic and Research Affairs (ARA), says modern technology has made a huge difference at the university.

The students – usually teachers – attend residential classes when schools are on holidays. When they return to their places of work, they are supported through the online platform, explains Dr Waiganjo-Aidi.

She says: "For the Bachelor degree programme, the CUE recommended contact hours of 1,680. We at MKU manage 2,016 hours. This surpasses the minimum standards."

CUE inspected MKU's school-based



Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Secretary General Mr. Wilson Sossion addresses Distance and Institution-based Learning (DIBL) students during an induction session at the MKU main campus in Thika.

mode and gave the university recommendations, which Dr Waiganjo-Aidi confirms were implemented. The mode meets the Fourth Schedule of CUE standards for Open, Distance and E-Learning.

The schedule states in part that, "The delivery modes may include traditional distance education by correspondence courses, online provision and interactive

CD ROMs, e-learning and blended learning to open learning centres, and face-to-face provision where a significant element of flexibility, self-study and learning support is an integral part."

One of the principles of the Universities Standards and Guidelines 2014 demands that "staff responsible for delivering ODEL curricula and evaluating the

Using face-to-face delivery during school holidays (April, August and December) augmented with online learning in between, the university exceeds the student-lecturer contact hours recommended by the Commission for University Education



Dr. Bibianne Waiganjo, Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic and Research Affairs

students' success in achieving the ODEL learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported".

Dr Waiganjo-Aidi says that between 5 and 10 April, the University trained DIBL staff in all campuses on the new blended mode so that they serve students well.

Lecturers from Nairobi, Nkubu, Nyeri and Thika campuses were trained at the main campus in Thika. Those from the Nakuru and Kericho campuses were trained in Nakuru. Eldoret and Kitale-based lecturers were trained in Eldoret. Kisumu campus hosted its own, plus lecturers from Kakamega, Kisii and Kabarnet campuses. The Mombasa Campus hosted lecturers from the Malindi Campus.

One of the standards requires a university to "ensure availability and adequacy of technical and ICT infrastructure, and appropriate technical support staff for the infrastructure".

Distance and Institution-Based Learning for teachers

Mount Kenya University (MKU) recognises the need to provide quality and affordable education to all in need.

In this regard, the university offers education through various modes of training that best fit the convenience of learners. Among them is the Distance and Institution-Based Learning, popular in its abbreviated form – DIBL.

DIBL is a flexible mode of learning that uniquely combines distance study with classroom lectures.

Based at the School of Education, it is designed to train teachers who can teach effectively and efficiently; conduct educational research; apply practical approaches in classroom teaching; implement relevant emerging educational and community issues; manage learning institutions

effectively; and develop their learners' abilities to think critically and creatively in solving problems.

The Directorate of Distance and Institution Based Learning, which coordinates DIBL, was formerly known as Directorate of School Based Education Programmes (SBEP). This was the directorate that catered to students (teachers) who were only available to learn during school holidays.

After rebranding following a market survey and also to be in line with Commission for University Education (CUE) regulations on minimum contact hour regulations, SBEP rebranded to DIBL, introducing a component of digital student-teacher contact into the holiday face-to-face interaction.

Hence, lecturers not only conduct

lecture sessions at the university during school holidays, but also have web-based interaction with learners via the SAKAI platform installed by the University to cater for the distance component.

Thus, distance (web-based) and institution-based (face-to-face lecturer design) learning is made possible.

"As you come to Mount Kenya University, and if you choose the Distance and Institution Based Learning (DIBL), I want to assure you that the degree course you will undertake under this mode will be as good as the degree course taken through the regular mode," says DIBL Director, Kariuki Nderitu.

The Directorate aims "to be a role model of excellence in the provision of distance and institution-based learning".



Distance and Institution-Based Learning students engaging in discussion at the MKU study villas.

Alumni

MKU graduate flies talent high in foreign land

A few months ago, Ms. Audrey Ashiali Oduor, a Mount Kenya University (MKU) alumnus, was appointed a judge in a voices competition at Arabian Pearl Gulf School in Bahrain. The competition focused on speech presentation, drama monologues and choral verses.

Audrey, 26, a teacher at Arabian Pearl Gulf School is a holder of a Bachelor of Education, Arts (English and Literature) degree from MKU (2014). But she is also talented in creative arts, film and theatre. That is how she was selected to judge the school's voices competition.

Before she got the opportunity to teach in Bahrain, Audrey taught at Aga Khan Academy Senior School, Nairobi.

With talent and passion in drama, she was popular at MKU Thika where she studied, as she would perform in various activities during student orientation sessions to welcome 'freshers'.

"I recall my close allies then: Mr Stephen Opana, Mr. Vincent Muli (who later served as Minister for Entertainment in 2016 MKU Students Governing Council) and Winnie Dwalloh, among others. We used to prepare different skits within a couple of minutes," she reminisces.

While at MKU, Audrey acted in two plays, representing the University to national level. This was in 2012 and 2013. The plays were titled, "The Dossier" and "The Snare". They were scripted and directed by Mr William Luta Opana,



Audrey Ashiali Oduor

an MKU alumnus of the 2009 class and now a staff member at the University's Institute of Film and Creative Arts.

Audrey scooped two awards: Best Actress in Aberdare region, and the most promising actress nationally at the 2013 national festival.

While on attachment at Chania Boys Thika, she participated in music festivals and went all the way to national level. That was in August 2014.

She has also scripted and acted in films, among them "Life Blood MKU", directed by Mr Ngahu, and "My heart will go on" by Mr Antony Njagi. She is



the second assistant director in a drama series, "Co-wives", which is yet to be released. The series is by Purpose Media Services.

"What drives me is the urge to be somebody. I am a go-getter and I strive to achieve my targets... My mum has been my great source of inspiration. She encourages me a lot," Audrey says.

She adds: "I am always proud of my university, MKU, for nurturing me and giving me the platform to showcase my talent. I chose MKU after I researched and found it to be a serious university that nurtures students' talents."

Rwanda MKU alumnus and community service award winner visits Kenya, offers internship

Meet Mr. Ruzindania Egide, an alumnus from Kigali Campus. Upon his graduation, he established a children's home in February 2016. He was thereafter listed as the best awardee for community transformation, during a dinner sponsored by Prof. Simon Gicharu, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mount Kenya University.



Ruzindania Egide

Mr. Egide supports over 26 children at the home, which in January 2016, he relocated to a new four-acre space. He has a football team for youth too, and also runs a mentoring and coaching network.

His visit was a fulfilment of the award.

He visited Macheo Children's Home, Ark Children's Home, Kiganjo Estate Thika and By Grace Children's Home in Ngong.

He was accompanied by Mr. Patrice Baraka, the Alumni Officer at Mount Kenya University, Rwanda, as

well as the Alumni Relations Officer Mr. Afubwa Musumi and Fourth Year student Ms. Naomi Kirigo, who secured her attachment at Macheo Children's Home.

Mr. Egide has offered internship to Kenyan students/graduands of development studies and social administration, in Kigali.

This was a great milestone, and the Alumni Office looks forward to more achievements through partnerships.

Meet Gibson Kimani, an entrepreneur made at MKU

Mr Gibson Kimani graduated from Mount Kenya University (MKU) in 2014 with Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management. He has worked with various star-rated hotels in management levels. Today, he runs his own business and has employed 14 other people.

Gibson is the founder and director of Gibsons Africa Limited, a company that offers events management and catering services (for graduations, weddings and corporate events), and bakes cakes for all occasions.

According to the Dean, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Gibson knew what he wanted right from the start. He was very active in class and school catering events, and had a go-getter attitude. He was quite passionate about the course, and the outcome can now be seen.

Gibson adds that his talent in entrepreneurship was nurtured at MKU and the quality delivery of lessons by staff at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. "If it were not for them, I will not be here..." he declares.

Last year (2016), he applied to join



Gibson Kimani

the MKU Graduate Enterprise Academy that nurtures young start-ups. He was successful, and his cohort is scheduled to graduate soon.

He says the Graduate Enterprise Academy has built his business acumen very many miles ahead. To him, "MKU has the best choices for studying the course you need to transform yourself".

The lecturers are available, and there are massive facilities and services for students.



"I advise that graduates should never detach themselves from the University. I am always in touch with Graduands and Alumni Relations Office, and the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Thanks to Mr. Afubwa Musumi for the network," Gibson says.

He has created jobs for 15 people, himself being the first employee.

Gibson Africa Limited is on Mwiki-Kasarani Road, off Thika Road.

Networking alumni unveil investment group

What started as a WhatsApp network group in July 2016 is now an investment company. The final launching plans are in place.

The School of Hospitality and Tourism Alumni came together via a WhatsApp group administered by the Alumni Officer Mr Afubwa Musumi and the Dean of the School of Hospitality, Travel and Tourism, Ms Jane Kanjuru.

Several meetings later after proposals to create a business venture, the Houstouri Investment Group was founded. It is now live.

The group will enable members to invest in land, hotel and tourism businesses.

Such is the kind of success associated with Mount Kenya University (MKU) School of Hospitality, Travel and Tourism, reflecting the passionate call by MKU founder Prof Simon Gicharu that the university's alumni must endeavour to be job creators.

We are ready to serve, freshly elected MKUSA leaders declare after induction

At 22, Abdi Ahmed Ismail, the MKUSA secretary general, is no doubt youthful. He says, however, that in the last few months, he has matured in leadership.

Since being elected to this position and after undergoing an intensive induction programme, he feels confident that he has made huge steps in leadership.

"My leadership skills have been sharpened," he declares. "MKU has developed me as a leader – not just of fellow students. These are skills I will use in life after graduation. I have learnt how to cooperate with people from all walks of life."

Abdi says that as a student leader, his focus is on how to improve student welfare by addressing any challenges students may face. "We escalate these issues to the university administration and it becomes easy to address them. As MKUSA officials, we are conversant with the challenges fellow students in the university face."

His counterpart, Ahmed Abdirissack, 24, adds: "Leadership is not about the individual. It is a collective responsibility. You cannot do it alone. You grow through advice. For example, since our induction, we have met several people who have given us excellent advice."

Ahmed is the MKUSA finance minister. He too admits the induction impacted him positively. "I learned that you can have leadership potential but not know how to deliver. I gained skills on how to talk with people."

He adds: "Leadership is a bridge between the university administration and students. Fellow students should know that we are not at another level above them. We are their bridge to the MKU management. They should also know that our job is not to fight the administration but to help solve their problems."

Ahmed has pledged to keep learning. "Hopefully, I will continue growing as a leader," he concludes.

MKUSA President Martin Owilah says he is appreciative of the team he has. "We have grown from strength to strength, learning new things and ways of managing."

He echoes his cabinet members, saying induction has really helped them. "I must say thanks to our university, the associate dean and dean of students for that platform," he stresses.

"The invited guest, Mr Peter Quest, was so great in teaching and guiding us on the skills and leadership values of today's generation and world," Martin recalls.

He emphasises that they left the induction as individuals full of



Martin Owilah
President



Purity Kimwe
Vice-President



Abdi Ahmed
Secretary General



Tally Musee - Health and Entertainment minister



Patrick Ngugi - social Welfare and Entertainment minister.



Julius Kaleli
Sports minister



Mahbub Abdi
External Affairs minister



Ahmed Abdirissack
Finance minister



Abel Ombaso
Academic Affairs Minister

knowledge and potential to exercise and execute their roles and responsibilities in an objective manner. This, he adds, is because they were taken through the details of what their dockets entailed.

He says it has been smooth running for the MKUSA governing council.

"The reason we have enjoyed peace and things have moved well all through the first semester this year is because ministers have been doing things objectively and not clashing with each other's roles, hence uniting ourselves to serve our MKU comrades."

Martin suggests that student leaders should also be taken through financial management training to improve how they handle funds.

MKUSA vice-president Purity Kimwe says: "As I was contesting, my goal and objective was to serve the entire Mount Kenya University fraternity through upholding the constitution and ensuring that it is followed to the letter. I have interest to see special needs students included in our leadership by creation of their docket. I intend to empower ladies through mentorship programmes from successful women in the country."

"To Mount Kenya University fraternity, I am extremely thankful for such an opportunity. I am looking forward to leave it better than I found it. I am looking forward to making the cabinet strong. It will leave a mark in the university and so shall the office of the vice-president."

Owilah and team take the mantle at MKUSA

During the heady election campaign days, prospective Mount Kenya University Students Association (MKUSA) officials laboured to convince voters to elect them.

Then, when the successful ones were handed the mantle to lead the student body for the next one year, they erupted in ecstasy. They hugged and jumped up in joy. They could not believe that, indeed, they had ascended to the positions of leadership.

Inauguration

Then came the inauguration day. It was a day of entertainment and sheer fun spiced up with speeches. On an afternoon of extended fun and celebration, the new officials of MKUSA were sworn in.

The MKUSA elections were successfully held on 3 February across all MKU campuses and the new council inaugurated a week later.

The new students' governing council represents the face of Kenya.

National rugby star Martin Owilah took over the presidency from Charles Karondo.

Owilah is deputised by the youthful Purity Kimwe, 19. Abdi Ahmed Ismail is the secretary general, while Abel Kengere is the new academic affairs official. Ahmed Abdirissack is in charge of finance and Julius Kaleli will oversee the sports docket. Mahbub Abdi Dagane will handle external affairs.

Tally Musee, who was unopposed, is responsible for the health and accommodation portfolio, while Patrick Ngugi takes the entertainment and social welfare docket.

Induction

The new student leaders were taken through a series of induction events from 27 February to 4 April. They went through leadership training at various campuses from 7 to 11 March.

MKU Dean of Students, Mr Evans Omwango, explained that his office had organised the training because student leaders were part and parcel of the university governance structure. They participate in university management and should therefore be well prepared to execute their role at the institution.

The induction forums were held in Nakuru and Nyeri. External professional facilitators and former student leaders trained the MKUSA officials on leadership and apprised them of the kinds of challenges and opportunities they will be expected to respond to.

The forums introduced MKUSA leaders to the structure and operations of the University in whose management they will participate, said the dean.

The new leaders bonded, learnt leadership skills and developed annual work plans for their campuses.

The topics covered at the induction forums included MKU history and governance system, communication channels and students welfare management systems. Others were university student leadership challenges and opportunities, team building, student leadership in the 21st century, and challenges and opportunities at the campus.

Within a few weeks, the MKUSA officials had grown in stature.

MKU-Makerere University Partnership

Prof Gicharu delivers enchanting talk to inspire Makerere students into business ownership

The 2017 graduating class of Makerere University Business School (MUBS) can count themselves a lucky lot. They were treated to rare and delightful entrepreneurship nuggets on their graduation day in May.

This is thanks to Mount Kenya University (MKU) founder, Prof Simon Gicharu.

Attending the event as a chief guest, Prof Gicharu delivered a captivating keynote address that conveyed business tips, which he enriched with educative anecdotes from personal experiences.

The talk, delivered in brilliantly woven stories, was deliberately aimed at inspiring his key audience – the graduating students – to develop a winning entrepreneurial attitude.

His speech dwelt largely on four critical attributes that he urged the graduating students to internalise if they were to become successful entrepreneurs. He pegged them on real lessons he had picked along his 22-year-long entrepreneurial journey.

Identifying opportunities

A fundamental business attribute, he advised, was to learn to be quick at identifying opportunities. "Look keenly around you and you will realise that business opportunities abound. Human need for products and services that address unique needs is almost limitless," he told the graduands.

To drive the point home, he narrated how in his school days, he successfully identified opportunity that led to him host a makeshift but profitable weekly discotheque, and another through which he made money selling bread to fellow students.

Quoting Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, Prof Gicharu said: "Opportunity is missed by most people because it comes dressed in overalls looking like hard work." In this, he was advising the Makerere Business School graduands not to fear rolling up their sleeves to get down to work after sniffing a business chance.

The road less travelled

Prof Gicharu narrated how he blended this attribute with a decision to stick to the road less travelled. This, he

explained, enabled him to constantly stay ahead of the pack by venturing into areas that few dared to.

For example, when the computer college he started in Thika town faced mounting competition, Gicharu spotted an opportunity in science training, by then delivered only in few public institutions.

The plan succeeded and his became the first private college to be accredited to offer diploma programmes in pharmacy, clinical medicine and medical laboratory – a rare feat.

"I have learnt over time that if you want to make a difference in your business and your life, you must always take the road less travelled.... This has been the secret of success for Mount Kenya University. We do things differently. It is a culture that has evolved since our days as a small commercial college in the late 1990s," said Prof Gicharu.

Information and networking

The MKU founder further told the MUBS graduands to learn to network broadly and to continuously seek knowledge.

"I personally have a goal of reading more than 25 books per year.... I also attend as many meetings, seminars and conferences on higher education as I can. To increase your knowledge and boost your networks, you too must do the same. Concentrate on what will help your business to grow," he advised.

Humility

Prof Gicharu added that if there was one other important quality for success as an entrepreneur, it was humility. It will "endear you to your customers and employees," he said. "It will enable you to assess yourself with honesty. It will teach you that you may be the leader but that doesn't mean you have all the answers. I personally view my employees, not as subjects but as colleagues," he added.

It was because of humility, he added, that his business evolved from a college running on a miniscule budget to an international business with assets worth billions of shillings.



From right to left: Chairman, Makerere University Business School (MUBS) Council and former Presidential Candidate 2017 Prof Venacious Baryamureeba, MUBS Principal Prof Wasswa Balunywa, Mount Kenya University Founder and Chairman Prof Simon Gicharu and the Deputy Principle MUBS. Prof Gicharu delivered a captivating Commencement Speech to the MUBS 2017 graduating class.

Mount Kenya and Makerere to mount joint MBA course

Mount Kenya and Makerere universities are set to launch an Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme in September 2017.

This follows a collaboration of the schools of business of both universities, which developed a "best practice" curriculum and had it approved by the Mount Kenya University (MKU) Senate.

Classical Master of Business Administration (MBA) programmes are based on theory, supplemented with pre-written case studies. For both Mount Kenya University School of Business and Economics (MKU-SBE) and Makerere University Business School (MUBS), such a learning model is no longer sufficient in a globalised world.

Business leaders are increasingly expected to act proactively to initiate growth, expand business regionally and internationally, and create sustainable job opportunities.

The unique programme is therefore a response to the changing needs of Kenyan and East African businesses, as well as of organisations operating locally, regionally or internationally. It identifies an emerging need to equip mid to top career professionals with problem solving methodologies and practical tools to help them diagnose complex business situations in the right context, and act pro-actively.

The MKU-Makerere EMBA is highly interactive. It

uses a practical group-based "live" problem solving approach. It aims at transforming executives into innovative business leaders who are competent enough to actualise the potentials of the business organisations and the people they lead. Specifically, the course will equip participants with tools and concepts within a holistic perspective to understand business organisations and how they can be developed in an international context.

The programme is offered in a small interactive class of not more than 30 participants, carefully composed to stimulate peer learning. It is designed to promote personal leadership development and experiential learning through solving real problems in companies and organisations.

The schedule is convenient and flexible to suit busy executives. The course runs part-time as weekend classes on a fortnightly basis in a serene and convenient location within Nairobi. It is delivered by local and foreign faculty, and employs international quality standards.

The programme is uniquely designed for business professionals. It consists of three modules. Participants graduate after each module (Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and MBA Degree).

The programme takes a total of 14 months to complete.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Plenty of praise for MKU at universities exhibitions

Mount Kenya University (MKU) got high level recognition at the 15th edition of the Exhibition by Kenyan Universities, hosted at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Nairobi.

The annual event this time ran from 27 February to 2 March 2017 under the theme, "Positioning Universities in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer in the Digital Era".

It is organised by the Commission for University Education (CUE) to provide a platform for higher learning institutions to showcase their academic programmes and innovations to stakeholders and the public.

MKU's desks manned by teams from the Marketing Directorate, the School of Nursing and the Department of Engineering received many guests and caught the attention of the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, and CUE chairman, Prof. Chacha Nyaigoti Chacha, among other dignitaries.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

The School of Nursing team comprising students and led by their Research Coordinator/ Clinical Instructor, Mr. Mbugua Samuel, did a wonderful job in attending to the approximately 500 people who visited the health awareness clinic.

Some of the services rendered included checking of blood pressure, temperature, blood glucose level, height, weight, body fat, muscle mass, bone mass, BMI, visceral fat and body water, all of which gave visitors an interpretation of their nutritional status, physical activity and other relevant health parameters.

The clients were very happy with the services offered and advice given without a charge.

CUE Chairman Prof. Chacha Nyaigoti Chacha took note of the team's good work and later applauded them at the event closing ceremony.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

The team from the Engineering Depart-



Education Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i visits the MKU stand.

ment, made up of students and led by Mr. Peter Maina Mithamo showcased various innovations. These included:

- The solar dehydrators used to dehydrate perishables or green produce;
- Navigation device for the blind, which is a tool used to aid the blind in movement and detection of obstacles;
- Alcohol interlock device that is used to disconnect engines or machinery used when a person has consumed alcohol beyond the required limit; and
- Etching tool kit, an electronic system used in engineering design.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, was impressed with the innovations when he visited the MKU stand during the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

MARKETING DIRECTORATE

The team led by the Marketing Director, Mr. Murigi Boniface, ensured that those who visited the stand left knowledgeable of the university's programmes. The team interacted well with clients and distributed publications, including the university prospectus, career booklets, newsletters and calendars.

The Kenya University and Colleges Placement Service recognised MKU for topping the list of private universities that were popular with form four leavers applying to join under the government sponsored scheme.

Dr. Matiang'i was also impressed with MKU publications and seemed specially attracted to the career booklet, which the marketing team informed him was distributed in thousands of copies for free to high schools around the country.



From left: Dr. Dinar Mwinzi Principal Secretary, State Department for Vocational and Technical Training, together with Mr. Sammy Itemere, Principal Secretary, Broadcasting and Telecommunication join MKU innovators during the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) Exhibition held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) on 26 May



Solar Dehydrator one of the innovation by MKU staff

You can now take maritime studies at MKU

Mount Kenya University (MKU) has been authorised to offer maritime and transport logistics courses.

In March, the Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA), the industry regulator, gave MKU the green light to mount certificate and diploma programmes after reviewing the university's facilities and resources.

Classes begin in May. The university will start with 60 students in both the certificate and diploma programmes, and will use the curricula developed by KMA.

Dr Bibianne Waiganjo-Aidi, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academic and Research Affairs, says the university has raced to enhance

teaching facilities.

The KMA team visited Mombasa campus in February to inspect the facilities allocated for the programmes and submitted recommendations in its March report.

"The officials recommended what we needed to do to improve to meet the set standards," she explains. "We are recruiting more staff, buying more books and adding to already available teaching materials. The university is committed to meeting the KMA recommendations. We will have attained all the standards in the coming semesters."

"The audit report revealed that most of the requirements are in

place plus all the physical infrastructure for conducive learning," said Mrs Jane F. Otieno, KMA corporate secretary and head of legal services, in a letter to the university on behalf of Director General Cosmas Cherop.

She added that because MKU would be rolling out the curricula for the first time, the accreditation process will continue. "The implementation of the audit team's recommendations will be reviewed by the Authority in the subsequent monitoring and evaluation audits," she stated.

The KMA team advised that the university should subscribe to an

online portal as a platform for students to access international maritime/shipping/logistics learning materials.

The institution should hire additional qualified lecturers with both industry and academic experience in the maritime sector.

The institution should establish collaborations with industry players in the maritime sector to foster academic-industry linkage, KMA further advised. This will enhance the understanding of changes in the industry. It will improve the necessary networking of students and lecturers with industry players to enhance knowledge.

KMA further wants MKU to join professional maritime, shipping, logistics and oil and gas bodies to keep abreast of trends in these related sectors and collaborate with industry players. The university should also initiate continuous professional development of lecturers/teaching staff by sending them to international and local seminars and conferences.

MKU is additionally advised to build partnerships or collaborations with local and international universities and colleges offering maritime courses. This will create opportunities for programme exchange for the benefit of students and lecturers.

Staff and Student Exchange

Two Mount Kenya University (MKU) members of staff visited the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) in April and returned home with a bagful of ideas for more areas of collaboration.

Dr Claude Rusibana, Head of Business and Economics at MKU Rwanda, and Dr Peter G. Kirira, Deputy Director, Research, Grants and Endowment Directorate at MKU, participated in several activities during the week-long visit.

They presented two papers at the Second Annual Conference of the Centre for African Research on Enterprise and Economic Development (CAREED).

The two-day conference was organised by Prof John Struthers, the Director of CAREED and MKU Rwanda Chancellor-Designate. It drew participants from Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, South Africa, Malawi, Ethiopia, Egypt and Algeria.

Dr Kirira presented a paper titled, "Sustainability of a Donor Funded Intervention Through a Women Self-Help Group Enterprise: Steps Towards Moving Beyond Aid Dependence". His presentation discussed the results of a collaboration between MKU and Partners for Care (PFC).

Dr Kirira also presented a paper on behalf of Prof Peter Wanderi on the topic "Making of Entrepreneurs in Africa: The Case of Mount Kenya University's Graduate Enterprise Academy". The papers discussed the role of the Academy in supporting budding entrepreneurs.

Dr Rusibana participated as a panelist in "The Africa Round Table Debate". Various issues about African commodity trade and business development were discussed.

At the end of the conference, MKU Rwanda was invited to consider hosting the Fifth International Conference on Information Technology and Economic Development (ICITED).

The conference, to be jointly organised with the University of the West of Scotland, will be held in October 2018 under the theme, "Information Technology for Modern Economy".

A final decision on the hosting of ICITED2018 will be communicated after consultations with Mount Kenya University management.

Dr Rusibana and Dr Kirira also visited Ayr, Paisley and Hamilton campuses of UWS and witnessed a number of initiatives that Mount Kenya University could borrow from. They also took note of additional opportunities for collaboration.

Staff and Students Exchange

While there are many areas that staff and students from the two universities can benefit from through exchange, the following are specifically highlighted because of the existing resources.

Students and staff from MKU Department of Journalism and Mass Communication would gain from a visit to UWS Ayr Campus, especially those in film production. This is because of the film making infrastructure available at

MKU staff's eye-opening visit to University of West of Scotland



Delegates at the Second Annual Conference of the Centre for African Research on Enterprise and Economic Development (CAREED) held in Scotland. Dr Claude Rusibana, Head of Business and Economics at MKU Rwanda, and Dr Peter G. Kirira, Deputy Director Research, Grants and Endowment Directorate at MKU, presented papers at the conference

the campus.

An exchange could involve students and staff from UWS coming to Kenya or Rwanda to shoot wildlife films with their MKU counterparts. They would then travel back to UWS with MKU peers to jointly do editing and production.

Joint Resource Mobilisation

Other than research grants, the MKU dons were informed of other available funding opportunities in Scotland that should be pursued. A small team with staff drawn from UWS, MKU and Heart for the City should be formed to mobilise resources. The team can be directed by Prof Struthers (UWS) and Dr Kirira (MKU), and its mandate should be to mobilise resources for student and staff scholarships, endowment fund, community outreach activities, infrastructure development and research.

Academic Writing Retreats

The tour revealed that the quality of proposals and publications from the University of the West of Scotland were largely a result of writing retreats organised by the university's Hamilton Campus.

The campus runs residential academic writing retreats for postgraduate students and their supervisors. These are organised on the understanding that writing good proposals and papers requires training, mentorship and practice. Postgraduate

The campus runs residential academic writing retreats for postgraduate students and their supervisors. These are organised on the understanding that writing good proposals and papers requires training, mentorship and practice.

students pay a fee to attend the intensive three-day retreats. The retreats help improve the quality of proposals; create a community of practice where research students support each other; and enable students to understand the expectations and frustrations of their supervisors, and vice-versa.

MKU can benchmark and learn from this by inviting UWS Hamilton Campus staff to host an academic writing retreat in Kenya.

The two MKU staff members further propose that MKU School of Postgraduate Studies as well as the Directorate of Research, Grants and Endowment work jointly towards implementing similar retreats.

Collaboration on Projects

UWS has a working relationship with Oxfam, which has a keen interest in research and policy that help to fight poverty and promote sustainability.

The Government of Kenya has initiated a process that will lead to the closure of one of the biggest refugee camps in the world. The development of joint projects on the refugee dilemma is an area of mutual interest. It was therefore agreed that MKU School of Social Sciences/Institute of Security Studies, Justice and Ethics and UWS School of Media, Culture and Society, would pursue joint research and training to empower refugees during

and after repatriation. It is expected that Oxfam-Kenya will support these projects, given the organisation's strong institutional linkage with UWS.

Grant Writing

Paisley and Hamilton campuses organised two sessions on grant writing. One session involved the sharing of experiences by two UWS staff in sourcing for grants from the European Commission, National Research Commission and from the Scottish and UK governments. The other was a presentation on writing skills for a good grant application.

The following lessons were drawn:

- Internal review (peer review) of each grant is important in quality control to ensure that every bid is fundable.
- It helps to read other funded grants as a learning process.
- It is important to study donors and their funding priorities.
- Seed funding to collect preliminary data will increase chances of being funded.
- It is important to form an interdisciplinary team for each grant application.
- It is necessary to show evidence of involvement of and consultation with the 'affected community'.
- Evidence of dissemination and impact strategy is useful.

Higher education and public good: How MKU is adding to society's wellbeing

The objectives of institutions of higher learning must be intricately intertwined with the greater good of society.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) founder and board Chairman Prof Simon Gicharu, argues that intellectuals must descend from university ivory towers and roll up their sleeves to be of service to the common man. "They must produce solutions to everyday challenges and provide answers to the questions regarding development of nations."

Prof Gicharu made these remarks at a workshop on "Higher Education and the Public Good", hosted at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 23 May.

His presentation was titled, "Higher Education in Africa for the Public Good: The Kenyan Case with Special Reference to Mount Kenya University".

In much of Africa, he pointed out, the contribution of higher learning institutions to public good was well cut out in view of the "numerous pressing woes" the continent faced.

He named these as poverty and conflicts motivated by narrow interests such as regionalism, tribalism and clannism.

"Our focus then should be on how higher learning can be harnessed to churn out solutions to these myriad challenges and hence promote the public good," he stressed.

While universities generate and disseminate knowledge, said Prof Gicharu, these became most useful when applied in the development of required products and services, or in redressing broad social, economic and political challenges facing society.

Talking about Kenya, Prof Gicharu said higher education had played a critical role in producing the much needed manpower to drive economic growth and unlock the country's vast potential, and in enabling millions to escape poverty.

"We have seen students shake off the chains of poverty only a few years after graduating from Mount Kenya University and indeed other institutions by applying the skills attained during training," he explained.

He went on to detail the significant roles that MKU had especially played in promoting public good in Kenya through unique initiatives.

Prof Gicharu spoke of the impact the university's Graduate Enterprise Academy was generating by instilling practical entrepreneurial skills in young graduates and empowering them to take off in business.

He detailed the steps MKU had taken to promote peace and national cohesion, including the hosting of an International Conference on Peace, Security and Social Enterprise in May this year.

The conference resulted in the launch of an initiative called Africa Consortium



A Mount Kenya University School of Public Health officer attends to a member of the public who turned up for a free medical checkup at MKU Nakuru Campus. The university is at the forefront of supporting national efforts to control non-communicable diseases through screening and awareness. Medical camps are part of the university's community service.

Our focus then should be on how higher learning can be harnessed to churn out solutions to these myriad challenges and hence promote the public good,

for Peace (AC4P) – a platform to enable universities and organisations interested in peace and social enterprise to work together.

Prof Gicharu further shared how MKU had implemented a policy of setting up campuses in far-flung areas of Kenya to spread out higher learning opportunities across the country.

For instance, the university was the first to set up a campus in Lodwar, Turkana, an area that had been ignored by even public higher learning institutions, leave alone private entities.

The gesture impressed the Turkana County Government, which approached MKU to sell the campus to them. A deal was reached and MKU became the first private institution to sell a university campus to government.

These, among other various initiatives by MKU, were useful in fostering society's wellbeing. They serve public good, Prof Gicharu stressed.

To him, public good include rapid social economic development; equitable distribution of resources and opportunities; expansion of democratic space; peace and security for harmonious co-existence among various ethnic groups, countries and regions; and a conducive environment for children to attain their dreams and lead better lives after obtaining adequate skills for a good employment.

You must play your part by putting in effort, VC tells new students

Students must expend effort to unlock their full potential and attain their career dreams. Whereas Mount Kenya University (MKU) has student support systems, it is the individual student's responsibility to invest effort in the various activities necessary for their academic and lifelong success.

MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof Stanley W. Waudu gave this advice in an orientation address titled, "Effort is the Key to Success". He was addressing new students on what they need to do to succeed in their endeavours to become doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, musicians, among other professions.

Explaining that careers get developed over time, he said: "Children are born without careers. Careers are developed as a result of developing competencies, nurturing talent and abilities at schools, colleges and universities, and passing examinations."

He reminded his audience that effort is important because it paves the way

to success. Nothing can be achieved without effort, he stressed and added that the passing of examinations was a result of putting effort in learning.

Quoting various personalities, among them Winston Churchill and Mahatma Gandhi, the VC emphasised the importance of effort in success.

Churchill said, for example, that, "Continuous effort, not strength or intelligence, is the key to unlocking our potential."

In making reference to this, Prof Waudu noted that, "a student who attends class 100 per cent performs better than one who does not attend classes most of the time."

MKU has a range of student support systems to help its students go through the process of career development successfully, said the VC.

The student support systems include, guidance and counselling, mentorship, academic advisory services, among others.

Automation System

Going hi-tech: MKU in major automation work

The department of Management Information Systems (MIS) at Mount Kenya University (MKU) has embarked on major systems upgrades and deployment of up-to-the-minute technologies to improve the University's operational processes.

Linking MKU finance with banks

At the finance department, it will soon not be necessary for students to queue at the windows to submit bank deposit slips after paying fees. Work is ongoing to integrate banks' systems with MKU's finance department, such that when students deposit funds at the connected banks, the transactions are reflected at MKU finance in real time.

"We are now at the point of testing the system," says Vincent Karuru, the deputy director of Management Information Systems (MIS) department. "We have laid down the infrastructure. For example, virtual private networks (VPNs) are already in place. We are now testing data sent from banks to make sure it hits our system in real time and notification sent to a student that money has been credited to his or her account."

For students, this means provided they pay money at the bank with correct details, they will no longer need to deliver bank slips to finance department.

Mr Karuru says the department is also contemplating providing a pay bill number to students. "This will be ideal for those who do not want to go to the bank," he explains. "They can pay fees into their account bit by bit. We hope to have the pay bill in place by 1 September."

Students and faculty support (DIBL)

MKU has also initiated a training programme for students and staff on the distance and institution-based (DIBL) learning system.



Vincent Karuru Deputy Director MIS



Biometric Access Control at Mount Kenya University -Thika Main Campus. MKU has complied with the Ministry of Education's directive that all universities capture student biometric data, becoming the first university to do so.

Further, an online ticketing system is in place to track user requests. It will help to monitor the response rate, the responses made and the issues resolved, either completely or partially. The help desk administrator can assign and escalate issues if need be.

The client gets notified through email and is informed when the ticket is closed. Clients can reopen a closed ticket if not satisfied with the response.

Advantages of the online ticketing system

1. Requests sent through emails are automatically assigned to users in that section at random, and they are notified through email when a ticket is assigned to them.
2. Ability to track resolved, unresolved

and escalated issues.

3. Because the system is integrated with a chat system, when a person is offline, messages are sent to the ticketing systems.
4. Ability for users to provide feedback. The system comes with a knowledge base where frequently asked questions and responses can be accessed. This automation has enabled the MIS department to identify the areas to improve, the issues mostly raised, their frequency and their commonalities.

"In addition, we conduct regular training to students, and the faculty developed training manuals are available online to complement our training," says Mr Karuru.

The online learning platform has ena-

bled students to:

- Access course outline and notes
- Access modules
- Access videos
- Interact with lecturers
- Interact with fellow students
- Access assignments and continuous assessment tests (CATs)
- Submit assignments and CATs through the same platform
- Receive grades and feedback
- Engage in discussion forums with lecturers and fellow students
- Participate in the chat room
- Access e-resources, such as the journals that the university subscribes to
- Access e-books.

Students from different campuses are able to engage in discussions. The platform brings together the entire MKU community, including digital students studying within or outside Kenya.

Integrated Biometric Access Control System Status

The installation of access control equipment at the main campus in Thika is underway. Work will soon commence on the same at the Nairobi campus.

Configurations and integration with the other systems is also in progress. Students and staff have been enrolled and the system will be operational at the end of May. It comes with a full access control and visitors management capability.

"We have started replacing the old staff and students cards with the RFID cards because the system is fully integrated with access to the parking areas at the university," Mr Karuru explains.

He says once phase one – covering Thika and Nairobi campuses – is complete, they will proceed to phase two that will include Mombasa and Nakuru campuses in September 2017, then to other campuses later in the year.

New integrated high-tech system to give MKU major security boost

Mount Kenya University (MKU) is installing an integrated biometric access control system. Once completed, the system will minimise risk of unauthorised access and intrusion.

Deputy Director of Management Information Systems (MIS) Vincent Karuru says the entire security technology being put together will allow the university to gain full control of who is entering the institution.

The security system allows for monitoring of hardware functionalities, and can be programmed to raise an alert whenever a particular device fails to respond appropriately. It is further integrated with CCTV cameras and access controls to the parking area, thereby providing an all-round mechanism for

managing security at the university.

The Security Features in Brief

a) Biometric Solution - Hand Punch: The hand geometry based biometric solution is integrated with a proximity card reader.

Advantages

- i) Accuracy:** The Hand Punch works on hand geometry. It takes a 3D picture of the hand (thickness, length and width), and matches it on 1:1 basis. This means that the chances of rejections are very minimal even if the user's hand is wet, injured or dirty.
- ii) Antimicrobial protection –** The Hand Punch has a built-in antimicrobial coating on



- iii) Hand outline –** The Hand Punch comes standard with a blue hand outline printed on the platen. This ensures accurate hand placement for verification, as well as quick and easy enrolment.

b) Turnstiles System

The turnstiles have been mounted at the gates. They are integrated with the hand geometry-based biometric solution, which is used to authenticate users before allowing them in and out of the premises.

c) Automatic Vehicle Spike Barrier

The Automatic Vehicle Spike Barri-

ers are mounted at the gates. They are connected to the access control system and proximity card readers. It controls access to the parking area at the university through authentication.

It has been installed complete with combined logic and loop detector, which trigger the electronic interlock in the barrier to safely lower the spikes first before raising the arm.

d) CCTV Cameras

CCTV cameras have been installed to record the activities and incidents at all entry and exit points. The unit allows for live monitoring and playback.

All in all, the entire system will improve the management of security at the institution.

Why choose MKU as your ideal university?

Even before you settle on MKU Digital Varsity as your preferred platform for conveniently acquiring higher education, you need to know why this is your ideal university.

Since its inception in July 2010, thousands have chosen and passed through MKU Digital Varsity. Why would this be the case?

These thousands of students from across the world – but mostly from Sub-Saharan Africa – first looked at the institution and the brand behind the digital varsity and liked what they learnt. MKU is a centre of excellence...

- Where students and faculty win awards, thanks to the studious adoption and implementation of international best practices.
- That offers a broad-based, holistic and inclusive system of education.
- That fosters innovation, creativity, competitiveness, scientific research and critical thinking.
- That is expanding access to quality higher education for the citizens of the larger East African Community and also for the people of Sub-Saharan Africa, and surprisingly, the rest of the world.
- That offers a wide-range of academic and professional courses through various flexible modes of delivery that include virtual learning.

The MKU brand

Symbolised by the distinct blue and light yellow corporate colours, MKU is a byword for academic excellence to many students, and to potential employers looking for well-trained manpower in an increasingly competitive environment.



Students engage under the Study villas

MKU offers premier, internationally accredited academic and professional programmes delivered to talented students by renowned international and local faculty members and researchers.

The University is famous for its continued funding and investment in research for faculty and students, information resource centre, incubation and innovation centres, internationally benchmarked moot court, Enterprise and Mentorship Academy and integration of ICT in learning

It boasts ultra-modern learning infrastructures that match global standards. Such infrastructure include well-equipped, award-winning multi-media library and the magnificent Chancellors Tower block that houses the academic schools.

The division of student welfare services



The MKU Library's digital section has well networked computers accessible by students and staff. The online resources are also accessible by our users which include E-books and E-journals

continuously re-engineers and positions itself to unlock emerging talents among the students through diversified extra curricula activities, career orientations and international linkages/partnerships for students to achieve their full potential.

A digital varsity for everyone

You have arrived at that critical decision. You must pursue higher studies starting now. You have the qualifications to join the programme or course of your choice.

You have also examined your financial situation and confirmed that, indeed, you can pay the necessary fees – maybe not at once, but at least a semester at a time.

There's just one distressing problem. Your daily engagements leave you with little or no time to attend scheduled lectures. Your busy life cannot permit this. You agonise over it. You look at all possibilities and realise that it is simply impossible for you to attend class. That time is not there – certainly not on a regular basis.

So, what do you do? You know you can shop around for a distance, online or digital option, but where is this university that offers a digital alternative that is flexible, affordable and supportive enough, and just right for you? Where is this university that fits your circumstances wherever you are and whatever you currently do?

Worry no more. You need not trawl the entire Net in search of a solution. Just log onto the Mount Kenya University (MKU) web site and you will find the right fit: MKU Digital Varsity.

MKU Digital Varsity is the right place for you to embark on your academic odyssey, live through an enriching experience and acquire skills that will stand you in good stead throughout life.



Dr. Edith Wakori, Senior Lecturer, School of Pharmacy, MKU

Senior MKU lecturer picked to represent private universities at the Pharmacy and Poisons Board

Private universities now have a seat at the Pharmacy and Poisons Board. This has happened through The Statute Law (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act, 2015, which was signed into law by the President of Kenya on 15 December 2015.

This law empowers private universities training pharmacists to nominate a person to the Pharmacy and Poisons Board (PPB).

The deans of the four private universities training pharmacists in Kenya (Mount Kenya University, USIU-Africa, Kenya Methodist University and Kabarak University) met and established a forum (The Kenya Association of Pharmacy Schools) through which each of them nominated one person. The list of four names was forwarded to the Cabinet Secretary for Health to choose one person to represent the private universities in the PPB.

Dr. Edith Wakori, a senior lecturer at the School of Pharmacy at Mount Kenya University (MKU) was picked.

Dr. Wakori has a long and distinguished career in pharmacy, being amongst the first graduates of pharmacy in Kenya in the mid-1970s. As a former Dean of the MKU Pharmacy School, she is well versed with the higher education pharmaceutical academic landscape.

The PPB, which consists of nine elected members, is the regulator of the pharmacy profession and the trade in drugs and poisons in Kenya. Having a seat in this board therefore ensures that private universities in Kenya will have a direct role in shaping not only the regulations in the training of pharmaceutical personnel in Kenya, but also all the other aspects of pharmacy practice that define the profession in general.

Pharmacy Programmes

- Post Graduate Diploma in Pharmaceutical Sales & Marketing
- Bachelor of Pharmacy
- Diploma in Pharmaceutical Technology

Community Outreach

How the Directorate of Research, Grants and Endowments supports communities

The Mount Kenya University (MKU) Directorate of Research, Grants and Endowments is engaged in a series of projects and studies that are generally aimed at enhancing knowledge and improving the welfare of communities in different parts of the country. Here, we share briefs about some major activities.

Kenya Christian Scientific Affiliation

The Kenya Christian Scientific Affiliation (KCSA) project aims to bring together scientists and people in religion. The project is bridging the dichotomy between science and religion in Kenya.

It will create a forum for Christians and scientists in Kenya to freely share and enrich each other on issues of science and the Christian faith.

The project is initially engaging faculty postgraduate students from across universities in Kenya and religious representatives.

Lake Victoria Islands MalSchistoHel Integrated Project

Malaria, schistosomiasis and soil transmitted helminthes (STH) are a major public health burden for the residents of Lake Victoria islands, Kisumu. The Lake Victoria Islands MalSchistoHel Project investigates surveillance and control activities of the three diseases.

The objective is to create synergy in cost efficiency and promote greater community participation towards the reduction of the prevalence of these diseases.

Collaborative New-born Support Project

The Collaborative New-Born Support Project aims to enhance survival of neonates and improve quality of care and accessibility of new-born services in Bungoma County. The major goal is to reduce neonatal mortality rate by 30 percent between November 2015 and June 2017.

It is expected that there will be increased access and utilisation of neonatal care services, and that the health system management will be strengthened to deliver quality work. The project is engaging the county government, health facilities and the general community in a multi-faceted approach of e-platforms and community *barazas*.

MKU, Partners for Care join hands for health and hygiene

Mount Kenya University (MKU), in partnership with Partners for Care (PFC), has established four community outreach initiatives.

i) Jiggers campaign

The two institutions organised a jiggers' campaign sensitisation in Marsabit, Kenya. The main objective was to increase the impact of the jiggers' campaign in Marsabit County by providing the personnel required to reach a larger population.

MKU, together with PFC and Ohio



Sick neonates inside Incubators at the Webuye Sub-County Hospital. A County Innovation Challenge Fund implemented by MKU (funded by DFID-UK)



Neonate under phototherapy treatment at the Webuye sub-County Hospital

State University of United States of America, organised a two-day jigger treatment campaign in Marsabit County on 13 May, 2015.

The jigger treatment campaign involved visiting schools and "Manyattas" from where the treatment camps were erected. The 2016 jigger campaign was held on 9-11 May.

ii) m-Health

This is a mobile platform for linking patients in informal settlements (Marurui Settlement) with doctors. Clinical officers and other health personnel visit areas where there are no medical facilities, and once they identify a patient, they feed the clinical symptoms into the mobile phone and the information is relayed to the doctor at the clinic. The doctor makes his diagnosis and advises if the patient must visit the clinic or if a prescription would do. This way, one doctor is able to provide care to many patients in a day.

iii) Water backpack project

This is an innovative project that involves replacing jerricans used by rural communities with a "water pack" - a container that holds 20 litres of water and has a dispenser. The water pack is a more affordable and hygienic way of ferrying water for long distances. It is also good for water storage and dispensing.

The water backpack has been distributed to various communities and primary schools. The project aims to provide



Neonates on baby cots purchased by the County Innovation Challenge Fund

clean water to vulnerable communities.

iv) Hospital equipment

Partners for Care has sourced hospital equipment donated from Medi-share and taken them to needy hospitals. Marsabit Hospital is a beneficiary.

Mount Kenya University provides impact assessment expertise. In addition, the possibility of getting medical supplies for Thika Level 5 Hospital is being explored.

Rafiki Bank East Africa Chama Awards

The Rafiki Bank East Africa Chama Awards initiative was started in 2011 with the aim of recognising the best "chamas". It is run by Rafiki Bank, a subsidiary of Chase Bank, and Mount Kenya University (MKU) is a knowledge partner in the initiative.

The targeted "chama" must have been in existence for at least one year with a minimum of five members. Awarded "chamas" are categorised as follows: Best Investment Group; Best Social Responsibility Group; Best Diverse Portfolio Group; Best Members Contribution Group; Fastest Growing Group; Most Innovative Group; and Chairperson of the Year.

The 2016 call is expected to be announced late May, 2016 and warding of respective "chama" groups scheduled June, 2016. After awarding of respective groups, MKU will publish all the activities of the "chama" in identified journal(s).

Update on the growth and work of CSAK

Membership

The Christian and Scientific Association of Kenya (CSAK) is expanding. The number of members has increased and membership has diversified to other regions of the world as evidenced by a new Kenyan scholar who recently joined from Japan.

The Association now has 206 members. It is envisaged that before the end of 2017, more scholars will have joined to raise this number to about 400.

Publications

CSAK publishes its newsletters online and in hard copy. The online editions can be accessed via www.kcsa.or.ke. The Association further publishes various activity reports aimed at keeping records and updating members and supporters on the Association's work.

Capacity Building

CSAK held an induction meeting for the Eastern Region at Mount Kenya University on April 4th, 2017. A total of 14 members from different regions attended the meeting.

The new members were informed of their entitlements in the Association as well as their responsibilities. They were encouraged to debate and enlighten the general public of the need for science and religion to support each other for the benefit of society.

Conference

Three members of CSAK - Prof. Francis W. Muregi, Dr Samuel Karenga and Mr. Humphrey Mwambee - participated at the Conference on Science and Religion in the French-Speaking Africa, held at the Protestant Theological University in Groningen, the Netherlands, from 18 to 21 April.

Feedback on National Essay Competition 2016

Contestants in the National Essay Competition 2016 were individually informed of the outcome of their submissions through email. They were briefed on the areas they did not address or were wrongly presented, leading to the results they received.

This was aimed at strengthening the budding scholars in academic writing and to prepare them for the coming essay contest in September 2017. The winner, first and second runners-up will be awarded in July 2017 during the national workshop to be held in Nairobi.

CSAK Online Certificate Course

The CSAK Online Certificate Course is up and running. Members have started taking the course being offered free of charge, and will receive a printable online certificate on completion. The course material and instructions can be accessed on the CSAK website, www.kcsa.or.ke, under the "online certificate" tab.



National Public Debate lead panelists; (from 3rd left) Mr Barrack Muluka, Dr Esha Faki (Maseno University), Dr Joyce Nyairo (Director, Santuri Media) and Prof. Joseph Galgalo (VC, St. Paul's University) together some members of the CSAK Board of Management, Madam Jane Nyutu (2nd left) and Prof. Stanley Waudo (VC, Mount Kenya University) pose for a photo after the debate.

Community Outreach

How MKU's graduate academy supports Kenya Vision 2030

Beneficiaries of Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA) can substantially contribute towards the realisation of the Kenya Vision 2030 dream. They can create jobs and wealth to edge the country towards massive industrialisation.

That was the message that Jane Nyutu, MKU co-founder and member of the university's Board of Directors, delivered to the apprentices during their commissioning on April 27.

She challenged them to use the knowledge and experience gained at GEA to build great businesses that will make the MKU fraternity proud.

"GEA is a perfect reflection of MKU's response to Kenya Vision 2030's clarion call upon Kenyans to be active participants in employment and wealth creation," she said.

Madam Nyutu highlighted GEA as part of the university's community outreach initiatives and its third core mandate besides teaching and research.

The Board of Directors set aside Sh40 million in 2013 to ensure the smooth running of GEA.

"Wherever possible, we can partner with various organisations to train and provide various kinds of support to our upcoming entrepreneurs," said the MKU co-founder.

She added, "We thank Family Bank, Stima Sacco, BIDCO, Makerere University Business



Madam Jane Nyutu receives a gift from Naomi Mwendwa, a graduate of the GEA apprentices 2017

School and all those who have joined us."

She added that enterprise development as witnessed at GEA is a necessary ingredient for stimulating economic growth and employment opportunities in all societies.

Madam Nyutu further noted that in the developing world, successful small businesses were the primary engines of job creation, income growth, and poverty reduction.

The establishment of GEA in 2013 and its continuous support by the MKU Board of Directors is a real testimony of the university's overall desire to see graduates succeed in their studies and also

become successful entrepreneurs who can improve both their well-being and the quality of life of their families.

Said Madam Nyutu: "I wish to particularly [recognise] Family Bank and other organisations that have come on board to walk with us in this very dignified journey of empowering the Kenyan graduates through job creation."

She also assured partnering organisations and prospective ones that their contributions were well appreciated. "We shall do all that is possible to ensure the GEA apprentices benefit fully from your contributions," she said.



MKUSA leadership seeks divine guidance



H.E Hon James Ongwae, Governor Kisii County giving a public lecture to MKU Kisii Campus students



Dr. Simon Nyakwara (Center), presents a desktop computer that was donated by Mount Kenya University Kisii Campus to Mobamba Primary School in Kisii.



Prof. Simon N. Gicharu, Mount Kenya University Rwanda (MKUR) Founder who is also the Chairman, Board of Directors, hands over a new bus to the institution on 28 February. Vice-Chancellor Prof Edwin Odhuno, members of staff and students received the new bus at MKUR's ultra-modern premises in Kagarama region of Kicukiro District, Kigali.



Kenya National Commission for UNESCO Deputy Director Dr. Reuben Nthamburi (left) donates a Digital Television Set, a DVD player, antenna and Digital Content from KICD to Naivasha maximum Prison officer in charge Patrick Kiriinya Mwenda at Naivasha Maximum Prison on March 18, 2017 during the evaluation program of Education that is conducted to the inmates to promote quality education. Looking on in white t-shirt is Mount Kenya University School of Education Director Moses Nderitu. Mount Kenya School of Education donated books, pens and bar soaps.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scalis Altitudines Educationis

Research

School of Pharmacy staff feted for top conference presentation

After presenting her paper at a regional health conference in late March, Ms Hannah Nyakio packed her stuff and returned home. Her thoughts did not dwell on the paper.

The Preclinical Coordinator and lecturer at Mount Kenya University's School of Pharmacy had presented a research paper highlighting how a novel combination of two drugs could be used to treat malaria.

She remembered that the conference organisers had promised they would reward the best papers. But since they never mentioned this soon afterwards, Ms Nyakio pushed the issue out of her mind.

The 6th East African Health and Scientific Conference and International Health Exhibition and Trade Fair, held in Bujumbura, Burundi, ran from 29 to 31 March.

Then on May 4, Ms Nyakio received a call from Tanzania asking her to travel to Dar es Salaam overnight. She was invited to an experts' meeting to review the East African Health Research Journal in the coastal city.

A pleasant surprise awaited her.

Ms Nyakio was feted as one of the presenters of the best six papers at the Bujumbura conference two months ear-

lier. She was one of the two Kenyan winners of the regional awards.

She was awarded a certificate and a trophy for the best presenter of one of the sub-themes.

The theme of the conference was "Preparedness for Control of Disease Outbreaks, Epidemics & Pandemics in the Context of Climate Change, Globalisation and Gaps in Health Systems".

Ms Nyakio's paper was titled, "Synthesis of a Quinoline-trioxane Hybrid Drug".

"I was pleasantly surprised to receive this award," Ms Nyakio says, noting that her research has the potential to contribute to the war against malaria.

Reports from Southeast Asia indicate failure of artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT). This has necessitated an urgent search for new compounds with respect to their chemical framework.

A recent rational drug design approach termed "covalent biotherapy" involves linking two molecules with individual intrinsic activity into a single agent, thus packaging dual-activity into a single molecule termed as dual-drug, conjugate or hybrid.

Ms Nyakio is currently undertaking her doctoral project titled: "Nanoformulation of Praziquantel for Management of Schistosomiasis in Children and Adults".



Hannah Nyakio displays the certificate and trophy she received

PUBLICATIONS IN PEER REVIEWED JOURNALS

- Onyango C.O., Nyakio H.W., Magoma G.N., Kirira P.G., Malala B.J., Kimani E.T., Muregi, F.W. 2017. Efficacy and safety evaluation of a novel trioxaquine in management of cerebral malaria in a mouse model. *Malaria Journal*, (under review).
- Wamakima H.N., Kirira P.G., Nganga M.M., Gimode W.R., Brendon N., Matshawendile T., Muregi F.W., 2015. Synthesis of a Novel Trioxaquine with Potential to replace Artemether-Lumefantrine and Dihydroartemisinin-Piperaquine for Malaria Chemotherapy. *Malaria Journal*, (under review)
- Gimode W.R., Kiboi D.M., Kimani E.T., Wamakima H.N., Burugu M.W., Muregi F.W., (2015). Fitness Cost of Resistance for Lumefantrine and Piperaquine-Resistant Plasmodium Berghei in a Mouse Model. *Malaria Journal*, DOI 10.1186/s12936-015-0550-5
- Muregi F.W., Nyakio H.W., Kimani E.T., 2012. Novel Drug Targets in Malaria Parasite with Potential to yield Antimalarial Drugs with Long Useful Therapeutic Lives. *Current Pharmaceutical Design*, 18 (24): 3505-21

Staff from School of Clinical Medicine make impact at conference

Two Mount Kenya University (MKU) staff members from the School of Clinical Medicine recently attended a conference organised by the Ophthalmic Clinical Officers Association to promote continuous professional development.

The conference took place at Nyeri White Rhino Hotel on 9 and 10 March. It focused on enhancing the role of the ophthalmic clinical officers in eye care through continued education.

Head of the Department of Forensic Medicine Mururi Susan, and Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine, Mr Peter Mwaura, attended. The Nyeri marketing team was on hand to offer support.

Ms Mururi's objective was to market the Master of Clinical Medicine programme. She presented a desk review on professional competencies through research and skills development.

Science faculty member committed to research shines in regional innovation contest



Donatus Njoroge (left) and the other winners display their awards at the awards dinner.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) School of Pure and Applied Sciences faculty member, Mr Donatus Njoroge, has excelled in a regional innovation competition. He emerged among the best 25 innovators in East Africa, in a post-harvest challenge held in Tanzania.

The event was presided over by Christophe Bazivamo, Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC). Other guests included Lisa Walker of USAID and James Shikwati, the Director of Inter-region Economic Network (IREN).

Mr Njoroge's project, titled, "Use of *Ocimum* species to Protect Stored Grains against Post-Harvest Pests", had been shortlisted from an initial pool of 250 from Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania.

The East Africa Post-harvest Technol-

ogies Competition 2017 (EAPTC-2017) had been organised by IREN in conjunction with USAID, East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, and Syngenta, a global agrochemicals and seeds company.

The event aims to identify scalable post-harvest technologies in East Africa, for dissemination. The EAPTC-2017 selected top 50 scalable technologies from successful entries and offered them accelerated training on scaling up and pitching. The innovations were later presented to a team of judges.

The 25 outstanding innovators from East Africa had the opportunity to showcase and pitch to potential partners (development partners, donors, governments, farmers/traders associations and investors) in a special session at the East Africa Postharvest Technologies Fair in Nairobi in May.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Prof Gicharu fetes research team

Mount Kenya University (MKU) has feted 30 of its researchers for their excellent work. Prof Simon Gicharu, the Chairman, Board of Directors, met them on 21 April and commended them for having boosted MKU's visibility locally and internationally through their efforts.

Prof Gicharu, the MKU founder, underlined the commitment of the University Management and Board of Directors in investing resources in the university's research and innovation agenda for the benefit of society. He further reiterated his commitment that the university would do whatever necessary to build research capacity and ensure that the tempo already set was maintained.

While appreciating the researchers, he paraphrased President John F. Kennedy's famous quote, "Ask not what MKU can do for you, but what you can do for MKU".

The researchers are led by Prof Francis W. Muregi, the Director of Research, Grants and Endowment Directorate. He was awarded a Certificate of Leadership Excellence for his efforts in building research teams. Other staff members with research projects were also appreciated.

Present during the function was the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic and Research Affairs, Dr Bibianne Waiganjo-Aidi, who said that to date, the university had supported close to 200



MKU Founder and Chairman Prof. Simon N. Gicharu, staff, and Ph.D students pose for a photo during a luncheon to honour the university's researchers at Utalii Hotel in Nairobi.



MKU Chairman Prof. Simon N. Gicharu honours Prof. Francis Muregi, Director Research, Grants and Endowments for his contributions toward research at the university.

persons to attend local and international conferences. It has further supported the publishing of 51 papers in peer-reviewed journals as well as sponsored capacity building workshops for staff and students.

MKU has already provided seed-funds of close to Ksh7 million in the last three years for research and innovation projects. On external grants, Dr. Waiganjo-Ai-

di noted that the university was currently managing grants worth Ksh200 million. It is also waiting to receive grants worth up to Ksh148 million from the National Research Fund (NRF).

Prof Gicharu also recognised partners and collaborators who have continued to support the university's research efforts.

He feted Prof Bernard Boyo (Daystar University) and Prof Peter Ngunjiri of the

African Population and Health Research Center's (APHRC's) Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA) for their contribution in a recently funded project by the Templeton World Charity Foundation. The two received letters of recognition and cash tokens from MKU.

Research fund awards MKU staff; more tipped to win Ksh20 million study grants

Four Mount Kenya University (MKU) faculty members have been awarded up to a maximum of Ksh2 million for PhD research in their respective fields of study.

The awards by the National Research Fund (NRF) Grant 2017 follows a successful workshop on how to convert "academic proposals" to "fundable proposals". It was conducted by Directorate of Research and Innovations.

The Staff members who received the grants are as follows:

| No. | Name | Discipline | Project Title |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Nancy Nganga | Environmental Sciences | Assessment of the Status of Facilitation Role of Host Universities in Regional Centres of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development in Kenya. |
| 2 | Laban N. Ireri | Health Sciences | Characterisation and Ecological Niche Sampling of Malaria and Vector Species in Embu County, Kenya. |
| 3 | Kamau Joyce Muthoni | Social Sciences | An Evaluation of the Influence of Early Delivery in Pre-schools in Murang'a County, Kenya. |
| 4 | Oscar Onyango Sangoro | Social Sciences | An Empirical Study on Microfinance Institutions Indicators on Contribution to the Economic Pillar of Vision 2030: A case of Kakamega County, Kenya. |

In addition, seven members of staff were shortlisted for the Multidisciplinary Collaborative Research grant that awards up to a maximum of Ksh20 million per research project. Following is a table of the shortlisted members:

| No. | Name | Discipline | Project Title |
|-----|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| 1 | Dr Paul Sifuna Oshule | Biological Sciences | Biodegradation of Acaricidal Residues in the Environment: Curbing Accumulation of Organophosphates in Milk and Milk Products |
| 2 | Dr Catherine M. Mwendu | Health Sciences | Gene-environment Interactions in the Genesis of Substance Dependence, Psychosis and Relapse in Kenya |
| 3 | Dr Jesse Gitaka | Health Sciences | Combating Antibiotic Resistance using Guidelines and Enhanced Stewardship in Kenya: An Implementation Science Approach |
| 4 | Mr Francis Makokha | Health Sciences | Genomic Approaches for Understanding Breast Cancer Progression in Kenya Patients |
| 5 | Prof Njeri Wamae | Health Sciences | Entomological Surveillance, Characterisation and Ecological Niche Sampling of Malaria and Vector Species in Embu County, Kenya |
| 6 | Dr. Benson Njoroge | Social Sciences | Effectiveness of Offline Study Desk on Prison Education |
| 7 | Prof Francis Muregi | Social Sciences | Bridging the Gap between Science and Cultural Religious Practices through Science Communication |

MKU Rwanda

Joint audit of MKU Rwanda returns positive results

A recent joint audit of the Mount Kenya University Rwanda (MKUR) confirms that the university is generally on the right path of growth.

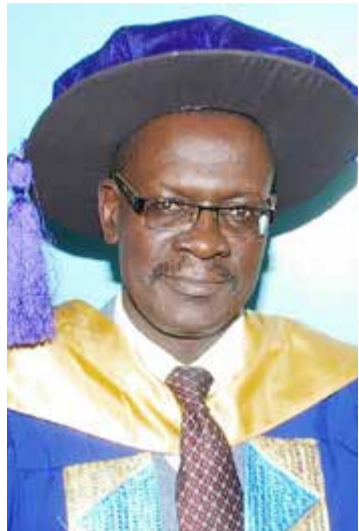
The audit, carried out on 27 and 28 March 2017, shows that the University has invested heavily in infrastructure development, and has in the process put in place state-of-the-art teaching and learning facilities.

The audit team further found it commendable that the University picked its Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellors from among its senior academic staff, such as senior lecturers and associate professors.

Evidence of research output was also found. An excess of 63 scholarly articles by MKUR staff were published in international journals, as well as 10 conference proceedings covering different disciplines and areas of specialisation.

This shows that a number of academic staff at MKUR published actively and fairly regularly, thus contributing positively to the research profile of the University.

The University also received credit for effective use of its Website and other ICT channels to fulfil both academic and



Edwin Odhuno, Vice-Chancellor, MKU Rwanda



visibility objectives.

In the School of Education, the University has set up the Distance and Institutional-Based Learning (DIBL) platform that enables students to access learning modules and other relevant material to supplement lessons that were taught face-to-face.

In the School of Health Sciences, the audit established that there had been

a big improvement in terms of infrastructure and equipment for conducting practical sessions. The audit team was impressed by the Nursing Skills Laboratory, which was well stocked with an assortment of the latest teaching aids, including mannequins and related equipment for paediatric as well as medical/surgical and postnatal care.

All the eight labs devoted to the Med-

ical Laboratory Sciences and Pharmacy were found to be standard, according to the requirements stipulated by the concerned regulatory bodies.

The microbiology laboratory was singled out as the best in the University in terms of equipment and reagents.

The audit confirmed that the space provided by the University library was adequate, and the atmosphere conducive. Partitioning of reading carrels was done well and in a manner that conformed to the current best practices.

The library has a sufficient number of computers, and uses the open source software called KOHA as its integrated library management system (ILMS).

The lecture rooms were found to be adequate, both in size and in number. A number of the classes and laboratories have smart TVs installed for instructional purposes.

The University has four computer laboratories. Each floor of the building has one. The audit found these to be adequate, and additionally established that internet connectivity was reliable throughout the university via both cable and Wi-Fi.

Meet the acting dean MKUR's School of Health Sciences

President Jomo Kenyatta's nurse, Connie rose up the academic ladder to become a don

Dr Connie Wambui Mureithi is the acting Dean, School of Health Sciences, Mount Kenya University, Rwanda (MKUR). She brings to her new position a wealth of experiences gained from teaching, examining, thesis supervision, researching and managing at universities across East Africa, and publishing in journals.

Dr Mureithi has been external examiner at a number of universities in the region. These include the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, School of Nursing, at the University of Rwanda, Kigali (2013 to 2015); Moi University, Faculty of Health Science (2011 to 2012); and School of Nursing, University of Nairobi (2006 to 2008).

A highly committed and passionate scholar, Dr Mureithi studied at the Kenya Medical Training College, University of Nairobi, University of Wales, Cardiff, and the University of South Africa.

She is a trained counsellor, registered midwife and a registered nurse. She also holds a diploma in

Advanced Nursing and Community Health.

Before her appointment as acting dean at the MKUR School of Health Sciences last September, Dr Mureithi was a Senior Lecturer, Head of School of Nursing and Assistant Coordinator of Post Studies at the Mount Kenya University, Kigali Campus.

From August 2011 to August 2012, she served as Assistant Professor/Academic Head at the Aga Khan University, Kenya Campus.

Before then, she was Assistant Professor at Aga Khan University, Nairobi, in charge of special programmes. She was involved in curriculum revision and development, and in aligning clinical teaching with quality assurance framework. This was from August 2010 to August 2011.

For three years – from August 2008 to July 2011 – Dr Mureithi was Assistant Professor and Academic Head at the Aga Khan University, Uganda Campus. From January 2001 to July 2007, she served as Senior Lecturer, and Academic Head at Aga Khan University, Kenya Campus.

In addition to her work at universities, Dr Mureithi has held positions in a number of professional organisations as follows:

- 2011 to 2012: Chairperson of the Kenya Nursing Journal
- 2011 to 2012: Member of the Nursing Council of Kenya,



Dr Connie Wambui Mureithi, Acting Dean, School of Health Sciences, MKUR

- Research Committee
- 2005 to 2013: Executive member of the Society for Women and AIDS in Africa and Coordinator of East African countries, namely, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Eritrea
- 1997 to 2012: Assistant Secretary for Society of International Development, Kenyan Chapter
- 1992 to 2015: General Secretary for Society for Women and AIDS, Kenyan Chapter
- 1996 to date: Member, Guild of Graduates, University of Wales Cardiff

Dr Mureithi has also carried out research on diverse health challenges in the region, besides the study for her Doctorate thesis, titled, "A Qualitative Study on Self-care Health Seeking Behaviours of Piave Community in Nakuru District, Kenya."

She has participated in several forums for thesis defence at Mount Kenya University Rwanda. She has also supervised scores of students who went on to complete their studies.

Dr Mureithi has attended a myriad conferences, workshops and trainings that have enriched her skills as a lecturer and administrator. She has also presented many papers in conferences locally and abroad.

Publications

Unpublished paper prepared for Global Evidence Summit in September 2017, South Africa

Nalubega S1, Mureithi C1, Mochama M1, Rugira T1, Monchari P1, Habtu M1, Tumusiime A1, Osuwat LO1

School of Health Sciences, Mount Kenya University Rwanda

Barriers to and Facilitators of Evidence Utilisation in Health Care in Low Income Settings: A Qualitative Systematic Review

Wilson Rwai Waweru, Lawrence Obado Osuwat, Connie Wambui

Mureithi, Analgesic and Anti-Inflammatory Activity of *Tradescantia fluminensis* Leaves Extract,

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Mureithi, CW. 2012. The Role of Traditional Healers in the Delivery of Health Care in Piave Community, Nakuru District, Kenya. *Kenya Nursing Journal* (42) 1: 31-38.

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Mureithi, CW. 1996. *Continuing Professional Education: The Case of the Nursing Profession in Kenya* (Cardiff: University of Wales M.Ed. Dissertation).

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PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

MKUR initiates bid to improve English in Rwanda

A conference hosted by Mount Kenya University Rwanda (MKUR) in March provided the clearest indication of the university's keenness to lift the standards of English language among Rwandans.

English is the first official language of the East African Community (EAC), of which Rwanda, which has a French heritage, is a member.

The country adopted English as its official language in 2008, making a bold move to switch from French. The policy shift involved training teachers and initiating a gradual process of changing the language of instruction in schools to English.

The English Language in Education and Research Conference 2017 (ELER 2017), an initiative of MKUR, was an effort to give impetus to this journey. It aimed to establish ways by which MKUR could help improve the general standard of English language in Rwanda.

The conference, a gathering of scholars, educators and students, among other education stakeholders, ran from 1-7 March 2017. It was guided by the theme, "Emerging Issues in Education and English Language Learning".

It has been observed that many external investors coming into Rwanda use English as a medium of communication, hence MKUR's initiative to invite scholars to help find ways of boosting the quality



Dr. Gasingirwa Marie Christine hands over certificates to a participant of the First English Language and Research Conference in MKUR as Prof. Peter Wanderi, one of the keynote speakers, looks on.

of English language among its graduates.

"Today, it's almost impossible to be in big position of employment for a company if you do not speak English language," states an abridged version of the conference report.

A key recommendation that came out of the conference was that MKUR should put in place an elaborate system for enabling more Rwandans to improve their English, and not just its graduates.

The establishment of a "language pro-

ficiency laboratory" at the university was thus proposed.

This was in light of the fact that other than students, entrepreneurs in Rwanda would also need help with their English.

The university was further asked to work closely with employers keen to sponsor staff for English courses. Conference participants asked MKUR to design programmes that would specifically suit such working students.

Additionally, it was suggested that teaching of English should go beyond the classroom. It should penetrate communities through creative activities.

The establishment of a UN Model MKUR Chapter was also proposed. This, it was suggested, would provide an effective forum for students to learn from each other and by giving speeches in English.

Other recommendations touched on the need to motivate English teachers for them to deliver effective teaching, and to make available more teaching facilities and resources.

Generally, according to the post-conference report, the ELER 2017 fulfilled its objective of providing a fertile ground for professional exchange that generated practical ideas for promoting English language in Rwanda, and for improving MKUR's faculty in that respect.

Government officials join varsity in genocide memorial walk

On 12 June 2017, residents of Kicukiro District and High Hills Academy pupils joined the Mount Kenya University Rwanda (MKUR) fraternity in a walk to mark the 23rd remembrance of the 1994 genocide.

The walk, which started from MKUR to Nyanza Genocide memorial site, was graced by the Kicukiro District Vice-Mayor in charge of social affairs, Bayigana Emmanuel. Also present were Gatabazi Claver, a representative from Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre le Genocide (National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide) and Mwesiye Robert, the Executive Secretary of National Youth Council among other government officials.

MKUR Vice Chancellor, Prof Edwin Odhuno, thanked the Kicukiro District community and the Government for giving the institution an enabling environment to operate in. He said the University will continue to support worthy causes that impact society positively.

"We thank the leadership of Rwan-

da for national unity and putting in place policies and laws to ensure genocide does not happen again. Rwanda is now on the right track for sustainable development, and MKUR will be supportive of government programmes that promote peace and unity in society," he said.

Quoting His Excellency the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, who once said, "Rwanda cannot turn back the clock, but we have the power to determine the future", Prof Odhuno urged Rwandans to continue rebuilding the nation for the betterment of the younger generation.

Kicukiro Vice-Mayor Bayigana Emmanuel commended the University for playing a big role in building capacities and improving the social welfare of the Rwandan community.

He urged the youth to exercise patriotism in rebuilding the country to prosperity. "The Rwandan genocide... was unique compared to other genocides in the world in that it was organised by Rwandans, executed by Rwandans and was stopped



MKUR staff and students are enjoined with members of the public during a walk to mark the 23rd commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

by Rwandans. This has made it easy for Rwandans to unite and reconcile for prosperity," he said.

Gatabazi Claver of the Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre le Genocide recalled that the 1959-

1994 leaderships in Rwanda were based on divisions, which caused the genocide. He urged the youth to focus on their studies seriously and engage in research to enable them become job creators for the benefit

of society.

Kagoyire Esperence, a genocide survivor, narrated how victims were being captured and taken to Sonatube from Eto Kicukiro to Nyanza by foot to be killed.

She said that an estimated 2,000 people were killed in one of the local schools called ETO, located on the outskirts of Kigali. The area had been protected by the United Nations peacekeeping force, but after the removal of the UN troops, refugees were forced to move to Nyanza where they were all killed.

She was one of the lucky survivors as she was assumed dead after a handful of grenades, machetes and other traditional tools had been deployed on her community. She thanked MKUR management for the financial support she received to grow her business and continue being self-reliant.

During the visit to the site, the University gave a donation to the centre to enable it carry out its daily activities.

Infrastructure Development & 21st Century Learning

We'd rather build own ultra-modern facilities than rent premises - VC

Teaching and learning must take place in a conducive environment. That is why Mount Kenya University (MKU) is building its own teaching facilities at campuses, the latest being the ultra-modern Nakuru Campus.

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof. Stanley W. Waudo and members of the Board of Directors officially opened the Nakuru Campus on 16 December 2016. Prof. Waudo delivered the inauguration address at the premises.

According to the VC, the university

is better off building own premises for the long-term benefit. "You design classrooms, laboratories and other facilities according to your requirements."

The VC asserts that, "a conducive learning environment must have facilities, services and security that meet required standards and society's expectations."

"The Nakuru Campus physical facilities officially opened last December are a showcase of the kind of modern academic resources the university provides to students so that they learn in com-

fort. As a university, we have reached a consolidation stage," says the VC. "We are considering how to ensure we make optimal use of our academic resources."

He adds: "As a university, we are committed to ensuring that physical and human resources are adequate to support quality training."

Other places where MKU runs campuses in own premises include Nairobi, Thika (main), Mombasa, Kisii and Kitale. The university owns land in Eldoret on which it plans to build a campus.



2002

The face of MKU's continuous improvement drive



MKU Nairobi campus



MKU Kisii campus



MKU Mombasa campus



MKU Rwanda



MKU Nakuru campus



Today

MKU's continuous improvement ethos is easily visible through sustained infrastructure development. The 2002 building and today's Alumni Plaza demonstrate this. The ultra-modern Alumni Plaza will host all administrative offices for synergy and delivery of excellent customer service. The 13-floor plaza will have Senate Boardroom, Vice-Chancellor offices, the Division of Academic and Research Affairs, Division of Administration, Planning and Institutional Advancement, Finance, Human Resources, Business Development and Marketing, and Customer Care Service, among others.



Nakuru Campus studio, officially opened by Rt. Rev. Bishop Maurice Muhatia Makumba of the Nakuru Catholic Diocese

Nakuru campus now has a modern journalism studio

May 21, 2017, enters the records at Mount Kenya University as the day its Nakuru Campus commissioned an ultra-modern journalism studio to upscale the training of journalists.

It was an exciting occasion for the entire MKU community. For the journalism department, the launching of the new studio was a prayer well answered.

Rt. Rev. Bishop Maurice Muhatia Makumba of the Nakuru Catholic Diocese congratulated MKU for its commitment to transform lives through effective teaching processes entailing coursework and practical lessons. He was the guest invited to bless and offi-

ciate the launch of the journalism studios.

The ultra-modern facility, he said, was testimony to the University's undertaking to present journalism students with adequate equipment for practice.

Mount Kenya University Nakuru Campus Director Mr. Christopher Mutembei praised the MKU Management for envisioning and providing such a key facility that, he said, would give deserving journalism students the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

The event was witnessed by various dignitaries, as well as more than 700 students from other colleges and universities in Nakuru.

The ultra-modern broadcast journalism facility contains a radio studio, TV studio, an editing suite, the editor's office and reception lounge.

A number of former journalism students of MKU Nakuru Campus have been absorbed in media houses as follows:

| SNo | Station | Staff Working |
|-----|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | MBCI | 4 |
| 2 | Sauti ya Mwananchi | 2 |
| 3 | Egerton Radio | 1 |
| 4 | Citizen | 3 |
| 5 | Nation Media | 1 |
| 6 | Ebru T.V | 1 |

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

International Students

From viewpoint of foreign students

It is commonly believed that lightning does not strike an object twice. This belief does not hold in Yusuf Usman's case.

Smitten by his love for Mount Kenya University (MKU) where he is about to complete his Masters in Nursing Science degree studies, he wants to return to the institution for his PhD too.

Usman, 32, who travelled all the way from his homeland Nigeria to pursue his dream at MKU, is ready for a second bite of the apple. The MKU academic lightning has struck him twice.

It all began in Uganda in 2014. He sought admission to pursue his beloved advanced nursing course, but the best he could be offered was a Masters in Public Health. He did not settle for that. When a fellow countryman residing in Uganda but who had studied at MKU informed him about the university, Usman decided to give it a try.

"I applied to MKU, was admitted and began classes in January 2015," he recalls.

Usman is the President of the MKU International Students Chapter.

Violet Zipporah Kadyoma, 23, cannot hide her amusement when she talks about what she refers to as Kenyan ways. She chortles heartily when narrating how challenging it was to adapt to the Kenyan culture, especially the people's love for speaking in Kiswahili.

"I studied back home in Malawi," she says. "I came to Kenya and it has a different system of studying. But I am now used to it."

Violet is pursuing a Bachelor of Development Studies degree after joining MKU last September. She learnt about the university through the Internet, having already settled on Kenya as the country where she would pursue university education.

Why Kenya?

"I chose Kenya because it is strong in community development education," she reveals. "And MKU is one of the leading universities in East Africa that is still growing."

Violet is the Vice-president of the MKU International Students Chapter.

Bertrand Ishara Cimole, 21, was on the lookout for institutions offering

I chose Kenya because it is strong in community development education

a unique degree. He wanted to study petroleum exploration and production, but this course was not available in his home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

He did not have to search hard. His two brothers studying at the MKU Nairobi Campus informed him that the university offered the programme.

"My brothers directed me to the university and guided me on the application process," he says.

Now in his third year, Cimole believes his Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Exploration and Production will come in handy when he returns home. DRC has oil deposits and he sees himself playing a role in the exploitation of this resource.

Cimole is the minister in charge of finance and treasury at the MKU International Students Chapter.

Nduwayezu Muco Pierre, a Bachelor of Business and Information Technology (BBIT) student, considers himself a true East African citizen. He is Burundian by birth, lives in Uganda, is currently stud-

ying at MKU's Main Campus in Kenya and has plans to visit Tanzania in future.

"I came to Kenya because it offers quality education," he explains. "The course I wanted (BBIT) was not available in Uganda. It is prestigious to study at MKU."

Pierre, 22, was preparing to study in the United Kingdom but he found that the process of admission would take him one year. He was not ready to wait for that long. So, he walked along Kampala streets and found himself at the MKU office there. The office gave him a brochure and he was impressed, especially because he learnt that the university was highly ranked in the region. He was also given the contact of Edwin Opatia, a Ugandan student at the MKU main campus.

He sought Opatia's advice, applied for admission, which the university granted, and he proceeded to join the main campus in January.

Pierre is the minister in charge of information at the MKU International Students Chapter.



MKU student leaders of the International Students Chapter, Left to right: Violet Zipporah Kadyoma, Yusuf Usman, Bertrand Ishara Cimole and Nduwayezu Muco Pierre.

MKU international footprint expands

MKU's international footprint is widespread and still expanding. Students are either based in their countries and are registered with the MKU Digital Varsity or study in the university's campuses spread across the Eastern African region.

- MKU's Digital Varsity has attracted and registered students from various countries in Africa and beyond: India, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Central Africa Republic, Djibouti, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, USA, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon, Germany, Australia, Burundi, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Tanzania, Seychelles, South Korea, Oman and the United Kingdom, among other countries .
- They sit for examinations at the Kenyan approved Embassies abroad and they maintain online interaction with the online tutors and technical and students support team at the Digital Varsity.
- To international students, the Net – courtesy of Mount Kenya University's Digital Varsity – is their classroom.

Why digital learning

- Student-centred learning through the web based integrated students management and Digital Learning system and learning moderated by the online tutor.

Exchange Programme

My Erasmus+ experience in Poland – MKU student

Two Mount Kenya University (MKU) students are on a fully-sponsored three-month student exchange programme in Poland. Erasmus+ Programme beneficiaries Grace Maina (Bachelor of Business Management) and Collins Wekesa (Bachelor of Travel and Tourism Management) travelled to Poland in March.

They are studying at Vincent Pol University, which has a memorandum of co-operation with MKU.

Mr Wekesa sent a message to the

Vice-Chancellor detailing his experience in Poland:

“On arrival at VPU, we received a warm and friendly welcome from the VPU staff led by Madam Anna, the international students coordinator. We settled in right away and felt valued as a team member from the beginning. I had initially wanted an international experience but hadn’t had a chance. I appreciate the Erasmus+ programme which gave me this opportunity to get not only class experience but also immerse myself in



Ms. Jane Kanjuru, Dean School of Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Management (left), Prof Stanley Waudo (centre) and Mr. Muthoga Njuru Deputy Director Quality Assurance (right) are joined by students who benefitted from the Erasmus + Programme.



Staff and students from MKU with visitors from Clarke and Dixie Universities pose for a group photo during a visit to MKU as part of a student exchange programme.

another culture.

I am liking the experience and enjoying the environment though cold, and am also learning the importance of attention to detail. I should have learnt this at MKU but I suppose it’s different in Europe.

At VPU everything you learn is a deliverable (gets presented or delivered in front of the class) and as such must be perfect.

I distinctly remember being asked to come up with a tourism product. At first I was frustrated as it seemed somewhat ridiculous, but I learned that the little things and the details set the best apart from the rest.

I am thoroughly enjoying learning in an international setting different from the perceptions of different students.

Otherwise, it’s an absolutely fantastic experience and I relish the time spent both professionally and personally. I am especially excited about competing with our hosts in class.

Finally, I believe by the end of this programme, my ability for networking and my general communication skills will have vastly improved and I have now discovered that I shouldn’t limit myself and am now open to opportunities that may arise.”

Don returns with fresh medical teaching, reference kits from WHO



Prof Njeri Wamae (right) with her friend Lisa Rotondo, Programme Director at ENVISION/RTI on the sidelines of the Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Summit.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) don, Prof Njeri Wamae, attended two events on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) in Switzerland in April and returned home richer. Not only did she gain a wealth of knowledge in her area of specialisation, but she also received academic gifts that she donated to the University.

Prof Wamae brought back an assortment of teaching, demonstration and reference materials from the World Health Organisation (WHO) headquarters in Geneva. These are important additions to the University’s library and parasitology laboratory.

Prof Wamae notes that the discipline of medical parasitology has evolved extensively.

“We can no longer depend on existing text books and other published materials,” she warns. “We must also look at

personal experiences that are current so as to instruct our students of parasitology on new diagnostic techniques as well as improved integrated interventions to combat neglected tropical diseases.”

Prof Wamae learned that excellent progress had been made under the WHO road map to tackling neglected tropical diseases. “In fact, some WHO member states have already or are just about to be certified as having eliminated Lymphatic Filariasis, including Togo and Malawi,” she reports.

Among other items, the don donated to the university a copy of the *4th WHO Report on Neglected Tropical Diseases*, which was launched during the NTD Summit.

The summit was attended by eminent persons, among them Bill Gates and Kofi Annan. Other dignitaries include the

WHO Director Margret Chan and WHO Regional Director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti, and a host of CEOs of global drug manufacturing companies.

The report focuses on integrating neglected tropical diseases into global health and development. This agenda is driven by the theme: “Collaborate, Accelerate, Eliminate”.

The report also looks at NTDs progress towards 2020 and beyond, as well as opportunities to 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Prof Wamae is the Chairperson of the Kenya National Guinea Worm Eradication Certification Committee of the Ministry of Health, and a Board Member of Operation Eyesight Universal Kenya.

She is also a public health specialist and consultant in neglected diseases.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Growing the list of partners

Mount Kenya University (MKU) is cultivating more strategic partnerships. The University has a memorandum of cooperation with Vincent Pol University in Poland. The collaboration is pegged on joint research projects and access to the prestigious Erasmus+ exchange programme by staff and students.

Last December, two MKU academic staff made a trip to Vincent Pol University. Two MKU students also visited and stayed at the same university from March to June 2017 under the Erasmus exchange sponsorship.

The MKU and the University of West of Scotland enjoy a partnership that focuses on establishing, where appropriate, franchising or local delivery agreements of specified programmes.

The University of West of Scotland participated actively at the International Conference on Peace, Justice and Social Enterprise, that was organised by MKU and hosted at Safari Park Hotel on 17 and 18 May.

The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC), a government agency, was a major partner in organising the conference.

MKU partnered with Africa Cyber Space Network during the international peace conference in May and hosted a panel to discuss on ways of seeking solutions to Cyber Crime.



Dr Evangeline Njoka, MBS, Secretary General KNATCOM for UNESCO exchanges MoU documents with Prof. Stanley Waudo, Mount Kenya University Vice-Chancellor. This is after signing an MoU on collaboration between the two institutions.

MKU has so far signed memoranda with two UNESCO offices – the UNESCO Paris Headquarters and the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM), in Nairobi.

MKU has further embarked on a new partnership with UNESCO regional office at Gigiri. Discussions are in progress towards the establishment of a radio-based educational programme for the MKU Naivasha Maximum Prison programme.

The training partnership between MKU

School of Business and Economics and Makerere University Business School (MUBS) takes effect this year. The two will jointly offer an Executive Masters of Business Administration programme.

The two schools are further collaborating on research, publications and mentorship of student leaders, and at MKU's Graduate Enterprise Academy (GEA).

Also, MKU is partnering with Wadhvani Foundation to inculcate entrepreneurial skills to students. Wadhvani Foundation is a Silicon Valley (USA) based entrepreneurship-focused establishment.

Focus on science training delivers MKU to the top – CPS survey

It is ranked first among private universities

Mount Kenya University (MKU) leads in science training in Kenya, topping private universities. At the same time, it is among the top 10 among all universities in Kenya.

This is according to research conducted by CPS Research International.

The survey found that "it is almost two to five times harder to find a private university offering hands-on science courses such as nursing, engineering or computing."

MKU scored highly because it offers all these. The CPS research thus vindicates the University's decision to invest heavily in science training.

The survey, titled "State of Science Training in Kenyan Universities", also revealed that in the top five private university category, MKU topped both the sciences and arts lists at 3.1 percent (or 64 courses), and 3.3 percent (30 courses) in that order.

The research further confirmed a strong positive correlation between the number of science courses a university offers and its global ranking and affinity to attract research grants and funding.

Universities with the largest number of science courses are ranked highly and have higher potential of being funded.

The CPS survey observed that there was a need for increased funding for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programmes in both private and public universities, as they were costly.

The study was commissioned by Pan African Education Trust.

CPS Research International is a market and social research company that has cut a niche in specialised research in various parts of the world.

MKU lecturer joins list of top Cisco instructors globally

Information Technology lecturer Charles Ng'ang'a is literally on top of the world. The Cisco Networking Academy has recognised him as one of the top 25 per cent of instructors globally in the Cisco networking system.

Mr Ng'ang'a, a lecturer at Mount Kenya University, is being feted for Advanced Level Instructor excellence and lasting contribution to the academy. He will receive his award on 26 July at State University of Zanzibar.

He said he was simply,

"thrilled to be honoured."

The letter breaking the good news to him states in part: "As a result of your accomplishments and contributions to Cisco Networking Academy, we're pleased to announce that you are being recognised as an Advanced Level Instructor this year."

To accompany this award, Cisco has developed a certificate of recognition and an icon that Mr Ng'ang'a's can use as part of his email signature.

Cisco will list Mr Ng'ang'a's name on the Cisco NetAcad

Recognition Programme page alongside other instructors who have received awards.

Mount Kenya University Cisco Networking Academy was established in February 2015. It is geared toward delivering comprehensive 21st century learning solutions to help students develop the foundational information communication technology (ICT) skills needed to design, build, and manage networks, along with career skills such as problem solving, collaboration and critical thinking.

Students complete hands-on learning activities and network simulations to develop practical skills designed to help them fill a growing need for networking professionals around the world.

At the end of the course, students sit for online tests and course feedback exams. These are used to rate instructors' performance worldwide.

Ng'ang'a's recognition thus follows impressive student feedback and performance in the Cisco Networking Academy programme.



Charles Ng'ang'a, MKU Cisco Instructor

Sports

Athletics coach who keeps MKU on a winning streak

What makes the Mount Kenya University (MKU) athletics team a formidable one? While talent must be the key factor, coaching plays the significant role of moulding the winning formula.

Coach James Murigi, 45, has been sharpening the institution's athletes since 2013. He has done a great job. That year, the MKU athletics team emerged second in the inter-universities games. The team did better in 2014, finishing as champions. They retained the crown in 2015 and last year, making it three years in a row.

"In 2013, we took second position in track and field events, but since then, we have had a stranglehold on Number One," says Mr Murigi.

He is happy that the university performs well even in inter-university cross-country races, usually held every January. This year, it successfully defended the crown it won in January last year. Both events were hosted at Kabarak University in Kabarak, Rift Valley.

"We are the men and women cross-country champions," coach Murigi says with pride.

MKU short distance runner Peter Mwai is in the Kenya relay team that competed in the Bahamas on 22 and 23 April.

On 19 and 20 May, MKU athletes will

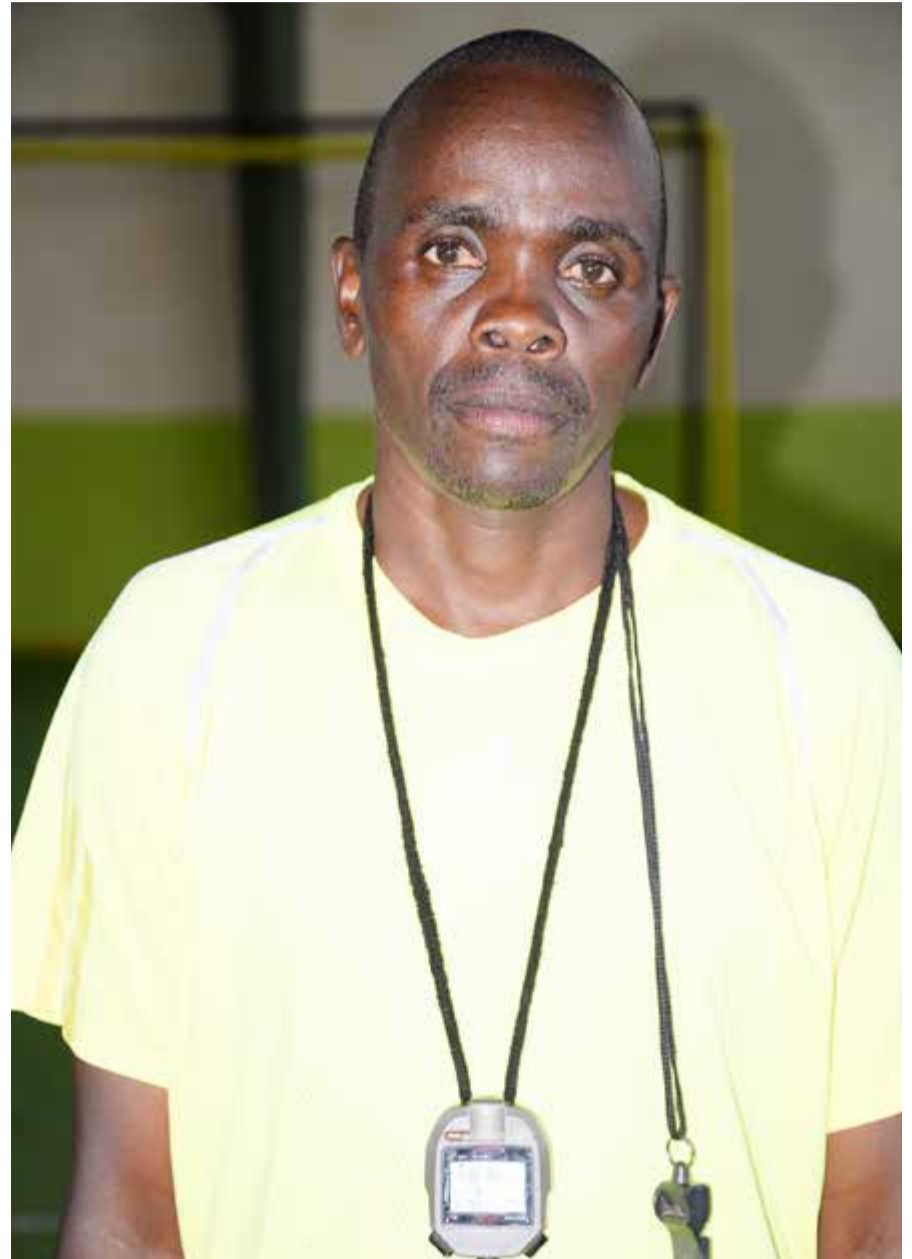
participate in national trials in Eldoret to select a team to represent the country in the World Universities Games set for Taipei, China, later this year.

"I expect not less than 10 MKU athletes to qualify for the games," says Mr Murigi.

He currently coaches over 40 MKU athletes. A majority of them are based at the main campus in Thika. These are runners who specialise in 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1,500m, 3,000 steeplechase, 3,000m flat, 5,000m and 10,000m events. Others are experts in field events such as long jump, triple jump, shot put, javelin and discuss.

The university's athletics coach says the only events that the institution does not participate in are pole vault and hurdles (400m, 110m and 100m). This is because these events are not hosted during inter-university competitions, although MKU has athletes capable of representing it in these categories.

"For example, our own Carol Waiganjo is the 2013 and 2014 national champion in the 100m race," Murigi explains. "She can run both the 100m flat and the 100m hurdles, but the latter is not offered at the inter-university games. She was the 100m champion during the 2014 East African Universities Championships held in Uganda."



James Murigi, Athletics Coach



Mathew Rapando prepares for a race in South Africa

Sprint champion Rapando not done yet in academic race

Matthew Rapando's slight frame reveals little about his immense athletic prowess. But the athlete he has competed against knows him as a formidable sportsman, a competitor to fear in the short races.

He is a champion.

Matthew, 21, is making the most of his time at Mount Kenya University (MKU). He is enjoying success in class and on the field, as he develops in both body and mind.

Matthew completed the coursework for his Bachelor of Business Management degree programme last December. He is

awaiting graduation in July and plans to embark on a Master's degree study in September – still at MKU.

He has been representing the university in athletics competitions within and outside Kenya since 2013. That year, he represented MKU in the Kenya University Sports Championship in the 100m race and took bronze. In the same championships, he helped the university team to grab gold in the 4 x 100m and 4 x 400m races.

In 2014, he won silver for the university in the 100m race during the East African Universities

Championship held in Uganda. He was also in the MKU relay team that grabbed bronze.

The following year, Matthew qualified for the World University Games as part of the Kenyan team. However, a logistical challenge kept him out of the games that were held in South Korea.

"The trip was expensive," he explains.

This did not discourage him from training hard for the Africa Inter-Universities Championship hosted by South Africa in Johannesburg. Matthew won gold, and was in the MKU team that settled for silver in the 4 x 100m.

PROSPECTS FOR AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY GRADUATE

Scaling the Heights of Education

Awards MKU students scooped during the Kenya National Drama Festivals, 2017

| POSITIONS | CAMPUS | ITEM |
|----------------------------|----------|--|
| Runners up | Thika | Best item on presentation of HIV/AIDS |
| Runners up | Thika | Best item on Ethics and Anti- Corruption |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Most Original Play |
| Runners up | Thika | Best Costume and Décor |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Best Costume and Décor – Mime |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Best Scripted Mime |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Best Production - Mime |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Adjudicators Award – Modern dance |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Best Female Dancer |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Winning Mime |
| 2 nd Runners up | Kakamega | Winning Cultural Creative Dance |
| 2 nd Runners up | Thika | Best Scenic Design |

Individual Students Awards

| Position | Name | Campus | Item |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Best Actor | Alfred Kanyua | Thika | Over all Best Actor |
| Runners up | Carmen Miheso | MKU Kakamega | Best Female Soloist- Creative Dance |
| 2 nd Runners up | Edward Makau | Thika | Most Promising Actor |



Alfred Kanyua, Overall Best Actor



Edward Makau, 2nd Runners up - Most Promising Actor



MKU students during Kenya National Drama festivals



MKU students troupe performs during the festivals



MKU Dean of Students Mr Evans Omwango lauds the university's handball teams for their impressive performances in the first half of this year.

Dean praises handball teams for flying varsity flag high

Mount Kenya University (MKU) Dean of Students, Mr Evans Omwango, congratulates the women's and men's handball teams for their superb performances during the first half of the 2017 sports season.

The teams have scooped 10 trophies so far.

The women's team performed particularly well, emerging champions in five competitions.

They took first position in the Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA) women championship.

They also bagged the Kusa National League, Kusa Nairobi League, St Paul's University's Open Tournament, and Strathmore University Open Tournament. They were runners-up in the East African Universities Games.

The men's team performed well too. They took second position in both the Kusa Nairobi League and St Paul's University Open. The team also emerged third in the Kusa National League and also in the East African Universities Games.

Many reasons explain various world phenomena

But there are 21 reasons why MKU is the most preferred private university by both Government and self-sponsored students

- 1. Accreditation:** Accredited by the Commission for University Education, Kenya.
- 2. International recognition:** The University is fully chartered, and is ISO 9001:2008 certified, meaning that it is committed on compliance with international standards on quality.
- 3. Convenient fees payment mode:** Affordable and flexible fees payment in easy percentage instalments of 30:30:20:20.
- 4. Accessible campuses:** Students have a choice to study from any of its accredited campuses in Kenya and other countries, hence increased access to and equity in university education plus Digital varsity.
- 5. Digital window:** Wi-Fi internet access across all the campuses.
- 6. Superb staff:** Qualified and committed teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 7. Academic resources:** Well-equipped Science and IT laboratories, Library and other academic resources.
- 8. Flexible study options:** Flexible modes of learning, which include fulltime, digital learning, Institution-based learning, part-time (evening and weekends).
- 9. Course completion time:** Students are able to complete their course within the stipulated time. Students' academic progress is monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis.
- 10. Student welfare support:** For the convenience of the students, the University has in place accommodation facilities and a student centre that houses a restaurant serving international cuisine. The university also has a gym and a salon/barber shop. There are also shops for the basic needs of students, laundry and dry cleaning services. The integrated sick bay offers basic health services and ensures a healthy environment for the University community. The sporting and recreation activities at the university vary and include rugby, football, tennis, volley ball, athletics, swimming and others such as drama.
- 11. Academic/Social trips:** The University has in place a fleet of buses. Transport is always available for academic and social trips.
- 12. Academic exchanges:** Students' benefit from academic exchanges with foreign and local institutions of higher learning.
- 13. Career placement:** The University produces highly skilled graduates who are employable. Others go into self-employment and create jobs.
- 14. Multicultural diversity:** The University recognises the diversity of its student population and develops talents through organising of cultural events. There is unity in diversity.
- 15. Community Service/Engagements:** Mount Kenya University is committed to carrying out corporate social responsibility based activities that add value to the community we live in.
- 16. E-Reading facilities:** Use of ICT and other technologies, such as kindles.
- 17. Research and Development:** We create innovators and support them to commercialise innovations and inventions.
- 18. Academic Character:** Mount Kenya University offers an all-rounded education, including moral and professional education to all persons irrespective of religion, race, gender, political affiliation, social or cultural background.
- 19. Transition rate:** Students progress from one level to another at a very high rate, which is an indicator of satisfaction.
- 20. Security:** Enhanced security in the University and within its environs through 24-hour CCTV camera surveillance and night patrols by security agencies.
- 21. Synergetic Partnership:** University partners with research institutions, Universities, hospitals and forges strong industry – academia linkages



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