



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

JUNE 2017

VarsityFocus

A magazine of the University of Nairobi

Trailblazers: A tale of UoN women

Dr. Vijoo Rattansi, OGW
Chancellor, University of Nairobi



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

Our Vision

A world-class university committed to scholarly excellence

Our Mission

To provide quality university education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

Our Core Values

- Freedom of thought and expression
- Excellence
- Care
- Good governance
- Innovativeness and creativity
- Partnership and teamwork

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UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
VarsityFocus

Published by

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Harnessing women power at UoN

The University of Nairobi (UoN) is one of the few institutions in Kenya that has institutionalised policies that promote inclusivity and diversity. During the recent Employer of the Year Awards (EYA) 2017, UoN emerged top in the inclusiveness and diversity category. The University also scooped first runners up in innovation and productivity, second runners up in corporate Performance, second runners up in Leadership and governance; and overall second runners up. The Survey was conducted by PriceWaterHouseCoopers and sponsored by Federation of Kenya Employers.

In this edition of the Varsity Focus the University of Nairobi celebrates with pride the contribution of its women leaders and scholars who have stamped their foot prints locally and globally in various fields. When you review the profiles of who is who at UoN, you come across names of outstanding personalities who have made significant contribution to society. At the Apex, you come across the humble, soft spoken and visionary Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi. She is the first woman Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. Dr. Rattansi was recently awarded *the Knight of the Order of the Star* by the Italian government in recognition of her efforts in promoting cultural and economic relations between Kenya and Italy. Dr. Rattansi is a renowned philanthropist who has assisted thousands of people

from disadvantaged backgrounds to go through education by providing them with scholarships.

In management, UoN women have also broken the glass ceiling and are comfortably discharging their mandates with passion. Prof. Lucy Irungu, Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) in charge of Research Production and Extension has risen through the ranks to her current position. Before her, there was Prof. Florida Karani, a renowned educationist and the pioneer female DVC in Kenya.

Prof Lucy Irungu is a scholar and a research guru! She is very passionate about enhancing the quality and quantity of research outputs from the University of Nairobi.

Another Professor at UoN is Judith Bahemuka, The Chancellor of University of Eldoret and the chair of the Chancellors forum in Kenya. She is a Professor and researcher at the Department of Sociology. Prof. Bahemuka is a celebrated diplomat who has served the country with distinction. Other renowned UoN scholars include Prof. Maria Nzomo and Prof. Kameri Mbote who have served with distinction in the world of academia and in the public sector.

A new generation of young women scholars and researchers like Dr. Jane Ambuko, Prof. Park, and Dr. Parita Shah have also emerged and are ready to carry the mantle from their senior scholars. Harnessing women power is one of the key pillars for UoN's global competitiveness and scholarly

excellence.

UoN is out to reclaim its glory as the regional centre of intellectual discourse. The University has entered into a partnership with the Nation Media Group and other stakeholders to provide leadership in promoting quality ideas and debates on issues of strategic interest to the country. One such initiative is the Thought Leadership forum that brings together policy makers, academia and individuals to discuss various issues touching on citizenry.

The University shall continue to provide a conducive environment for holistic development of students. Apart from excelling in academics, UoN provides an opportunity for students to exploit their talents in sports and entertainment.

At the international arena, the University has consistently maintained favorable global ranking during the Webometrics Universities rankings due to team work, steadfast leadership and support from the stakeholders. We give special thanks to the external stakeholders and UoN Alumni who have continued to support the university through provision of student internships, scholarships, mentorship and coaching programmes.

John.A.O.Orindi
Director, Corporate Affairs.

UoN passes scrutiny by statutory and regulatory bodies



*Prof. Peter M.F. Mbithi,
Vice-Chancellor*

The year 2017 started with a series of high profile activities, directly touching on core University operations. Some of them were internal while others were externally driven.

In January 2017, the Commission for University Education (CUE) undertook a Quality Inspection Audit of the University, an exercise that was targeting all universities and university colleges authorized to operate in Kenya. The purpose of the Quality Inspection Audit was to establish the extent to which universities were complying with the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012, the Universities (Amendment) Act 2016, among other Acts and Guidelines, and to assure members of the public that CUE was taking appropriate measures to regulate the quality of education in universities.

I am pleased to inform stakeholders that the University of Nairobi was found to have adhered to the provisions of the Acts as required and further, to the Guidelines for Appointment and Promotion of Academic staff.

Early in the year, management finalized the preparation of the Short Term Implementation Plan for the final phase of the 2013 - 2018 Strategic Plan. The Short Term Implementation Plan (STIP) is to cover the period January 2017 to June 2018, by which time another fully fledged five year Plan will be prepared.

The STIP addresses various challenges in the

University's operating landscape, currently characterized by growing pressures relating to declining income and rising operational costs. In the revised strategy, the University has undertaken to be more responsible to its internal and external stakeholders, with greater focus being given to the customer and also greater engagement with society. Within this period, the University also participated in the Government job evaluation exercise conducted by the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) through PriceWaterHouseCoopers (PwC). The exercise, which is part of Public Service Reforms, is expected to assist the University in streamlining its pay structure to compensate members of staff in a manner commensurate with their individual contribution in productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

On staff welfare, the University through the Inter-Public Universities Consultative Forum (IPUCCF) and together with other public universities completed negotiations and signed Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with the three staff unions. The CBAs enhanced salary and housing allowances for all staff, for the period July 1, 2013 to June 31, 2017.

I must express my satisfaction with the patience and maturity displayed by the union leaders during the negotiations.

In another development, I take this opportunity to inform our staff, students and other stakeholders that the University has won major trophies in the inaugural Employer of the Year Awards, organized by the Federation of Kenya Employers. At the ceremony, which was held on May 19, 2017, the University emerged the Overall 2nd Runners Up as Employer of the Year in Kenya. The University also scooped awards in the sub-categories of Inclusiveness & Diversity, Innovation & Productivity, Leadership & Governance and Corporate Performance.

At the academic front, the University remains committed to enhancing the quality and relevance of all academic programmes, with a view to increasing the relevance of

graduates in accordance with Kenya's Vision 2030 and improving the quality of graduates. Further, the University is committed to enhancing the growth of postgraduate students and the internalization of UoN.

In order to create an enabling environment for conducting cutting-edge research, the University has undertaken to enhance its research infrastructure and facilities. Since July 2016, we have signed 280 new MoUs with various partners, peer institutions and other agencies.

As regards students' welfare, the University continues to enhance students' mentorship, counseling services and co-curricular portfolio with a view to producing socially holistic graduates.

Recently, the University witnessed the successful launch of the Law Chapter of the University of Nairobi Alumni Association. The function was graced by the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Justice David Kenani Maraga.

As I have stated before, it is my belief that our strength as a corporate will to a large extent lie in our relationships and linkages with our alumni in various professions. I therefore call upon other Schools and Faculties to emulate the School of Law and work towards launching their alumni chapters. I also wish to urge our existing Alumni Chapters to be more visible and active in spearheading and supporting University activities.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank our staff and students for their dedication to the University, and to wish everyone the best in the daily endeavours. We pray that the Almighty God grants us peaceful elections in August 2017.

**PETER M.F. MBITHI, PhD, EBS
VICE-CHANCELLOR
AND
PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY**

UoN women achievers and trailblazers

Since its inception in 1970, the University of Nairobi (UoN) has overcome many hurdles in its steadfast voyage to fulfil its vision as a world class university committed to academic excellence.

Today, UoN proudly perches on the pedestal of honour as the leading university in East African region and among the best in Africa and the world, according to recent globally recognised rankings of higher institutions of learning.

This success stems from a myriad of factors, including sound leadership, institutional and individual collaborative initiatives and, above all, a solid team of highly qualified scholars whose reputations are globally acknowledged.

The top dons, both men and women, are the fulcrum around which the University has revolved for over four decades. They have not only nurtured academic excellence in teaching and research but also gone beyond the call of duty and excelled

in other aspects outside the University.

Documenting the profiles of outstanding scholars and administrators at the University of Nairobi across decades is a herculean task that requires eons and several volumes of books. Since 1970, every generation has had its outstanding scholars and administrators under whose shadows the University proudly stands today as a distinctive shrine of knowledge and trailblazer in different facets.

In this special issue of the Varsity Focus, we celebrate some of the current generation of UoN women scholars and administrators who have left indelible footprints in their specialties and other aspects that have touched and changed lives. In our subsequent issues, we will go back in time to celebrate the men and women who have proudly placed UoN on the global map in their respective specialties. VF

Chancellor reveals her vision for the University



Dr. Vijoo Rattansi,
Chancellor, University of Nairobi

An old Greek adage goes that “a society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in.” When they started the Mohamedally and Maniben Rattansi Educational Trust in 1956, little did Mr. and Mrs. Mohamedally Rattansi know how much impact the trust would have on the higher education sector in Kenya 60 years on. Yet from those humble beginnings, timeless vision and shoulders of the gigantic founders emerged Dr. Vijoo Rattansi.

As part of celebrating accomplished women leaders at the University of Nairobi, the Varsity Focus editor had a one-on-one interview with the Chancellor who is also the Chair of the Rattansi Educational Trust, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi excerpts:

Your contribution in the higher education sector and culture has been phenomenal. Last year alone you and the Rattansi Educational Trust donated scholarships worth KES 60 million to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Rattansi Educational Trust. What motivates you?

An old Russian acquaintance once told me that education is light. Simply put, the lack of education is darkness. The world is a beautiful place yet with all this

infinite beauty, a child born into poverty in our part of the world faces monumental odds to stem the slip into the viscous cycle of cross generational poverty. For many years, the Trust has invested in higher education of many students from least advantaged backgrounds in Kenya. Nothing inspires more than to see a child from a humble background attain a good education, turn the corner of misfortune and like a flower in season, bloom to be a man or woman of substance. Over the last 30 years, I have witnessed many success stories and with every person a renewed impetus to play a catalytic role in the transformation of society, one person at a time. Every child successfully plucked out of poverty holds the promise of light to his/her family, his/her society and the world at large. The butterfly effect of such an intervention is too great a quantum to be ignored. We may not do it for the entire nation but for as long as I live, the Trust and myself will continue standing in the gap for the children of fortune.

You are the first female Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. What has been your experience as a Chancellor?

Firstly, I must say that being the first female Chancellor of this University may be more of a case of historical accident than design. The history of man's existence is replete with moments in time where societies made significant changes to their modus operandi. One such moment in Kenya was the promulgation of a new Constitution in 2010 which Constitution expanded space and opportunities for women to participate in decision making and nation building. I want to believe that I fall in the category of pioneer women leaders who may have benefited from this wind of change in the country governance.

Secondly, I have had a most humbling experience as Chancellor. Just when I thought I was old enough not to learn new things, new challenges at this level have called for personal re-calibration of decision making processes. New opportunities have opened my eyes to new dimensions of scrutiny and measured yet thoughtful steps.

I hope someday, when I shed this official cloak and pen my memoirs, I can lend you a precision eye into the world of a Chancellor of this University.

You took over chancellorship at UoN with a full tray especially during a transition and what others say was a turbulent period for UoN. How have you managed to navigate UoN through the storm back to stability?

I wouldn't necessarily use the term turbulent. I would instead use the word uncertain. Change by its very definition comes with its own measure of uncertainty which can be quite disruptive.

My tenure has been marked by many changes at the top executive level of the University with the retirement of the immediate former Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof. George Magoha and the competitive elevation of Prof. Peter Mbithi to the position of the VC in 2015. Additionally, the positions of Deputy Vice Chancellor Finance and Administration, Student Affairs (SA) and Research, Production and Extension (RPE) fell vacant and were competitively filled. This constitutes 80% competitive reconstitution of the top 5 management positions at the University in a little under one and a half years. Leadership schools teach that change management is a process. What they do not tell you is that the time element in this process may be inflexible.

On many occasions, I engaged the wisdom of the Council and many other men and women of goodwill. The Council was supportive and I want to believe I gave them unqualified support. This was through advice as mandated by the Universities Act 2012 and in so doing greatly enriching the governance body of the University. I am a strong defender of the autonomy of governance boards and I believe I have not fallen short when called upon to safeguard the operational independence of the University Council. This constructive tension has, in my humble view, succeeded in yielding a semblance of stability for the University.

Certain levels of societal leadership expose the office bearers to an unkind world. One must therefore remain firm and steadfast in the faith knowing that they laboureth not in vain. The alternative to fervent positive effort is the finality of a damnation that slumbereth not. I believe that we have reached where we are today through constancy of purpose, commitment and positive synergies.

How would you term the relationship that you have with other public university chancellors?

As chancellors of public universities, we have in place a consultative caucus ably represented by a committee. Every so often, and funds permitting, we meet to deliberate and reason together on matters of concern to the body of chancellors. As a result of positive interaction and the shared nexus of similar challenges, the relationship amongst chancellors, myself included, can be termed as warm and cordial.

As you may be aware, outside conferment of degrees and awards, the facilitation for Chancellors of public universities in execution of their mandate is virtually non-existent. For this reason and together with a team of like-minded individuals, I have initiated a number of resource mobilization initiatives that have secured funds to facilitate two very important meetings of chancellors.

Arising out of these meetings are key recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology that chancellors believe, if implemented, will go a long way in resolving or minimizing conflicts at the policy and top management levels of public universities. These recommendations have been shared with the Ministry's Cabinet Secretary and it is the earnest hope of chancellors that he will accord them due regard.

You have just mentioned resource mobilization. As an ardent supporter of the University's resource mobilization strategies, would you like to comment on a few of those successes on a more personal as opposed to institutional level?

I consider myself part and parcel of the whole on matters of resource mobilization, where the whole here refers

to the University. As chancellor, I am acutely aware of the resource challenged environment within which the university operates. Consequently, beyond the bounds of institutional frameworks, the challenge to mobilize resources impinges on my conscience. For this reason, any personal interventions to make better the resource endowment of the University only augments the collective effort of the entire University.

The Rattansi Educational Trust, which I chair, continues to contribute towards higher education at the University. In addition to the Trust's annual allocation to the University, we have contributed KES 1,000,000 as seed fund to University of Nairobi Foundation. Further, we have contributed KES 10,000,000 towards furnishing of five lecture theatres at the new University of Nairobi Towers. This, I believe, will go a long way in improving the teaching, learning and research infrastructure for students at the University and lead to better quality graduate outcomes.

Further to monetary contribution, we hope to start resource mobilization efforts towards the construction of the School of Law Towers to be based at our Parklands Campus in the coming days.

I am and will always remain committed to the pursuit of a financially sustainable university.

You just mentioned a School of Law Towers to be based at Parklands Campus. Tell us more?

My short tenure as Chancellor has exposed me widely to the central role played by sound laws and sober interaction with the same. Some of the problems generally afflicting universities are of legal nature flowing from misinterpretation and/or misapplication of law. Universities, in general,

increasingly need dependable assistance from independent legal minds. It is for this reason that I am convinced that governors, managers and leaders of every creed in institutions need sound legal advice on matters that they may, from time-to-time, be considering. I hold the view that the University's School of Law should be at the fore as the country's Centre of Excellence in Law. It should be a pre-eminent technical resource in crafting of sound and time-tested legislation, growing legal practice, jurisprudence and constitutionalism and grooming of the finest legal minds that will seek to advise dispassionately and without selective, political or any other bias. This will subsequently help address or resolve many legal questions.

This walk began with a contribution of KES 9,000,000 to equip the Law School library with legal text books for purposes of meeting the stringent Council for Legal Education (CLE) standards on training of lawyers.

I therefore look forward to spearheading this resource mobilization effort for the benefit of this University and the entire country.

What are your thoughts on the issues of students discipline and drug and substance abuse at the University?

As a mother, I am naturally concerned about the well-being and all roundedness of our students. Like a shepherd, we cannot sit on our laurels if only one of our sheep strays. We must shepherd the lost sheep back to the fold. If, as a university, we only succeed at inculcating academic excellence without the requisite character and culture that makes our graduates fit-for-society, then we will have failed in toto.

Indiscipline and drug and substance abuse are issues that tug on my

heartstrings. I am greatly saddened and sympathize with our students struggling with these vices and I wish to echo the University's commitment to walk with them the path to rehabilitation. We hope to scale up efforts to fight this menace and secure the future for our students since Universities and other institutions of higher learning are cultivating grounds for the country's future human capital and leadership. I am verily informed that the University has taken steps to greatly improve the safety and security situation in our campuses in liaison with national security agencies. There have been, and I believe there are, ongoing discussions with counselors and the National Authority for Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) to increase awareness, access to information of and interventions on drug and substance abuse.

Last word?

We want to make the University of Nairobi the oasis of hope and scholarly excellence. We want every student that walks into this University to feel safe and secure so as to quench their academic curiosity and to walk out of our gates well-armed with the tools of life. For as long as I have breath and the appropriate instruments of governance, rest assured that I shall keep pursuing this with heart and soul and shall leave nothing to chance.

From us at Varsity Focus, we wish to convey our congratulatory message to the Chancellor on her recognition by the Italian Government through the award of the 'Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy'. Further, we wish the Chancellor well in all her undertaking and look forward to reading her memoirs when she finally puts pen to paper! **VF**

A Research guru at high pedestal



Prof. Lucy Irungu, Deputy Vice-Chancellor RPE

Prof. Lucy Irungu is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Production and Extension at the University of Nairobi and a Professor of Entomology in the School of Biological and Physical Sciences. She graduated from the University of Nairobi with a BSc. first class honours degree (Entomology) in 1978 from the Department of Entomology. She immediately joined ICIPE as a graduate research scholar and was awarded a scholarship by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation to pursue an MSc degree in Medical Entomology and Applied Parasitology at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, graduating in 1979. Prof. Irungu proceeded to Imperial College and the British Museum on internship for six months before returning to ICIPE. In 1981, she was awarded a scholarship by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) to pursue her PhD. She completed her studies at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in 1984 and returned to ICIPE for her postdoctoral work.

In 1988, she joined the Department of Zoology, UoN, as a lecturer and rose through the ranks to Full Professor in 2008.

Prof. Irungu served as the Chairman of the Department of Zoology from 1999 to 2004. She was then appointed Principal, College of Biological and Physical Sciences (CBPS), a position she held up to February 2011 when she was appointed as Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Production and Extension.

Prof Irungu is a vibrant researcher in the area of vector biology and control and host-vector parasite relationships, with special interest

in malaria vectors and other vectors and parasites of neglected diseases. In addition, she has supervised 23 MSc students and 11 PhD students to completion and is currently supervising 3 PhD students. She has published over 60 papers in peer-reviewed journals. Her commitment to growth is demonstrated in fundraising for research and scholarship in addition to strong collaborative links that have built institutional and individual capacities. Key amongst them was in leadership role in the establishment of the Centre for Biotechnology and Bioinformatics (CEBIB) in 2006.

She served as a member of task forces and committees in the MoHEST, Board of the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST). Most significantly, she chaired the committee of the Taskforce of MoHEST that developed the Science Technology and Innovation Bill which led to the establishment of the National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI), the National Research Fund (NRF) and Kenya National Innovation Agency (KENIA). These state corporations manage the Science Technology and

Innovation Ecosystem in Kenya's Higher Education Sector. The taskforce also developed the TIVET and University Bills 2013. These three bills were enacted as separate Acts in 2013.

Prof. Irungu has served as a board member of the UON Pension Scheme, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi Fund, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Scientific and Advisory Board, ICIPE Post Graduate Board, Consortium for National Health and Research Advisory Committee, Association of Commonwealth Universities Structured Training for African Researchers (ACU-STARS), Murang'a County Initiative, and the JRS Biodiversity Foundation.

The researcher belongs to several regional networks e.g. African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWRAD), East African Research Innovation Managers Association (EARIMA) and African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA).

She is a fellow of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene UK, a fellow of the Kenya Academy of Sciences, a member of the KIM, among other professional organizations.

During her six years as DVC (RPE), she has fully operationalized the mandate and functions of the office by ensuring that the organizational structure is in place.

"Under my leadership, research related strategic plans and work plans have been developed and implemented and all relevant policies and guidelines for the management of Research, Innovation and Extension in the entire University have been developed or reviewed and implemented in line with the UoN strategic Plan 2013-2018. This has resulted in the marked increase in the research funding portfolio, university research activities research visibility and the University's ranking," says Prof. Irungu. [VF](#)

Educational warrior and pioneer female Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Prof. Florida Amakobe Karani was born at Kima Mission (currently Bunyore Girls' High School) where her late parents were pioneer teachers and preachers. The Butere Girls' High School and Alliance Girls' High School alumna studied at the University of East Africa – Nairobi, and graduated with an honours degree in history.

She holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Education and Masters of Arts degree in history and education of the University of Nairobi, a PhD in Educational Communications and Technology (Major) and Educational Research (Minor) of the University of Pittsburgh (USA) and a Doctor of Education Honorary degree of Maseno University. She is a Professor of Education.

Prof. Karani has been described by the Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOS) Trieste, Italy (1999) as an 'Educational Warrior.' Her professional career in education started off with a brief stint as a Secondary School teacher before becoming a lecturer at the Kikuyu Campus (which eventually became the College of Education and External Studies).

From its inception, the College has lived through change and transformation, from residential – extramural - distance programmes in diverse disciplines, to the current teacher education and open, distance and e-learning that cuts across University academic disciplines. As a lecturer, researcher, manager and administrator, Prof. Karani has played a pivotal role in

the management and facilitation of the change during which the College has played a leading role in income generation and the expansion of University education, through the use of strategic, innovative and state of art educational delivery modes. Many graduates of the various phases of the development hold responsible positions in the public and private sectors throughout the country.

As first woman Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and the first woman Chancellor of a public University in Kenya, she has been a trailblazer.

Prof. Karani has participated in steering education in Kenya to greater heights through manning key positions (including Chairman, Vice Chairman, Commissioner and member) of some Boards, Councils, Commissions and committees in the field of education.

She has helped to improve the quality of education of some needy schools by sourcing text books for them and participated in guiding academic, all round growth and learner character formation in schools and colleges where she has been a member of the Board of Governors and those where she has been guest of honour on Open, Education and/or Prize Giving Days. Through self-help and harambee efforts, she has built a modern tuition block of four classrooms at her village school founded by her late parents – Mwitukho Primary School. The educationist has financed the education of some needy youth and helped in job hunting, thus rescuing them from stark poverty.

At the regional and international levels, Prof. Karani has participated in the



Prof. Florida Amakobe Karani

catylyzation and democratization of education. She is a pioneer member of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) which has chapters in 33 African countries, working with Government Ministries of Education, Non Governmental Organizations, the Civil Societies, and Local Communities, empowering women and girls through securing gender responsive education. As a member of some UNESCO committees, she has participated inter-alia in the promotion of continuing education and lifelong learning and the production and use of local content in education where relevant. For example, the production of the General History of Africa (GHA) text book series which were unveiled recently and are slated for use in schools in Africa-grades one to twelve.

In these and other ways, Professor Karani has been a transformation agent in education and a motivator, helper, pathfinder and a role model to many in and outside Kenya. **VF**

Champion for peace and development



Amb. Prof. Judith Mbula Bahemuka

Amb. Prof. Judith Mbula Bahemuka is a woman of many hats. She is the Chancellor of University of Eldoret, the Chairperson of the Chancellor's Forum in Kenya and the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at the University of Nairobi. Prof. Bahemuka is a celebrated scholar who is widely published.

A trained sociologist with interests in poverty reduction, wealth creation, good governance and sustainable livelihoods for marginal communities, Prof. Bahemuka has initiated various projects that have registered great impact in the target communities. She has been a member of staff at the University of Nairobi since 1974, with breaks to serve as Visiting Professor at Leiden (Netherlands); Catholic University (Washington DC); Maryknoll College (USA); and has been appointed by the Kenya Government to spearhead many programmes locally and overseas.

Prof. Bahemuka is the brains behind the Construction of Knowledge Societies- Elimika Project, an initiative that seeks to empower Kenyans for prosperity by equipping them with broad based knowledge on their citizenship, human rights, good governance, sustainability livelihoods and development.

"Elimika creates an opportunity to look at education afresh and build knowledge blocks that will help Kenyans articulate their rights and responsibilities," she says. "Universities have a special role to play in creating and disseminating knowledge to society in a bid to ensure that the Constitution of Kenya 2010 is implemented."

To date, the Elimika Project has recorded significant impact in empowering communities in five counties by equipping them with knowledge on pertinent issues as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The project has achieved varied results in the five target counties of Nairobi, Kwale, Turkana, Homa Bay and Makueni.

"Universities have been recognized as fore in promoting a culture for peaceful co-existence and to ensure that the community has responsible citizens," says Prof. Bahemuka. "Universities are central to peace building and sustainable security through engagement in critical research that bridges the gap between research, policy and practice and the development of a curriculum to address peace and security" she adds.

Prof. Bahemuka participated fully in the preparations for the Beijing Conference, working closely with the then Kenya Women's Bureau, and consulting for UNIFEM and UNFPA up to and during the conference.

She held the chair to the Sociology Department for four years, and also chaired the Social Sciences and

Humanities National Committee to UNESCO for five year. She was instrumental in negotiating for two other UNESCO Chairs, one for Egerton University and the other for Moi University.

In 2001 Prof. Bahemuka became a member of UNESCO Executive Board, where she served until 2005. She held the UNESCO Chair on Women Education, Health and Sustainable Development at the University of Nairobi.

Prof. Bahemuka founded the International Learning Centre with support from Andrew Mellon Foundation, in conjunction with Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) and Kalamazoo College of the USA, and was appointed its first Director. The Centre brings together researchers and scholars from Eastern and Southern Africa with American colleagues to cross-fertilize intellectual thinking between the two continents.

She was appointed as the country's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York (2003-2006); the Kenya High Commissioner to Canada and Ambassador to Cuba until February, 2009. During her tenure as Kenya's Representative at the United Nations, she was appointed by the UN Secretary General as member of UN Special Committee on Financing and Technological Transfer for Developing Countries. She served as the President of UNFPA Committee; President of the United Nations Forum on Forestry (UNFFV) which, under her guidance, agreed on a legal frame framework on Forestry.

Prof. Bahemuka also championed the negotiations for the creation of African Green Revolution Alliance for food security in Africa. The Alliance is now headquartered in Nairobi.

She is a great resource to the global community. **VF**

Incredible achiever in academia and public service

Ambassador Maria Nzomo is Professor of International Relations and Governance and Director, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies (IDIS), University of Nairobi.

In a professional career spanning 35 years, Prof. Nzomo has served in many senior academic, management and leadership positions. She has served as a University Professor, Ambassador, and Manager of various academic and non-academic institutions, Researcher, Publisher; as well as Coordinator and Consultant in various NGOs, Intergovernmental Governmental Organizations and UN bodies.

In academia, Prof Nzomo has set a trail of firsts. She was the first Kenyan woman to obtain a PhD in Political Science and International Relations from Dalhousie University, Canada, in 1981. This impressive feat put her on the course for another precedent as the first woman full professor of International Relations and Governance at IDIS, a culmination of academic voyage which began with BA and MA in Political Science from the University of Nairobi and McMaster University (Canada), respectively.

Prof Nzomo has taught and successfully supervised thousands of UoN Students at undergraduate and postgraduate (MA & PhD) levels in Diplomacy and International Studies. More than 1000 MA and eight PhD students have successfully completed studies under her guidance. The passion to impart knowledge remains relentless, as four PhD students under her supervision are



Amb. Prof. Maria Nzomo

due to graduate later this year.

The teaching and training pressure over the years has not dampened Prof Nzomo's passion for research. In 2002, the scholar initiated a pioneering regional research project for Countering International in Africa. This project propelled IDIS to become one of UoN Centres of Excellence in 2016. Prof Nzomo has developed a Curriculum to transform the programme into IDIS Center of Excellence. She has to date fundraised Ksh. 12million for this research programme.

Prof Nzomo has published widely in the areas of International Relations, Governance, Gender, Human rights and civil societies in Africa. She has over 60 publications in the form of books, journal articles, book chapters, and technical reports. This is besides numerous unpublished papers, public lectures, and keynote addresses delivered at various academic conferences locally and internationally.

As the University of Nairobi continues winning accolades as one of the top ranked universities in Africa and globally, Prof Nzomo has been a key cog in the wheel. She is one of three persons who spearheaded the IDIS institutional building process and the

development of the Foundational Curriculum-1990-1995.

Beyond the academia, Prof Nzomo's contributions are equally outstanding in public service. The don was Kenya's Ambassador and High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland (2003-2006). In this tour of duty, she set precedence as the first Kenyan woman Ambassador to serve in the four Southern Africa countries.

The envoy was also the first Kenya Ambassador to successfully organize for Kenyan envoys accredited to Southern Africa, a Regional Strategic Workshop for capacity building to enhance effectiveness in advancing Kenya's national interests abroad. This initiative promoted warm bilateral relations between Kenya and other countries.

Another feather in her diplomatic mission was appointment as Permanent Representative to the UN and the World Trade Organization in Geneva (2006-2009). In this role, Ambassador Nzomo represented Kenya in over 20 UN agencies and other International Organizations, including UNHRC, UNHCHR, WTO, ILO, WHO, ITU, UNCTAD, WIPO, UNHCR, WMO, IOM, ICRC, IPU, and UPU. She effectively served as Kenya's Chief Representative, Spokesperson and Negotiator at the UN.

Prof Nzomo contributed to successful conclusion of various UN Treaties and Agreements and the foundational institutional building and Work Programme of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHCR) 2006-2009. She also chaired the inaugural UNHRC Panel on Mainstreaming Gender into the Work of the Human Right Council, at the 6th Session of the Human Rights Council, 20-21st September 2007.

In honour of her outstanding service to Kenya, Prof Nzomo was awarded the Presidential award- Moran of the Burning Spear (MBS) - in 2005. [VF](#)

The linguist and language skills expert



Prof. Jayne Mutiga

Prof. Jayne Mutiga is an Associate Professor of Linguistics and the Director for the Centre for Translation & Interpretation of the University of Nairobi. She is the Founding Director of the Centre, having founded it in 2010. The centre is a crowned Centre of Excellence and the only one in the Eastern African region, training professional translators and interpreters for the work of translation and interpreting in the regional and international market.

Prof. Mutiga holds a PhD in Linguistics, a Master of Arts in linguistics and African Languages and a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics, from the University of Nairobi. She also holds a postgraduate certificate in Communication Skills from Lancaster University, UK.

Prof. Mutiga is a linguist and language skills expert with professional training in language and communication in the following areas, among others: language analysis and documentation, translation, document review and proofreading, editing, précis writing, report writing, public speaking and

interpersonal communication.

She has over 25 years' teaching and research experience in Descriptive and Applied Linguistics, and is a seasoned consultant in language and communication skills, translation, curriculum development, instruction and training. She has excellent proficiency in English, Kiswahili, Kikamba and Kikuyu languages.

Prof. Mutiga is widely published both locally and internationally, with over 30 journal articles in peer-reviewed journal, books and chapters in edited books. She has been an external examiner for Masters and PhD programmes in the following universities: Bayreuth University in Germany, Kenyatta University, University of Dar es Salaam, University of Zimbabwe and Rhodes University, South Africa.

In the course of her scholarly career, Prof. Mutiga has benefited from several awards including: University of Nairobi scholarship for postgraduate studies, British Council Scholarship for training in communication skills, DAAD PhD scholarship and DAAD Visiting researcher to Bayreuth University, Germany.

Prof. Mutiga's outstanding achievements, both academic and professional, and her unique contribution to society are numerous. Through the Pan Africa Masters Consortium in Interpretation and Translation (PAMCIT) she attracted the United Nations/ European Commission Grant for student

bursary, procurement of books and specialized equipment, staff and student mobility in 2015. In 2010, she received a UN donation of furniture, computers and other assorted equipment valued at Kshs.10 million for the then newly established Centre for Translation and Interpretation.

Prof. Mutiga has served for six years as an elder at the Christ is The Answer Ministries (CITAM), Church Valley Road, an assembly with a congregation of over 10,000 members. She is currently serving as a member of the Wycliffe Global Alliance International Board, representing the Anglophone Africa region in a board that governs over 100 organizations, coordinating the work of Bible translation worldwide. She is also a board member of Bible Translation and Literacy, Kenya, a member of university council of the Pan-African Christian University, is the vice chair of university council of Scott Christian University and the vice-chair of the National Governing Council of FOCUS Kenya.

She is a member of several professional associations, namely: Association of African linguists of Southern Africa (ALASA), Multilingual Education Network (MLN), East Africa, Chama cha Kiswahili Afrika Mashariki (CHAKAMA), Chama cha Kiswahili cha Taifa (CHAKITA) and German-African Network of Alumni and Alumnae (GANAA). [VF](#)

The Professor of plant pathology



Prof. Eunice Mutitu

Eunice Mutitu became a professor of plant pathology in the Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection in the Faculty of Agriculture in 2010. She holds a BSc in Agriculture and a Masters and PhD in Plant pathology from the University of Nairobi. She is also a Fulbright scholar and has been a visiting scientist in DSMZ Germany. Professor Mutitu has served as an external examiner locally and regionally at the University of Botswana and Makerere University in Uganda. In the years since she began her work at the university, she has undertaken many major and fundamental projects that have spanned a host of topics ranging from academic explorations to international initiatives. Of these projects, her most profound has been the Methyl Bromide Alternatives Project in Kenya, where she successfully led the national effort to phase out the ozone depleting chemical, Methyl Bromide (MB), from national use in soil disinfection. To this end, she ushered in the use of effective, non ozone depleting alternatives, which successfully replaced the use of MB by 2010, far in advance of the 2015 deadline set by the Montreal

Protocol member countries. In addition, she established a training center at the Kabete Field Station of the University of Nairobi. At the center, she set up a substrate culture under drip irrigation system for cut flower and vegetables, a gravity drip irrigation system for small scale growers with high value outdoor crops, a field for the use of effective non ozone depleting chemical fumigants and a facility that uses steam for nurseries and substrate disinfection. During the project phase, many high value crop and cut flower growers were trained and assisted with setups for the effective phase out of MB. For all of these efforts she was awarded the national honor of Elder of the Burning Spear.

Professor Mutitu was also at the forefront of the fight against the Citrus Greening Disease that had devastated citrus production for years in different regions of the Kenya highlands. To this end, the team produced thousands of disease free clean seedlings, by employing advanced tissue culture and molecular techniques, and distributed them to farming groups in Machakos, Kakamega and other counties. In addition, comprehensive training programs that have been instrumental in educating many farmers on how to combat the disease were put in place. At present, the University continues to produce the seedlings and carries out training using the laboratory and greenhouse facilities developed by the project.

Along with the aforementioned projects Prof. Mutitu has led very many research efforts of national importance. Her current research interests include biological and integrated management of economically important plant diseases

and the control of mycotoxin producing plant pathogens.

In addition to her role as a researcher, Prof. Mutitu has been an outstanding educator, having participated in the founding Department of Crop Protection and serving as its first chairman for 6 years. She has supervised 9 PhDs and over 30 masters students to completion. This work has led to the publication of over 40 publications and numerous conference presentations. She is a member of many professional associations related to her field and has served as a member of the International Methyl Bromide Technical Committee (MBTOC) which evaluates whether countries that request for critical use of methyl bromide have a case for approval.

In the recent past, Prof. Mutitu was appointed as director of the Board of Post Graduate Studies for six years up to January 2015, where she led the efforts to establish the new Graduate School and the revision of the old regulations to capture the current developments in post graduate training. Additionally, during her tenure, the number of PhD graduates increased annually from 40 to over 120, and many new market driven postgraduate programs were developed and senate approved under the guidance of the Board. Along with her work at the University of Nairobi, she was appointed to serve as the chairman of the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) Council for three years up to 2016.

Professor Mutitu is an exemplary example of the great and potential talent that is available at the University of Nairobi. **VF**

Legal scholar per excellence

Prof. Patricia Kameri-Mbote is a Professor of Law and the former Dean at the School of Law, University of Nairobi (UoN). An advocate of the High Court of Kenya Prof. Kameri-Mbote teaches Women, Access to Resources and the Law at the Southern and Eastern Africa Research Centre on Women's Law (SEARCWL) and Law of Property in Land at the School of Law, University of Nairobi. She has also taught international environmental law at the University of Kansas; Trade, Environment and Law at the University of Stellenbosch, Cape Town, South Africa.

For her exemplary contribution to the country, Prof. Kameri-Mbote was awarded the national honour in the order Elder of the Burning Spear (EBS) in December 2015. In 2012, she was conferred the rank of Senior Counsel (SC).

Prof. Kameri-Mbote serves on various national, regional and international boards such as: the Global Council of the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP); the International Development Law Organization (IDLO); Lewa Wildlife Conservancy; Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE-Uganda); and is the Chair of the Advisory Board of Strathmore Law School (Strathmore University, Nairobi) whose preparation, planning, initiation and launch she executed between 2009 and March 2012. She is a member of the Kenya National Academy of Sciences; the International Commission on Environmental Law (ICEL); and the UNEP Expert Group on Environment & Security. She also serves on the

editorial boards of the following journals: Journal of Law, Environment and Development (LEAD); the Global Environmental Politics (GEP); Journal of Human Rights and the Environment; and the East African Journal of Peace and Human Rights.

Prof. Kameri-Mbote has served as Chair of the Department of Private Law and Acting Dean at the School of Law, University of Nairobi. She has also served as the Director of Research and Policy Outreach and Acting Executive Director at the African Centre for Technology Studies, Nairobi from 1999 to 2002. She was a member of the Committee of Eminent Persons appointed by His Excellency the President of Kenya in February 2006 to advise the government on the way forward for the stalled constitution review process.

Prof. Kameri-Mbote served as a Policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2006. She is also an external examiner to the Faculties of Law at the Universities of London, Kent, Witwatersrand, Makerere; Australian National University; Westminster; and Dar es Salaam.

She has served on the following boards: Chair, Kenya School of Law Board and Chair, Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB); Member, the Council for Legal Education; the Kenya Copyright Board; the Pell Centre for International Relations, Salve Regina University, Rhode Island; the Arts & Humanities Research Board (AHRB) Research Centre for Law,



Prof. Patricia Kameri-Mbote

Gender & Sexuality, University of Kent; and Chair, Seeds and Plant Varieties Tribunal.

She has consulted for many international and national agencies including the International Telecommunications Union; UN Women; UN Habitat; UN FAO; the UK Department for International Development, the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Government of Kenya.

She has published widely in the areas of international law, environmental law, women's rights and property rights and participated in international, regional, national and local conferences. Patricia also chaired the Kenya Nile Discourse Forum from 2003 to 2005. **VF**

Guiding the nation in conservation and climate change



Dr. Parita Shah

Dr. Parita Shah strongly believes that women have intelligent brains and are competing equally with men in all fields, and even doing better.

"Prof Wangari Maathai was one of the first women to get a PhD in Africa and she actually set a rolling stone which other women like myself have courageously followed. Her words and actions have always encouraged and motivated me to do my best," she says. In December 2016, Dr. Shah completed her PhD in Biogeography at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi. Her study analyzed the effectiveness of biodiversity Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Kenya. Through this study, she has been

able to identify the biodiversity policies of Kenya which truly reflect the international biodiversity conventions and their obligations and also their strengths and weaknesses.

"The study is a real asset to the many biodiversity institutions namely, National Environment Management Authority, Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Forest Service and the National Museums of

Kenya as some of these institutions are the lead agencies in implementing these international conventions," says Dr. Shah.

For example the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR Convention), are under the docket of the KWS for effective implementation. The findings in the study also indicate the strengths and weaknesses of our biodiversity institutions. Furthermore, the extent of the involvement of stakeholders, especially the communities and the role of MEAs education to the communities, is well

highlighted.

"It is my vision to see the results of this study taken seriously so that Kenya can be an example worldwide in 100% successful implementation of MEAs," she states.

At UoN, Dr. Shah teaches a variety of units including Environmental Impact Assessment, Environmental Audits, Natural Resources Management, Climate Change and Biodiversity, Map Interpretation and Aerial Photography, Tourism and Biogeography. She also supervises undergraduate and postgraduate students on various topics ranging from climate change to human-wildlife conflicts.

Dr. Shah has written papers with senior colleagues in various areas including conservation and heritage and also participated in conferences where she has presented papers on topics like climate change, conservation of biodiversity and population, health and environment.

"My vision is to help the country implement research recommendations in areas of conservation and climate change," she ends. [VF](#)

“Prof. Wangari Maathai’s words and actions have always encouraged and motivated me to do my best”

Postharvest technologies ace



Dr. Jane Ambuko

Dr. Jane Ambuko is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection, University of Nairobi. She holds a BSc Agriculture and MSc Horticulture from University of Nairobi and a PhD in Agricultural Sciences (Pomology and Postharvest Major) from Tsukuba University in Japan.

Dr Ambuko's area of specialization is Postharvest Science and Technology. She says that 30% of farm produce does not reach the table. Her current research focus is adapting, validation and promotion of postharvest technologies and Innovations mainly targeting smallholder practitioners in agricultural value chains. In this regard, she has received funding for multi-disciplinary research from various organizations including United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Rockefeller Foundation,

RUFORUM, NACOSTI (NRF) among others.

Notable among these multidisciplinary research projects are those piloting low-cost technologies

for smallholder farmers in Kenya. Examples of the technologies include the 'Coolbot' Technology, a low-cost cold storage alternative, and the zero energy brick cooler (ZEBC) which is a simple evaporative cooling alternative for farmers in rural areas without electricity.

After successful pilot studies to adapt and validate these technologies, Dr. Ambuko is working with development partners such as the Rockefeller Foundation to scale up. Besides teaching and research, she is involved in outreach and capacity development initiatives aimed at empowering smallholder farmers especially on postharvest management and market access.

Dr. Ambuko has supervised and mentored over 20 graduate students in different agricultural disciplines. She has authored/co-authored several papers in peer reviewed journals and actively disseminates research findings in national and international

conferences. She is a member of several professional associations including the International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS), American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS), Horticultural Association of Kenya (HAK), and Kenya National Young Academy of Sciences (KNYAS).

She is a recipient of a number of prestigious fellowships including the Norman Borlaug Fellowship, African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD); and Africa Biosciences Challenge Fund – ABCF. In 2013-2014, Dr. Ambuko was appointed by the FAO-United Nation's Committee on Food Security to the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE), the project team on 'Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems' (HLPE report #8).

Her most recent accomplishment was convening the 1st All Africa Postharvest Congress and Exhibition (2017), which received overwhelming support and funding from local and global partners. The congress held at Safari Park Hoitel created awareness about the problem of high postharvest losses and has set the agenda for addressing the problem in Kenya and Africa as a whole. [VF](#)

“30% of farm produce does not reach the table”

Pushing engineering to new frontiers



Dr. Siphila Mumenya

Dr. Siphila Mumenya holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Nairobi and master's degree in Structural Engineering with specialisation in materials from the City University in London. She holds a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Cape Town.

Dr. Mumenya has over 30 years of experience as an engineer and academician. This includes experience in engineering designs for a wide range of high-rise as well as low level structures and the associated civil and geotechnical works. For a period of over 20 years, structural engineering work has been undertaken under employment in the public sector as well as in the capacity of a consulting engineer.

The responsibilities have ranged from design and supervision of residential buildings, commercial complexes, schools, religious institutions, water reservoirs and basements. The civil engineering works have essentially been in design of roads, car parks, and drainage as well as waste water disposal systems.

For over 10 years, extensive consultancy work has been undertaken in liaison with reputable firms of architects and quantity surveyors. The responsibilities have comprised of contract and project

management of new schemes, site investigation, assessment of structural soundness of old structures, renovations and alternative design solutions for problematic sites.


A wealth of expertise has been acquired while attempting to offer solutions to problems which are unique to the building industry such as; advising clients on cost effectiveness in project management as well as identification of critical paths during project implementation. In the course of project administration and structural engineering consultancy work, the local authorities' by-laws have been well understood.

Dr. Mumenya is currently the Chairperson of the Department of Civil and Construction Engineering. By being affiliated with an academic environment, experience in research and development has been acquired, which complements the engineering challenges encountered in the construction industry. **VF**


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UoN holds 3rd Nairobi Innovation Week

The University of Nairobi held the 3rd Innovation Week 2017 from 6th to 10th March, 2017, amid strong government commitment to continue supporting the University's annual event as a national event.

The Cabinet Secretary, ICT, Mr. Joe Mucheru made the pledge when he officially opened the Innovation Week on March 8, 2017, at a highly attended ceremony held at the University of Nairobi Towers. The event drew participants from partners in various sectors of the industry as well as the government.

In the key note address, the Cabinet Secretary, commended UoN for the consistency in hosting the event. Mr. Mucheru highlighted the initiatives by the government to support innovation and entrepreneurship among the youth with specific focus on the use of technology.

"We have rolled out various programmes targeting the development of the Kenyan youth. For example, we have the 'Talent ni Kazi' whereby the government has set up music studios in different counties to support upcoming young artists. The youth must be encouraged to get into the innovators hub, develop innovations and earn an income. I challenge the youth to have a job creating mentality instead of job searching," said the CS.

The UoN Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, said that since inception in 2015, the Nairobi Innovation Week has recorded significant results. "We have seen research products get launched, startups scale and policy environment improve as a result of this initiative," he said.

The VC added, "As a University, we have identified specific projects and programmes that we are focusing on that are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals. We are revising curricula and launching new academic programmes. We have also started initiatives like the Bicycle Sharing initiative to transform urban mobility and reduce the over-reliance on motorized transport. We have built new partnerships to enhance our commercialization of research, among other initiatives."

Prof. Mbithi announced that the Nairobi Innovation Week 2018 will be held from March 5th to 9th, 2018.

The UoN Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi thanked all the partners and sponsors for supporting the University.

"I am extremely happy and humbled by your support through participation, mobilization of resources, and generation of ideas that have made the Nairobi Innovation week a

successful and truly global event," she said.

She thanked H.E the President and the entire government of Kenya for consistently supporting the University morally and materially. She was also grateful to all partners, sponsors and the UoN community for the immense support they accorded Innovation Week.

The sponsors

The Nairobi Innovation Week 2017 strategic partner was UNICEF while the title sponsor was Barclays Bank of Kenya. The gold sponsor was KCB Group while Safaricom was silver sponsor.

The Bronze sponsors included Konza Technopolis, Kenya Revenue Authority, NIC Bank, Kenya Climate Change Innovation Centre, University of Nairobi Enterprise services (UNES), University of Nairobi Alumni fraternity, Strathmore University, AALTO University from Finland and the Embassy of Finland, UBER, and National Research Foundation.

The partners were the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives; Ministry of ICT; Ministry of Education; ICT Authority; Embassy of Israel; KENET; DEMO Africa; IBiz Africa; Metta; NIC Bank; Chase Bank; Samsung; IBM and Nation Media Group. [VF](#)



Skills Hunt Summit 2017



Students follow proceedings during the Skills Hunt Summit in Chandaria Auditorium, University of Nairobi Towers.

The University of Nairobi and Accelebrate Ltd, a talent search firm committed to developing students' skills to meet the market needs, co-hosted the Skills Hunt Summit 2017 at the University of Nairobi.

More than 500 students from all UoN colleges attended the Summit, which was sponsored by the Centum Business Solutions of the Centum Group.

Ms. Viridiana Wasike, the Managing Director of Accelebrate Ltd, said the company chose the University of Nairobi to host this event because of its leadership position in higher education. She urged UoN to take lead in this process and partner with all other Universities and Industry partners in matching UoN graduates' skills with industry needs.

Ms. Wasike said the Skills Hunt Summit initiative is expected to culminate into another event dubbed "Skills Hunt Mega Expo" to be held in November

16-18, 2017 at the University of Nairobi. More than 250 companies will be invited to exhibit "career opportunities" and over 5,000 students from the University of Nairobi and other universities and colleges will interact with potential employers.

In his welcome remarks, Prof. Peter Mbithi said the programmed was very timely and is in line with the University's strategic vision of producing holistic graduates who are better skilled and able to meet the global market needs. He noted that 'Graduate Skills Enhancement' is one of the key pillars in his 10-point Transformative Agenda. The Vice Chancellor urged more industry partners and alumni to join hands with the University in mentoring students on leadership in order to make them marketable and relevant in this globalized, highly competitive and very dynamic world.

Mr. Johnson Kinyua, Director, University

Advancement, UoN, urged students to develop complex problem solving skills, critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, active listening and communication skills. Mr. Kinyua noted that these skills are the most sought after by employers. It was clear from the summit that acquiring a degree is important, but developing special skills opens doors of opportunities. Students were encouraged to make an effort to develop their soft skills.

In a keynote speech, Ms. Risper Mukoto, the Managing Director, Centum Business Solutions, cautioned students against 'get rich quick' schemes and guided them on the importance of working hard, discovering their purpose in life and identifying a mentor or a coach who will continually challenge them.

She encouraged students to engage in sharing their knowledge with the world by giving back to society, engaging in internships and industrial attachments in order to get the much needed experience required by most employers. Ms. Mukoto noted that the Centum Graduate Programmed receives over 15,000 applications but only 15 candidates get the job because of their special skills, character, attitude and leadership potential.

Other speakers at the summit were Dr. Vincent Gout, Strathmore University (through Video), Prof. Ruth Nduati and Dr. Susanne Nabulindo from the UoN Medical School, Ms. Miriam Boit, Britam Assets Management, Dr. June Madete, African Biotechnology Engineering Consortium, Mr. Paul Onditi, ArtLab Africa, Ms. Catherine Wamwangi, Robert Bosch East Africa (Germany) and Pastor Charles Okerefor from In His Presence Bible School. [VF](#)

UoN hosts 1st All Africa Postharvest Congress



Mr. Willy Bett, Cabinet Secretary Agriculture addressing participants during the All Africa Postharvest Congress.

The University of Nairobi organized the 1st All Africa Postharvest Congress and Exhibition, which took place at the Safari Park Hotel from 28th to 31st March, 2017. The congress was organized in partnership with a consortium of universities, research and development organizations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and the World Food Preservation Center (WFPC).

The aim of the Congress, whose theme was “Reducing Food losses and Waste: Sustainable Solutions for Africa”, was to contribute to the global agenda of reducing postharvest food loss and waste. It is estimated that 30 per cent or 1.3 billion metric tonnes of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted along various supply chains.

The Congress brought together over 600 participants from all over the world representing 40 countries from Africa,

South America, North America, Russia, Asia, Middle East, and Europe. The delegates were drawn from diverse sectors including researchers, academics, entrepreneurs, farmers/farmer organizations, development agencies, civil society and policy makers. The congress sessions provided a platform for the delegates to learn, share information and build strategic partnerships with the overall objective of identifying effective interventions to reduce food loss waste on the continent.

More than 50 exhibitors from all over the world show-cased innovations and technologies that can be applied to reduce postharvest losses in various food value chains. The congress also featured the Postharvest Technologies Challenge (PTC) which sought to identify and document hitherto unknown technologies and innovations that can be used to address postharvest challenges in various food value chains. The entries were screened by experts through a process which identified the top

10 innovations. The ten finalists pitched for their innovations during a special session of the congress and were awarded a cash prize amounting to USD 35,000.

The congress was officially opened by the Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture Mr. Willy Bett, who represented Deputy

President William Ruto. In a speech read on his behalf by the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Ruto congratulated the University of Nairobi for accepting the task of hosting the inaugural event. He pledged the full support of the government for such noble initiatives.

The University of Nairobi's Vice Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi congratulated the organizing committee led by Dr. Jane Ambuko for reaching out to the diverse stakeholders and partners who make the congress a reality. He reiterated the importance of partnership among the diverse stakeholders in finding problems facing humanity. The Vice Chancellor pledged the University's support for such initiatives and hoped that the congress would provide a clear way forward to address food losses in Africa.

Dr. Ambuko thanked the Vice Chancellor and the University Management for accepting to host the congress and for the unwavering support throughout the planning process. She also thanked her team for their concerted efforts and support that turned what started off as a dream into a resounding success. **VF**

Elimika project impacts communities in 5 counties

The Construction of Knowledge Societies- Elimika project has recorded significant impact in empowering communities in five counties by equipping them with knowledge on pertinent issues as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010.

In a report presented to the stakeholders during the validation workshop held at the University of Nairobi on March 9, 2017, it emerged that the project had achieved several results in the five target counties (Nairobi, Kwale, Turkana, Homa Bay and Makueni).

While officially opening the workshop, the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi said the Elimika project was an important link between the University of Nairobi and the communities where the project was being implemented.

“The shifting of the learning space from university lecture theatres and seminar rooms to local communities is a significant step in bridging the divide that has traditionally characterized the relationship between the university and ordinary citizens,” he said.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Production and Extension, Prof. Lucy

Irungu, commended the Elimika team for identifying the research gaps which would form a basis for further research.

“The Elimika project has demonstrated that the goal of high quality research underpinning knowledge creation and technology transfer at the county level is within our reach. The University of Nairobi is a research intensive university with a reputation for excellence and a strong and vibrant research culture. It is our objective to ensure that our research, across all disciplines remains relevant by positively impacting the community and the region,” said Prof Irungu.

The Elimika lead consultant and the UoN UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair, Prof. Judith Bahemuka, said the baselines yielded important information on areas of priority and gaps in each of the counties.

“This knowledge is an important resource for researchers, the county governments as well as other policy actors in the five counties,” she said. Prof. Bahemuka thanked FORD Foundation for supporting this initiative.

Elimika has generated several knowledge products including: a comprehensive literature review that

guided the baseline studies; baseline studies in the five counties; a training manual in both English and Kiswahili, and several pamphlets on governance and devolution, philanthropy, leadership and integrity, and Bill of Rights; and an edited volume drawing from the findings that was being finalized at the time of this evaluation.

The project has awarded five partial scholarships, including one to a PhD student and four internship opportunities. Elimika is being implemented by UoN's UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair in partnership with Ford Foundation, K-Rep Development Agency, United States International University (USIU), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, Ministry of Health, Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC), Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), Commission on Revenue Authority (CRA) and the county governments of Makueni, Kwale, Turkana, Homa Bay and Nairobi. [VF](#)



Prof. Peter Mbithi, Vice-Chancellor University of Nairobi confers with UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair, Prof. Judith Bahemuka (Extrem left), during the validation workshop held at the University of Nairobi. Others present where from left , Maurice McOloo, Ford Foundation and Prof Lucy Irungu, DVC (RPE).

24 students receive Mitsubishi Corporation and DAAD scholarships as Rotary Club comes on board



The Cultural Attaché, German Embassy, Mr. Uwe Koppel (Left), during the awards ceremony as Prof. Henry Mutoro DVC AA looks on (Right).

The Mitsubishi Corporation and DAAD have awarded scholarships to 24 University of Nairobi students while the Rotary Club of Kenya has entered into a partnership with the University to offer scholarships to bright but financially needy undergraduate students at the Schools of Business, Economics, Law and Computer Science.

Fourteen students were awarded the Mitsubishi scholarships through its annual Mitsubishi Corporation International Scholarships Programme while DAAD gave 10 scholarships to students drawn from various African countries pursuing their masters degrees in German studies in the Department of Linguistics and Languages.

The Mitsubishi awards were given to selected students, drawn from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies and the School of Biological Sciences (Bsc degree in Environmental Conservation and Natural Resources Management). The students come from needy backgrounds but have recorded excellent performance in their respective courses.

Speaking during the Mitsubishi

the University of Nairobi.

Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof. Henry Mutoro, thanked Mitsubishi Corporation for the continuous support the company has extended to the University. He said the corporation has been supporting 14 students annually in the last decade.

UoN's Corporate Affairs Director, Mr. John Orindi, requested Mitsubishi to support other university activities such as research and innovation. He appealed to the corporation to provide coaching and mentorship to engineering students and extra curriculum activities.

During the DAAD scholarships award ceremony on a separate occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof Peter Mbithi thanked the Federal Republic of Germany and DAAD for the continued cooperation in diverse fields.

"We are indeed grateful for the continued support that the German government has given us in training members of the academic staff in various fields and also for training other professionals working in

scholarship presentation ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi and Mitsubishi Corporation General Manager Ichiro Sugane pledged to continue supporting bright and needy students from

various sectors of the Republic of Kenya," said the VC in a speech read by Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs Prof Henry Mutoro, who represented him at the occasion..

The VC noted that the German studies programme has become attractive to many young African scholars. He attributed this to the thematic areas covered, and the competent teaching staff in the Department of linguistics and languages. The thematic areas include linguistics, literature, didactics and translation.

The Cultural Attaché, German Embassy, Mr. Uwe Koppel, congratulated the scholarship recipients and urged them to work hard in their studies. He highlighted the importance of learning a foreign language and the opportunities that come with it.

The DAAD Regional Director, Dr. Helmut Blumbach, on his part commended the students on their achievements and called on others to take advantage of the many opportunities presented to them.

The University of Nairobi has been hosting the DAAD funded German Masters programme in the Department of Linguistics and Languages since 1994.

Meanwhile, Rotary Club of Nairobi (RCN) has unveiled a KES 2M annual scholarship programme at the UoN targeting disadvantaged students in the School of Business, Economics and Law. The scholarships are part of the Rotary Club's community service project whose aim is to support financially disadvantaged students at UoN to be developed in partnership with the RCN in a long-term recurrent programme.

The minimum criteria for applicants is that they must be registered needy students at the University, with an excellent academic record, individuals of impeccable character, and non-beneficiaries of any other scholarship in the previous academic year. **VF**

Pictorial



1. ICT Cabinet Secretary, Joe Mucheru looks into the microscope during the Nairobi Innovation Week. Looking on is Prof. Peter Mbithi, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi and one of the exhibitors.
2. Trevor Ombija, NTV , News Anchor, with his fans, during the University of Nairobi Open Day. Nation Media Group was the official media partner during the event.
3. Diamond Platinumz, Tanzania's top rated musician entertains students at the Chandaria Auditorium, University of Nairobi Towers on the final day of the Open Day.



4. University of Nairobi Basket Ball Team ' Terrorists' play against Strathmore University during Inter University Sports Day.
5. Nation Leadership Forum , audience listen as opinion leaders discuss nation issues relating to food security, famine and climate change at the University of Nairobi's Chandaria auditorium.
6. Chief Justice, David Maraga, unveils the University of Nairobi Law Alumni Chapter. The launch was at the Chandaria Auditorium.

UoN Towers completed

The iconic University of Nairobi Towers, which was officially handed over by the contractor China Wu Yi to the University of Nairobi Management in November 2016, is now occupied.

A key Kenya Vision 2030 project of the University, the building was completed on schedule and within the budget at a cost of 2.3 billion. The University Council has applauded the contractor, China Wu Yi and the lead architects, Waweru and Associates, for completing the job within the set timelines. The Tower was fully financed by internally generated resources without external support or loan.

The University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, thanked the contractor for a job well done. He also thanked the Council for their continued support over the years, pointing out that the University Council had been very supportive of University endeavours to improve infrastructure and academic quality.

The construction of the building took three years, the ground breaking having been done on June, 17, 2013. The project was successful courtesy of several teams that worked tirelessly to see it through. Key among them being quantity surveyors, electrical engineers, structural engineers, among others. The building holds a student population of 3,500 and is 89m high.

The University of Nairobi Towers has a 24 hour security surveillance system. The structure also boasts of a water recycling system. It uses solar energy and



hence the concept of 'green building'. The Tower hosts the Graduate School, School of Business, School of Engineering, and Confucius Institute together with the members of the University Management, University Council and Senate who take up the upper floors.

The building has space for a restaurant and also houses an ultramodern auditorium with a capacity of 600 at the Chandaria Centre for Performing Arts on Level six. The Theatre is expected to support UoN's competitiveness in hosting high profile conferences and also promote the development of performance arts by giving the youths the opportunity and space to actualize their talents and promote the rich cultural diversity of Kenya.

There also several seminar and conference rooms to facilitate the University core business of teaching and learning and also provide the opportunity to generate more revenue. The building has a helipad which has been gazetted as Aerodrome class D. It boasts of state of the art ICT services and firefighting equipment.

The University of Nairobi Towers is one of the infrastructural projects recently undertaken by the University and is expected to further smoothen the business of teaching, learning and conducting research.

The University Vice-Chancellor has appointed a team to develop a concept for marketing the facility with a view to taking advantage of the increased interest in conference tourism in Kenya. **VF**

UoN scoops top awards at EYA 2017

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has been named this year's winner in the Inclusiveness and Diversity category at the Employer of the Year Awards (EYA).

At the ceremony which was held on May 19, 2017, UoN was also crowned the 1st runner's up in the Innovation and Productivity category and 2nd runners up in Leadership and Governance, 2nd runners up, Corporate Performance and 2nd runners up in the overall Employer of the Year category.

UoN was recognized for her inclusiveness and diversity in the workplace. The University as an opportunity employer has recruited persons from all the ethnic groups in Kenya. The University has a policy that caters for employment of persons with disability. This is partly a requirement of the performance contract by the

government of Kenya. The government has put in place measures to ensure that the youth, women and persons living with disabilities are given fair treatment in distribution of tenders and in employment opportunities.

As far as governance and leadership category is concerned, the University was not left behind as its leadership were recognized for the good work and rewarded. Other companies that were recognized in this category include Centum Investment and BAT.

Speaking during the awards ceremony, FKE Executive Director, Jacqueline Mugo said that Employer of the Year Awards, (EYA), will each year recognize and fete 'organizations that place people at the core of their businesses and have implemented policies, systems and processes that create and sustain productivity along with industrial peace and harmony.'

Following its flagship innovation project, Nairobi Innovation Week, the University was recognized under the category, 'Innovation and Productivity'. The Employer of the Year Awards is an initiative by the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE). It is aimed at promoting and encouraging best practices in Corporate Performance, People Management and Industrial Relations among employers in Kenya. This was the first annual Employer of the Year Awards gala which publicly honoured employers implementing best practices in the areas reviewed.

The initiative is in a bid to raise and sustain productivity, enterprise performance and responsibility.

Employer of the Year Awards attracted 128 organizations. Out of these 78 were shortlisted for site visits. The overall winners performed well relatively in all the eight thematic areas. These areas are: Leadership and Governance; Corporate Performance; Innovation and Productivity; Responsive Business Conduct; Inclusiveness and Diversity; Learning and Development; Workplace Environment and Effective Human Resource Practices and Industrial Relations. [VF](#)

“**The University as equal an opportunity employer has recruited persons from all the ethnic groups in Kenya**”

- Prof. Peter Mbithi



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi (3rd Left), flanked by senior University Managers, receives trophies from FKE Executive Director, Mrs. Jacqueline Mugo (3rd Right)

UoN leads in Webometrics and Digital Repository Rankings

The University of Nairobi was ranked position 8 in Africa and 775 in the world in recent Webometrics Ranking while the University's Digital Repository is top in the region according to the latest Ranking Web of Repositories.

The Webometrics ranking confirms UoN as the kingpin among East African and Kenyan universities. The University of Nairobi was ranked position 11 worldwide in the presence parameter. Presence is the number of pages of the main web domain of the institution. On the visibility parameter, which is the number of external networks originating backlinks to the institutions web pages, UoN is position 785.

According to the transparency or openness parameter which reflects the number of citations from top authors according to the source, the University was ranked number 910. In the excellence or scholar parameter which reflects the number of papers amongst the top 10% most cited in 26 disciplines, UoN recorded a significant improvement to position 1,513. The ranking covered more than 24,000 higher education institutions worldwide.

In Kenya, Moi University and Egerton University took position two and three respectively after recording an improvement in their overall web ranking. Makerere University was

ranked position two in the East Africa region. Harvard University was first in the world ranking, while South Africa's University of Cape Town led in Africa.

The Webometrics Ranking is the highest academic ranking of higher education institutions and is aimed at promoting academic web presence and supporting the Open Access initiatives for increasing significantly the transfer of scientific and cultural knowledge generated by the university to the whole society.

In the 20th edition of Digital Repository ranking, the University of Nairobi was ranked 4th out of 74 other universities in Africa. Globally, the University was ranked position 214 out of over 2,300 universities.

In Africa, the University of Pretoria Repository was ranked best, followed by Stellenbosch University and the University of South Africa. In Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and Mt. Kenya University were ranked positions two and three respectively.

According to the results, from a

worldwide view, the UoN repository recorded excellent performance in the different parameters. It emerged number 22 in the size parameter which looks at the total number of pages provided, including all the rich files, like those in pdf format. In the scholar and rich files parameters, the University was ranked position 37 and 460 respectively.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbiti congratulated the University of Nairobi staff and students for the excellent performance in the ranking.

"The University's performance in the competitive ranking of web repositories is a clear indication of the University's academic and research growing portfolio," he said.

The aim of this ranking is to support Open Access initiatives and therefore the free access to scientific publications in an electronic form and to other academic material. The web indicators are used here to measure the global visibility and impact of the scientific repositories. VF



ODEL Campus to expand programmes

Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) Campus was established in 2015 at the University of Nairobi. The campus streamlines the use of modern technologies in teaching and learning at the University.

The focus of the campus is on mobile learning, both online and offline. A student can access education from anywhere and at anytime using a smart device. Education is based on cloud computing and backed by print.

ODEL Campus has plans of launching 15 online undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the 2017/2018 academic year besides the Masters in Project planning that is fully online. These include Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com), Bachelor of Arts (BA), Masters in Business Administration (MBA), Masters in Climate Change, Masters in Christian Religious Studies, Bachelor of Science (Bsc), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed), Masters in Education

and Masters in Early Childhood Education. A student applies through the online application module at application.uonbi.ac.ke

The campus has 12 learner support centres all over the country. The support centres are used as the examination centres. They have library services, internet connectivity, tutorials, helpdesk and online learner support. The centres are situated in Mombasa, garissa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nyeri, Meru, Kisumu, Kisii, Eldoret, Kitale, Kakamega and Kitui.

ODEL is recognized as a mode of delivery by Commission of University Education (CUE) and is also accepted and recognized by employers as an alternative means for providing quality education.

Its flexible mode of delivery, with many opting to study this way in local and foreign universities due to access and convenience of the programmes, has

increased its popularity.

The availability of highly trained staff, a robust ICT infrastructure, content availability, a strong university brand and long experience in ODEL are among the strengths of this campus.

The University of Nairobi has been offering Open and Distance Learning programmes since the 1960s and e-learning delivery since 2001. The University has experienced staff in teaching and learning and management of ODEL systems.

The main objective of the Campus is to enable the University provide enhanced access to quality education and training to students from Kenya and all over the world who meet the minimum admission requirements for specific undergraduate and postgraduate courses through use of modern instructional content delivery techniques, skilled personnel and effective learner support services. The specific mandate of the campus is to support, guide, and facilitate the use of open learning, distance education, e-learning, blended learning, mobile learning and short lifelong courses.

The UoN's ODEL campus mission is to enable access to quality education and training through robust, integrated and scalable technology platforms, skilled personnel and effective learner support services. Its vision: to be a world class hub for open, distance and e-learning. [VF](#)

“A student can access education from anywhere and at anytime using a smart device”



High school students visit one of the University stands during the 2017 Open Day at the University grounds, Main Campus.

University establishes Graduate School

In line with the University of Nairobi becoming a world class university it has established Graduate School (GS), replacing the former Board of Postgraduate Studies. The GS has an expanded mandate which includes formulation and review of policy framework, admission of graduate students, coordination of graduate syllabi and regulations, sourcing and administration of scholarships and research grants and ensuring general welfare of graduate students.

The Strategic Plan for the Graduate School was approved in May 2015 at a time when the University of Nairobi had upscaled its quest to world-class status as a centre of excellence in research. There was therefore need to enhance the capacity of the Board of Postgraduate Studies to enable the University realize its vision. Over time, the University of Nairobi has recorded a significant increase in the number of graduate students, which called for expansion of the human and infrastructural capacity to cope with this

expansion.

The local environment has also changed dramatically, more so with the establishment of the Commission for University Education (CUE) in Kenya which put in place stringent academic standards. Among these requirements is to introduce course work in doctoral programmes, to increase international graduate students and the ratio of graduate students to 25% of the total student population in line with the international standards. The Strategic Plan set in motion the transformation of the Board of Postgraduate Studies into a Graduate School, in line with global best practices, to match the increasing need for graduate training and research. The operationalization of the Graduate School came to effect in February 2017 with the appointment of Prof. Lydia Njenga as the Director and Prof. Charles Mulei, Deputy Director (Academic) and Prof. Lawrence Ikamari, Deputy Director (Admissions) respectively. A Graduate School

Board with representatives from Senate, all colleges and external stakeholders provide policy direction to the school.

The Graduate School is highly endowed with a diversity of graduate programmes. It is expected to play a pivotal role in national development by training more doctoral graduates and mentoring of other institution learning at postgraduate level. The school will foster mutual linkages and partnerships with various key stakeholders in the promotion of research and mobilization of resources for scholarships.

Varsity Focus wishes the Graduate School well as it charts its way within the revitalized mandate. **VF**

“The University of Nairobi Graduate School is a Leading Centre of Excellence in Graduate Studies and Research”

- Prof Lydia Njenga, Director, Graduate School



A prospective student being served at the reception of the new Graduate School, located at the UoN Towers, level 13

A record 8,500 Graduate at the 56th ceremony



More than 8,500 graduands were conferred with degrees and awarded diplomas at the 56th University of Nairobi's graduation ceremony held on 2nd December, 2016.

A record 56 PhDs, 2477 masters degrees, 5177 bachelors' degrees, 49 postgraduate diplomas, 143 ordinary diplomas and 2 fellowship awards were presented.

The ceremony, which drew graduands mainly from the College of Health Sciences and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, was presided over by the Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi while the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, was the chief guest.

During the ceremony, Dr. Matiang'i challenged universities to streamline their systems of operation. The Cabinet Secretary emphasized the importance of good record keeping curbing against missing or lost students' examinations marks. He said the Education ministry was reviewing ways of improving the quality of programmes offered in the universities and challenged universities to uphold the integrity of the examinations processes.

Dr. Rattansi celebrated the great achievements of the graduands. "The road, no doubt, has been long and wearying but most of our graduands met

every challenge with a measure of enthusiasm, positive attitude and an undying spirit. Your crowning moment is at hand and I am humbled to be with you on this happy occasion," she said.

The Chancellor also paid glowing tributes to Dr. Idle Farah on completion of his tour of duty as the Chairman of the University of Nairobi Council. She thanked him for his distinguished and dedicated service to the University.

"While Dr. Idle's time at the helm of the Council has been marked by huge challenges, he and his team of wise men and women did not fall short whenever able stewardship was required," she said.

Dr Rattansi further observed: "I challenge you to pen your memoirs of this phase of your life and enrich the body of university governance. We wish you only the very best as you transit from the university to your next station."

Dr. Farah applauded the graduands on their achievements. He appealed to them to always keep time and always be committed to their goals. He confirmed that the 56th graduation ceremony marked the end of his term, having served on the University of Nairobi Council for 12 years. His term ended on February 2017 following his appointment as chairman in February 2013.

"It is 12 years that can only be described

as an epic journey. I sincerely thank the Government for according me the opportunity to serve my country and my alma mater. I am also grateful for the support I have received from my fellow council members, the university management, senate, staff and students," he said.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi congratulated the graduands and urged them to be UoN's goodwill ambassadors as they pursue their careers. Prof. Mbithi also celebrated the members of staff who have been involved in high profile research, negotiating beneficial memoranda with various institutions and development partners, locally and abroad. He said that through their efforts, the University has continued to improve research and academic quality, playing an increasingly more relevant role in providing sustainable development solutions for Kenya and the global community.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the University Council for providing the policy framework, strategic direction and stewardship. He also hailed the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education, for relentless strong support and guidance to the University and its leadership. He appreciated the faculty and staff for serving the University diligently. **VF**



University of Nairobi graduands during the 56th Graduation Ceremony at the Chancellor Court.

One-on-one with Valedictorian 2016, Sakina Shabbir

Tell us briefly about yourself (your name, age, degree course)

My name is Sakina Shabbir Mohamedali, Registration number D33/31514/2014, 23 years old. I pursued the course BCOM (first class honours) majoring in Finance at the University of Nairobi in 2016.

Why did you choose the course you pursued at UON?

Well as said, we explore our strengths in high school, mine was Business Studies. I found my true passion in that field of study, hence chose to pursue Bcom at UON.

Why BCOM? It's a wide coverage of all aspects in the field of study.

Why UON? Just one word, It's The best!

How did you achieve the feat of valedictorian?

A dream doesn't become reality through magic, it takes sweat, determination and hard work. According to me, that should basically sum up the success to achieving even the impossible.

Honestly, I had never imagined of achieving such a prestigious title, I aimed for a first class honours, being the top surely was a cherry on the cake. My God, my parents and lecturers and my loved ones have played a major role in helping me achieve this great honour.

What are your major highlights of studying at UON?

I consider myself lucky to have had the

opportunity to study at The University of Nairobi. Right from the Deans, to the lecturers to the students and learning material and to the administrative staff, I believe UON is endowed with best of best.

Highlight some of the challenges you faced while at UON?

While studying at UON Mombasa campus, one of the challenges I faced was limited copies of some of the books and reading material in the library. However, the issue was addressed in a short while when they opened a new library at the campus. My! One of the finest libraries I have ever been to. Its where I found the drive to work and study harder.

How can these challenges be addressed?

I believe nothing good comes without facing challenges. And as its said it takes two to tango, The University should increase its resources supply in terms of books and learning material while the students should take greater responsibility in taking good care of those materials and returning the books in time for everyone to benefit.

What have you been up to since graduation?

I am currently working with ACE group of companies where I have been able to exploit my skills and knowledge obtained through my journey at UON. I am pursuing CPA (section three) and



*Sakina Shabbir Mohamedali,
Valedictorian 2016*

intend to commence with MBA hopefully in September this year.

What is your advice to other students?

My advice mostly goes to girl child out there, brace yourselves and don't let anyone dull your spark. Study as hard as you can, dream as bigger as you can and achieve as much as you can.

"One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world", Malala Yousafzai.

Any last word?

To all you hardworking and high-spirited students, always believe in the saying that the sky is the limit. You can achieve anything and everything as long as you want to, nothing can stop you, after all Where there is a will, there's a way.

I would like to conclude with a quote by the famous American poet, Walt Whitman, "Keep your face always towards the sunshine and the shadows will fall behind you" [VF](#)

University performs well in Commission for University Education assessment

Between January 23 and February 3, 2017, the Commission for University Education (CUE) conducted a quality audit inspection of all public and private universities and university colleges authorized to operate in Kenya.

The purpose of the inspection was to establish the extent to which universities were complying with the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012, the Universities (Amendment) Act, 2016, the Universities Regulations 2014 and the Universities Standards and Guidelines, 2014.

CUE is the body solely mandated by Government to assure the public and stakeholders that education offered in universities and university colleges in Kenya is of good quality, accessible, affordable, equitable and relevant.

The regulatory body audited a total of 70 public and private universities and university colleges, with the University of Nairobi being audited on 24th and 25th January, 2017.

Among others, the focus of the Quality Audit was on the following key areas:

- Student enrolments into degree

programmes at all levels and postgraduate diploma programmes, with emphasis on minimum admission requirements, students progression and credit transfer system for the last 5 academic years;

- Quality and integrity of examinations, dissertations and research projects; delays in release of transcripts and missing marks;
- Certification process, including procedure for processing certificates;
- Award of degrees, with evidence of adherence to minimum standards on instruction hours and workload;
- Award of honorary degrees (Honoris Causa) as per University Standards and Guidelines;
- Appointment and promotion of academic staff, based on qualifications and merit.

During the audit exercise, the CUE team met members of the University Management, Senate, teaching staff and students' representatives. They also reviewed several documents to ascertain the status of University programmes and

others related to research, staff appointments, various awards and others to confirm our conformance with regulations and guidelines.

Following the quality audit, the Commission in its report noted that UoN adhered to the provisions set out in the Universities Acts, 2012, 2014, Universities Standards and Guidelines 2014 and the Harmonized Criteria and Guidelines for appointment and promotion of academic staff.

The Commission also identified a few areas of improvement which, once implemented, will enhance the quality of education in the University. The University was also advised to enhance its internal quality assurance mechanisms to better deliver and even exceed the desired quality for university education.

The University through Senate and other key organs is in the process of implementing the CUE recommendations with a view to enhancing quality in the core business of teaching, learning and research. [VF](#)



Members of the University Executive Board having a session with the Quality Inspection Audit team in the Vice-Chancellor's Office.

Dons challenged to publish, patent and prosper

Kenyan businessman Chris Kirubi has challenged university dons to publish, patent their research work and prosper.

“Universities such as Harvard are successful because they pioneer research, publish authentic and relevant

research findings, work closely with the industry and also shape government and public policies,” he said.

The industrialist advised universities to use agility and virtual principles to deliver results, avoid reinventing the wheel and borrow from the best

practices. He was speaking at the stakeholders' breakfast forum organized by the University of Nairobi to discuss the establishment of a modern Graduate School of Business.

Kirubi further urged dons to collaborate more with the industry to produce quality graduates who are experienced to face the job market. “Most graduates lack practical experience forcing companies to spend huge sums



Mr. Chris Kirubi (right) with the University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi and Prof. Isaac Mbeche, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Student Affairs

of money on training new employees. Universities should define the needs of industry and not respond to the market needs,” Kirubi advised.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi said the march towards world class status had started in earnest by the establishment of the graduate school.

“Times have changed and the market demands of the 21st century require us to re-engineer our programmes so as to work in close partnership with the industry and support each other,” he

said. He revealed that to enhance its contribution to society, the University intends to launch Executive Development Programmes targeting managers in government, business and industry, not forgetting international clients. The executive programmes will be housed in the University of Nairobi Towers.

Stakeholders at the meeting expressed willingness to work together with the University in establishing the best graduate school in the continent.

Various organizations such as Safaricom Limited, Cooperative Bank, Equity Bank, Barclays Bank, IBM, Kenya Revenue Authority, and Kenya Power were represented.

The University will enhance its digital learning platforms as it seeks to tap into international students' market. The Graduate School of Business will engage industry experts in fine-tuning the various programs and in the establishment of the endowment chairs. **VF**

Universities conclude negotiations with staff unions for 2013 – 2017 CBAs



Prof. Francis Aduol, Chairman Vice-Chancellors' Committee, shakes hands with Dr. Charles Mukhwaya, KUSU Secretary General, after signing the Union CBA for 2013-2017

Kenya's public universities have now completed negotiations and signed the staff Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) for the period 2013 – 2017.

The Inter-Public Universities Councils Consultative Forum of the Federation of Kenya Employers (IPUCCF) finalized negotiations for new Salaries and House Allowances with the Universities Academic Staff Union (covering teaching staff), Kenya Universities Staff Union (covering non-teaching staff in Grades 5 – 15) and KUDHEIHA Workers (grade 1-4) for the period July 1, 2013 to June 2017.

The Government had offered Ksh. 10 billion to finance the CBAs, which after computations, translate to an average total increment of 16 -19% for salary, depending on one's union and current salary point. Staff will also get a house allowance increment of 3.9% from their current (pre July 2013) levels. There is currently a Joint Implementation Committee of IPUCCF and the Unions in place working on the final figures and modalities of the CBA

implementation. The pay outs are supposed to be done on or before June 30, 2017.

The IPUCCF and the three staff unions are now expected to commence negotiations for the CBA's covering July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2021 since Government has advised that a CBA cycle takes 4 years. In essence, the benefit of the 2013 – 2017 CBAs will all be paid lump sum, in arrears, as the period covered has virtually elapsed.

The benefits negotiated with the IPUCCF, which is a forum of University Councils chairmen from all public universities – incorporating their Vice Chancellors - apply equally in all public universities.

Meanwhile, earlier on in February, 2016 the University of Nairobi Council and the three staff unions had finalized negotiations and signed internal CBAs covering the period 2013- 2017. The internal CBAs cover the following key benefits:

- a) House to Office Allowance ("Mguu" allowance)
- b) Book Allowance (for teaching

staff)

- c) Leave Travelling Allowance (once per year)
- d) Transfer Allowance
- e) Clinical Allowance (relevant cadres)
- f) Risk Allowance (relevant cadres)
- g) Hardship Allowance
- h) Optical Allowance
- i) Dental Allowance
- j) Daily Subsistence Allowance

k) Medical In-patient top up

Typically, allowances and other benefits negotiated through internal CBAs (by Union Local Chapters) differ from University to University, since they are dictated by the University's operating environment and are paid from internally sourced funds. Following the signing of the UoN internal CBAs, the due allowances were effected and backdated accordingly.

In a related development, the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) through Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) undertook a Job Evaluation Exercise for all jobs in the University between February 13 and March 17, 2017. The evaluation is meant to determine the relative worth of jobs, harmonize the job grading structure and produce a salary survey. The job evaluation exercise was covering the whole public sector in Kenya, and its report for various sub-sectors is keenly awaited. [VF](#)

Finance Department automates systems to enhance service delivery

The University Finance Department is the central unit charged with the responsibility of implementing sound financial controls, effective management of the University's financial resources and offers professional guidance on financial matters.

The management of the University's financial resources is regulated by the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Public Finance Management Act 2012, the Public Audit Act 2009, the State Corporations Act (Cap.446), the Universities Act 2012 and the University of Nairobi Charter and statutes.

In line with the foregoing, the University is required to respond to and comply with its own financial regulations that guide day-to-day financial management. The Finance Department also ensures timely preparation and submission of relevant financial reports to the government.

The University's main sources of income includes recurrent and development grants from The National Treasury, tuition fees from module I and module II students, research grants, accommodation and catering fees, donations and proceeds from income generating activities.

In order to improve revenue generation and contain costs, the finance department took over the Management of the University of Nairobi Business Centre, formally known as Central Stores. The Business Centre is in charge of following operations.

1. The production of Royal Satima mineral water for distribution to internal and external customers;
2. Centralized air travel and hotel

accommodation in order to negotiate for competitive rates and reduce on agency fees;

3. Centralized purchase of stationery, cleaning and electrical materials to take advantage of bulk purchase discounts and enhance accountability.

In order to enhance service delivery to both internal and external customers, the Finance Department has come up with the following service delivery innovations:

1. A tracking system that enables tracking of documents within departments in the University. This systems analyses documents turnaround time, notifies document owner of document status, reminds section of pending tasks as well as improving traceability of document current location.
2. Advance Management Accounting System that constantly reminds the advance holder the due date of accounting and in the

event of default the system is integrated with the payroll system to facilitate automatic recovery.

3. Research Grants Management Information System that captures all Research MOUs and budgets and also enables the researcher to track other financial information relating to the project.
4. Motor Vehicle Track System to track the movement of all University Motor Vehicles to ensure proper usage of fuel cards thus minimizing the fuel costs.
5. Mobile Money Transfers (M-pesa Transaction) which has eliminated crowds along the corridors in finance department.

The department is in the process of automating all the University's fixed assets, an exercise that is expected to be finalized by the end of June 2017. The Asset Management System will track the cost of the assets, how they are maintained, and depreciation levels and how they can be disposed. **VF**



Finance Office customer care centre.

UoN team to develop National Master Plan for Science and Technology Parks

The University of Nairobi, through University of Nairobi Enterprises Services (UNES), was awarded a contract to develop the National Master Plan for Science and Technology Parks in Kenya and designs for technology parks for Konza and Dedan Kimathi University of Technology and Science. "The call for expression of interest was floated by the Ministry of Education. The consultant had to be a Kenyan public university and was expected to have an international partner," said Prof. Peter

Ngau, the project team leader. "To this end, UoN/UNES partnered with Frost & Sullivan, a company based in Singapore with vast experience in science and technology parks. UoN/UNES also constituted the project team comprising ICT, planning and business professionals drawn from various schools in the university," Prof. Ngau said when the project team members paid courtesy call on the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, on April 19, 2017. Mr. Richard Wong from Frost & Sullivan said

the company had worked with various governments in preparing science and technology parks master plans. "Together with the UoN/UNES team we hope to meet the objectives of this project," he said. Prof. Mbithi said the project is in line with its research and knowledge dissemination mandate stating that the National Master Plan for Science and Technology Parks will be of great value to Kenya. "I call on the project team members to work towards the success of the project," he said. VF



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi (Center), and Prof. Peter Ngau (3rd left) Principal CAE, meet members of the project team to work on the National Master Plan for Science and Technology Parks.



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Team involved in historic separation of conjoined twins honoured



University of Nairobi's, College of Health Sciences immediate former Principal, Prof. Isaac Kibwage with one of the formerly conjoined twins during a dinner organized to honour the medical team that conducted the historic surgery.

A medical team from the University of Nairobi's College of Health Sciences (CHS) that participated in a delicate surgery to separate sacropagus conjoined twins received presidential commendation and certificates.

The UoN team leader, Dr. Chris Musau, a neurosurgeon, was awarded the order of the Moran of the Burning Spear (MBS) of Kenya. President Uhuru Kenyatta also hailed the team for a job well done.

In November 2016, the UoN team comprising of radiologists, anaesthetists and plastic surgeons took part in the historic operation. The consultants for the team were Prof. Julius Kiambi and Prof. Nimrod

Mwang'ombe. The radiologists were crucial in the pre-operative planning and their images were useful in the creation of 3D models of the joint pelvis which was done by one of the plastic surgery residents.

The separation, which took 23 hours, was performed at the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH). UoN anaesthetists and plastic surgeons ensured that the recovery and healing process progressed well. The wounds had completely healed by January 2017 and the two girls were for the first time allowed out of their rooms on 14th February (Valentines Day) and visited the Nairobi Animal Orphanage.

On 12th April, KNH hosted a dinner in honour of the medics. The dinner event was hosted at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nairobi's Upper Hill area and was graced by College of Health Sciences Principal, Prof. Isaac Kibwage and KNH CEO Ms. Lilly Koros.

Prof. Kibwage said the college was always ready to offer expertise in difficult cases such as the separation of the Siamese twins and will continue collaborating closely with KNH. He commended the teams from both institutions for high level of professionalism and expertise. [VF](#)



Separated twins, Blessings and Favour when they were taken for a day out of hospital on Valentine's Day.

Senior University managers appointed

The University of Nairobi Council recently made senior management appointments as part of UoN's transformative agenda to achieve and maintain world class status.



Prof. Lydia W. Njenga has been appointed as the Director, Graduate School. This post is established at the level of College Principal. Prof. Njenga is the immediate former Director of the Board of Postgraduate Studies and also a former Dean, School of Physical Sciences. She is widely published in Inorganic, Environmental and Analytical Chemistry and has supervised many students at Masters and PhD. Levels.



Prof. Charles M. Mulei has been appointed Deputy Director in charge of Academics, at the Graduate School. A Professor of Internal Veterinary Medicine, Prof. Mulei is the immediate former Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and former Chairman, Department of Clinical Studies. He has published widely in his area of specialization.



Prof. Lawrence D.E. Ikamari has been appointed as Deputy Director incharge of Admissions, Graduate School. Prof. Ikamari is a former Director, Population Studies and Research Institute and has also served as Associate Director, Research Centre for HIV Prevention and Research in the School of Public Health, College of Health Sciences.



Prof. Christopher M. Gakuu has been appointed as the Director of the new ODeL Campus. The post of Director, ODeL is established at the level of College Principal. An Associate Professor in the Department of Extra Mural Studies, Prof. Gakuu has widely published and has supervised many students at Masters and PhD level. He is the immediate former Associate Dean, School of Continuing and Distance Education.



Prof. Harriet J. Kidombo has been appointed Deputy Director, ODeL Campus. An Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies, Prof. Kidombo is the immediate former Dean of the School of Continuing and Distance Education. She has supervised several postgraduate students and is a member of various professional bodies.



Prof. Mohamud Abdi Jama has been appointed as Deputy Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, responsible for Main Campus. Prof. Jama is an Associate Research Professor at the Institute for Development Studies and former Director of the Institute. A widely published scholar, Prof. Jama holds a PhD degree in Agricultural Economics from the Washington State University.

Varsity Focus wishes the new appointees all the best in their new duties.

UoN hosts the first Triple Helix summit in Africa

The first ever International Triple Helix Summit in Africa and 15th of its kind in the world was held at the Chandaria Auditorium, University of Nairobi Towers.

Experts from government, academia and industry explored how ICT and data can be used to accelerate the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

During the official launch of the summit, University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi urged the event participants to develop an acceleration roadmap and implementation plan to help in the attainment of the eight SDGs. Prof. Mbithi pledged to support the implementation and realization of the SDGs. Prof. Mbithi also acknowledged the role the civil society plays as a critical linkage with the Academia.

Dr. Richard Belio Kipsang, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, enumerated the various efforts made by the government to attain universal access to quality education in Kenya. He said the government had established feeding programmes for pupils from arid and semi-arid areas, constructed infrastructure, connected electricity to schools and trained quality teachers, among other initiatives.

Speaking during the summit, Mr. Irungu Nyakera, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing & Urban Development, quoted the mantra "What gets measured, gets done." He challenged participants to actively perform monitoring and evaluation of the attainment of the SDGs. He also challenged technologically savvy young people to rise up and build ICT

solutions that can help the country deal with effects of drought, climate change and improve the education system.

The summit was organized by I Choose Life and addressed 7 SDGs such as ending poverty in all forms everywhere, end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, ensure access to affordable, sustainable, and modern energy for all, take urgent action to combat climate change and strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize global partnership for sustainable development.

Participants observed that technology can be used to accelerate the attainment of SDG. The event was attended by delegates from Vodacom, Erikson, Uber, Microsoft, among other technology companies. [VF](#)



Prof. Peter Mbithi, Vice-Chancellor University of Nairobi, addressing delegates during the Triple Helix Summit held at the Chandaria Auditorium, University of Nairobi Towers.

Students participate in practical snake ecology and handling



UoN students participate in practical snake handling.

Dr. Ambrose Kipyegon (right) and veterinary students inspect an African puff Adder at the 5th Year Lecture Theatre -Clinical Clinical Studies Department.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine students participated in a practical snake ecology and handling session that was facilitated by researchers from National Museums of Kenya-Snake Park and faculty lecturers.

During the hands-on session at the 5th Year Lecture Theatre- Clinical Studies Department, students learnt new skills in reptile trapping, handling, blood sampling and testing for repeatability in measurements of length and mass.

Practical training aims to elevate the students' knowledge and skills in a specific profession of their respective fields and produce graduates who are credible, creative and proficient thus increasing their employability. **VF**

Engineering students visit Makerere University



Fifty-eight students from the five Engineering departments and from Urban Planning visited Makerere University on 19th April 2017.

The various activities that took place during the three-day trip to Uganda include: a guided tour of the College of Engineering Design Art and Technology (CEDAT) at Makerere University, a workshop on how to promote innovations and research in East Africa (Students from both universities presented their projects during the workshop), TOTAL lecture on oil and gas production conducted by Total Professeurs Associes, a trip to Karuma dam, a visit to the Uganda National Museum and a visit to the Bahai temple.

Students pose for a group photo outside CEDAT Conference Hall during their visit to Makerere University.

The trip was organized by The Engineering Students Association (ESA) as part of its aim of fostering the student's interests in the engineering

field. ESA organizes corporate talks, expos, community outreach and industrial visits aimed at the holistic growth of the students. **VF**

AIESEC empowers youth to make positive impacts

AIESEC is the world's largest non-profit youth-run organization. It is an international non-governmental not-for-profit organization that provides young people with leadership development and cross-cultural global internship and volunteer exchange experiences across the globe, with a focus to empower young people so they can make a positive impact on society.

The AIESEC network includes approximately 70,000 members in 127 countries and territories. The vision is peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential achieved through youth leadership development.

AIESEC in Kenya was formed in 1970 with the first chapter being opened in the University of Nairobi. Since then, AIESEC in University of Nairobi has been able to facilitate close to 1,000 exchange experiences and has engaged students across various campuses. Currently, there are about 60 members in total, with 50 other students being actively engaged in AIESEC

events. The core products include Global Volunteer, Global Talent and Global Entrepreneur.

Global Volunteer is an opportunity for a young person to develop leadership qualities of self-awareness, solution orientation, empowering others and world citizenship while living a cross-cultural volunteer experience. In the product, a young person volunteers abroad for a period of 6 weeks to 3 months on social impact projects that contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Global Talent is a professional internship experience where a young person works abroad in a multinational company to advance their goals and gain professional experience. The project lasts for a minimum of 6 months.

Global Entrepreneur is similar to Global Talent but the young person volunteers abroad for a minimum period of 3 months with entrepreneurs in a startup, accelerator or incubator to advance their goals and grow.

AIESEC in UoN runs a variety of

activities, events and conferences throughout the year. Among major events for the year are AIESEC Week, which is an event carried out within the university to increase their presence and also to sell exchange to the students. FLIT Forum, which stands for Financial Literacy and IT Forum, is a platform which brings in external speakers to challenge the youth on finance and IT and what their place is in the current world and society. At the end of the year, AIESEC holds an annual Stakeholders Thanksgiving Dinner to appreciate supporters and also recognize the members and give out awards.

Two conferences are normally run in the year: Local Chapter Motivation and Training Seminar, LCTMS (to offer training and motivation to the members) and Election Conference (where the next sets of leaders that will make up the Executive Board for the preceding year are elected).

AIESEC has received support from various organizations over the last five years. These partners have offered support either financially; in-kind or even taken up interns under the various exchange products. AIESEC's impact in University

of Nairobi can be seen through the number of leadership experiences facilitated around the world. Last year, AIESEC was able to deliver 180 exchange experiences, including both the students taken out for exchange and the interns brought in to work in community development projects.

It has been an incredible journey of impacting lives and creating leaders among the youth as an organization. **VF**



Members of AIESEC pose for a group photograph



Ms. Angel Mbuthia

Former SONU Deputy President at the helm of Pan-African students union

Ms . Angel Mbuthia, the immediate former Deputy President of the Students Organization of Nairobi

University (SONU), was elected as the Gender and International Relations Secretary of the All Africa Students Union (AASU) during 12th Elective Congress of the union held in Khartoum.

Ms. Mbuthia, who is in her final year in the Faculty of Arts, will have the honour to serve at the highest office of students' governance on the African continent for a term of four years.

AASU is the Pan-African students organization formed to galvanize the young people particularly students into efforts geared towards development of the African

continent. Since its inception in 1972, AASU now has a presence in all 55 countries in Africa, and has played an important role in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. AASU is at the forefront of the fight for equal access to quality education, quality assurance in higher education, democratic governance, respect for human rights and gender, promotion of African culture, and sustainable development.

As per the requirements of her office, Ms. Mbuthia will be provided with various logistics to facilitate her work: accommodation, diplomatic status, monthly compensation and other material and moral support as captured in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed between AASU and the Government of Ghana in 1987.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi on behalf of management and Senate, congratulated Ms. Mbuthia for the achievement. The Vice-Chancellor urged other student leaders to emulate her and strive to be good ambassadors of the University of Nairobi brand. [VF](#)

Government makes changes in governance of University Students' Councils

The Universities (Amendment) Act, No. 48 of 2016 has made far reaching changes in the governance of all students' councils. The areas amended include the governance structure which will have a lean representation as the students' council will comprise of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, secretary-general and three members representing special interests of students. The Act underpins students' governance structure framework in law. The Universities (Amendment) Act, No.

48 of 2016 renders all the students' bodies as currently constituted defunct. In the future, as per the Act, elections will be conducted through students electoral colleges based on academic departments, schools or faculties as appropriate. The electoral colleges elect members of the university student council within 30 days. Council members will be limited to two terms of one year each. Therefore, this disqualifies a student council member to seek elective position where such a

member has been elected and served for two terms.

Elections will be conducted by an independent electoral body and will mirror national electoral laws and structures. Students are further required to comply with leadership and integrity prescriptions.

The new law provides a totally new approach to the way students elections are handled, and will lead to a lean students government organ. [VF](#)

Kenya Little League donates baseball books and kit

The Kenya Little League (KLL) has donated a collection of baseball books and equipment to the University of Nairobi.

At a ceremony held on May 10, 2017, Ambassador Francis Muthaura, KLL's Goodwill Ambassador, presented the items to Prof. Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs. Prof. Mutoro thanked KLL for the generous donation, stating that with the additional resources, the University is better equipped to teach and train baseball.

"It would be good if the Department of Physical Education and Sports and the Kenya Little League jointly promote baseball in Kenya," he said.

Prof. Jacob Nteere, the Department of Physical Education and Sports head, said the University has started a curriculum on baseball and softball in the College of Education and External Studies. "The

baseball items come in handy as we train our students on the baseball principles and practices," said the departmental head.

Amb. Muthaura stated that KLL is tasked with promoting both baseball and softball in Kenya. "Since its establishment in 2010, the Kenya Little League has managed to promote baseball in primary and secondary schools and colleges. We are now promoting it in universities," he said.

The Ambassador was accompanied by KLL's President Mr. George Mahinda and Patron Mr. Samuel Kimiti. [VF](#)



Ambassador Francis Muthaura (3rd Right) donates Baseball books to Prof. Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs.

UoN Students to represent Kenya in the Roll Ball World Cup

Two University of Nairobi students will represent Kenya in the 4th Roll Ball World Cup 2017. They are part of a seven-member team that will travel to Dhaka, Bangladesh, for the competition.

Amito Kevin Ouma and George Mbutu Mutie, from the College of Biological and Physical Sciences, have been part of the UoN roll ball team that has been participating in the local league.

Roll ball is a relatively new game in Kenya and is played between two teams of 12 players. Out of 12, only 6 players are allowed to play on court at a time. This game is played on skates. The ball can be held in single hand or both hands, even during passing. A player must dribble the ball while carrying it. [VF](#)



Mean Machine teaches Black Blad a lesson



Students participate in a rugby match at the University of Nairobi Grounds.

The University of Nairobi's rugby team, Mean Machine, beat Kenyatta University's Blak Blad 16-10 during the inter-university games. Blak Blad took an early lead when they scored twice in the initial minutes of the game at the UoN sports ground. However, Mean Machine re-strategized and gained control of the game and eventually emerged victorious.

The 15 a side rugby game was played on February 18, 2016. Other games played during the inter-university games include basketball, volleyball, handball and football.

University of Nairobi teams that performed well include the women basketball team that beat Machakos University 20 – 0. The men basketball team beat African Nazarene University 48-32 while the men hockey team beat Machakos University by 2-0. **VF**

TECNO Mobile to spruce up sports facilities

The University of Nairobi signed an MoU with TECNO Technology Limited, a company responsible for the marketing and promotion of TECNO mobile devices in Kenya. TECNO pledged to sponsor the renovation and refurbishment of the University rugby field and basketball boards and also the sponsorship and purchase of uniforms for the University teams

TECNO will erect three technical benches which will be strategically placed at the University rugby field for substitute players and match officials. The addition of the three technical benches shall ensure that the field meets required standards to enable the University host more games.

TECNO will also improve the standards of basketball boards to provide better training and gaming facilities to basketball teams. This shall promote the basketball court and facilities and lead to possible use of the same by third parties at a fee.

The University is proud to partner with TECNO in the improvement of sports facilities for the students. Excellent sporting and recreational facilities are important for the fitness and health of students in the University. It cannot go unsaid that there is a significant relationship between the fitness and health of students and their academic performance. This is why the university is keen on the quality of recreation facilities for the students. **VF**



An artistic impression of the proposed TECNO benches at the University of Nairobi.



The first UoN Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Josephat Karanja, consults with the Chancellor, President Jomo Kenyatta, during the 1970 Graduation Ceremony. Looking on is Apollo Milton Obote, then President of Uganda.



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