Staff elect representatives to the Staff Council

Over 200 employees participated in the just-concluded election

From March 8-9 staff members were offered the annual opportunity to exercise their democratic right to vote for their departmental representatives in the USIU-Africa Staff Council. The Council is a governing body established through the University Charter, with a mandate to deliberate, consult and find fact with a view to make recommendations regarding the growth and welfare of university staff members. The Council is run by an executive committee comprising a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian and Member-at-large, and convenes regularly to review and approve Council reports.

This year over two hundred employees voted for 34 of their colleagues to fill some of the 48 vacant seats in the Council, presided over by the Human Resources department. A by-election to fill the remaining seats will be held on Monday, March 13 at 1pm in the Office of Human Resources.

Once all seats are filled, the new Council shall convene before Friday, March 17 to elect members of the Executive Committee. The current Chairman, Mr. Eannes Ongus (Principal Fundraising Officer) is not eligible for re-election having served the maximum two terms of office, as detailed in the Constitution of the Staff Council.
On Wednesday, March 1, USIU-Africa hosted members of the fourth estate at a media roundtable at the Intercontinental Nairobi. The gathering met to discuss the issues surrounding media coverage of the higher education sub-sector.

Speaking during the event, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza decried the commercialization of higher education, noting the need for universities to comply with recognizable measurable standards and increase their focus on disseminating research results using new media platforms.

Aside from Prof. Zeleza, the event was attended by DVC-Academic & Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono, Director of University Advancement Mr. James Ogolla, Director of Administration Mr. Jared Raburu, Director of Legal Services and Company Secretary Ms. Helen Ambasa, Professor of Economics Prof. Francis Wambalaba and Faculty Council Chair Scott Bellows (Assistant Professor of Management).
Culture Week celebrations finally here

USIU-Africa’s annual celebration of culture is taking place this coming week beginning Tuesday, March 14. Every year, students organize a three day bonanza to celebrate the melting pot of cultures that is USIU-Africa.

This year, a majority of the 65 nationalities represented in our student community will participate in the various activities planned between March 14-16 behind the cafeteria (for the Cultural Village) and at the soccer pitch (for the Culture Night) on Thursday March 16.

Culture Week’s 2017 theme of “Travel the World in One Week” will showcase how differences in food, dress, music and language draw various communities together, rather than apart. Other highlights include the “Carnival of Colors” – a part of the Hindu Holi Festival which commemorates the victory of good over evil - where participants chase and spray each other with colored water and dry power accompanied by song and dance.

Food drive launched in response to famine crisis

Members of the USIU-Africa community have come together to organize a food drive in response to the biting famine currently ravaging large parts of the East African region, and affecting an estimated 11 million people.

Beginning Monday, March 13, through the #IamCompassionate campaign, students, staff and faculty have been requested to donate, maize flour, wheat flour, dry cereals (rice, beans, maize, green grams) as well as cooking oil at the Red Cross stand to be situated in front and behind the cafeteria.

Other activities in the campaign include a “Skip a Meal” day on Thursday, March 23, where community members are encouraged to donate money that would have been used to purchase their lunch meal, to support the cause.

Filmmaker speaks to graduate digital media class

Filmaker Mr. Jeff DeKock - Creative Director at Open Hand Studios - spoke to students of the Introduction to Digital Media graduate class on Friday, March 3. His guest lecture was on “The Evolution of Cinema and Photography in the Digital World”. Mr. De Kock holds a Master’s degree in Visual Anthropology from the University of Manchester.

The class is part of the Master of Arts in Communication Studies program, and is taught by Assistant Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication Dr. Maria Canudo.
USIU-Africa explores collaboration with Rwandese university

On March 2, Prof. Agnes Binagwaho (Professor of the Practice of Global Health Delivery; Former Minister of Health of Rwanda; Senior Lecturer on Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School) and Dr. Pierre Paul (Lecturer, Faculty of Global Health Delivery; Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Partners In Health) paid a courtesy call on Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza and met with officials of the Division of Advancement and the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences to explore areas of collaboration.

The areas under discussion include joint research, faculty exchange, joint grant applications, student supervision, student internships, joint curriculum development, among others.

Prof. Binagwaho and Dr. Paul were in Nairobi to attend a meeting of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria - a 21st century partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people affected by AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, designed to accelerate the end of the diseases as epidemics, by raising and investing nearly US$4 billion a year to support programs run by local experts in countries and communities most in need.

USIU-Africa represented at CUE exhibition

Our admission team represented the university at the Commission of University Education (CUE) exhibition at the Catholic University of East Africa (CUEA) from February 27 - March 3. The weeklong exhibition which was attended by over 40 universities accredited by CUE from all over the country, provided opportunities for participating universities to showcase their recent research outcomes and innovations, as well as their academic programs.

The exhibition further provided a platform for universities to showcase the various programs they offer and the technological advancement depicted by the universities. The event was organized by the Commission in conjunction with the Universities Exhibition Steering Committee.
Members of the Counseling Services department administer questionnaires to students to gauge awareness of drug abuse issues, as part of a three-day awareness drive aiming to have university community members take charge of their individual destiny by protecting themselves and their colleagues, friends and family from the devastating effects of alcohol and drug abuse.

Dr. Dana Basnight Brown (Associate Professor of Psychology and Research Scientist) was a guest speaker at the Doctoral Association of East Africa (DAEA) colloquium on Friday, February 24, whose theme was “Getting Published.” Her presentation at the United Kenya Club, was titled “Identifying appropriate journals for your manuscript: what to look out for” and was preceded by the University of Nairobi Business School’s Prof. Zachary Awino.

The Office of Internship has advertised Summer Internship positions in fifteen organizations spanning technology, banking, media, government, advocacy, health, entertainment, and financial services sectors. The deadline for applying for any of the positions is this Friday, March 17. Further details are available on the noticeboards, as well as on request through email (internship@usiu.ac.ke) and phone (0730116777).
The recently reported episodes of secondary school bullying, torture, and hazing shocked the nation in the past week. In its wake, Kenya ponders what sick institutional cultures must exist in order to promulgate regularized repeated physical violence by and against pupils in varying high schools.

Many might not realize that the depravity of bullying exists beyond schools and sports fields. Duncan Chappell and Vittorio Di Martino of the International Labor Office highlight deviant behaviour at workplaces as one of the most pertinent emerging issues in organizations across the globe. Executives and social scientists alike maintain many terms to describe deviant counterproductive behaviour in work settings including delinquency, deviance, retaliation, revenge, violence, emotional abuse, mobbing, bullying, misconduct, and organisational aggression.

Social scientists Eleanna Galanaki and Nancy Papalexandris define workplace bullying as recurring persistent negative acts directed to one or more persons that create a negative work environment. In bullying, the targeted person experiences difficulty in defending and protecting themselves. Therefore, bullying does not refer to conflicts between two parties of equal strength but rather a more influential aggressor in an imbalance of power.

Managers might not understand the severe depths and prevalence of workplace bullying. Workers in some industries report versions of bullying at rates of 70%. Researchers Ståle Einarsen and Anders Skogstad detail that male-dominated industries valuing machismo and masculinity or efficiency at any and all costs increases workplace tensions and provides greater tolerance for aggressive behaviour. Construction sites, military barracks, investment banking, and professional sports teams all stand out as highly susceptible industries. However, female-dominated industries do not enjoy immunity from workplace bullying. The UK Department of Education started warning and educating educators about teacher to teacher and principal to teacher bullying in primary and secondary schools as far back as 2009.

Charlotte Rayner and Helge Hoel delineate workplace bullying in the following five types. First, a threat to an employee’s professional status might include belittling opinions, public professional humiliation, and accusations about the lack of worker effort. Second, threatening a worker’s personal standing via accusations about the lack of worker effort. Third, employee’s professional status might include belittling of one’s performance. Fourth, a supervisor might destabilize a subordinate by failing to give credit when due, assigning meaningless tasks, unjustifiably removing responsibilities, repeatedly reminding him or her of previous blunders, and actively setting up the employee to fail. Fifth, a supervisor might through undue pressure, unnecessary disruptions, and impossible deadlines. Fifth, a supervisor might give an employee too many tasks to complete.

Eleana Galanaki and Nancy Papalexandris highlight the impact of bullying in another study. The effects of workplace bullying affect both individual employees as well as organizations. Negative personal short to medium-term effects include feelings of depression, paranoia, anger, anxiety, despair, plummeting self-esteem, irritability at home and at work, higher blood pressure, mood swings, feelings of helplessness, and lower job and life satisfaction. Long-term negative personal effects include post-traumatic stress disorder and inability to function in future work environments. An organization also suffers from bullying through decreased quality of work environments, increased staff turnover, and lower productivity.

Helen Cowie, Paul Naylor, Ian Rivers, Peter Smith, and Beatriz Pereira highlight personal issues that can cause a bully another including aggressive personality tendencies, history of interpersonal conflict, and one’s capacity to morally disengage. However, organizations stand as the key to reducing the frequency and severity of bullying. Roberta Fida and her large research team detail institutional factors that influence someone’s propensity to produce counterproductive workplace behaviour even when their personal internal factors do not constitute a propensity for bullying. Organizational causes of workplace bullying include unrealistic key performance indicators, excessive workplace constraints, lack of decision latitude in staff and supervisors, and lack of organizational support all lead to negative emotions that cause employees to increase aggression and, as a result, bullying.

Ali-Karim Samman and Parbudyal Singh highlight additional organizational causes of workplace bullying as accepted aggressive team norms, status inconsistency between similar job grade positions, low departmental autonomy, coercive leadership styles, unfair or impossible reward systems, ambiguous or biased organizational policies, and poor organizational cultures. Peter Armstrong’s research shows how bullying often results during budget decision cycles and from budget constraints. He details how bullies even build up what he terms “fear capital” to control the target’s behaviour even when the bullying manager might not even be present in the office. Anthony Wheeler and team also discuss how employees who fear personal resource loss from reassignment, possible poor performance reviews, plausible job loss, and decreasing budgets all increase bullies’ gain cycle opportunism that can lead to bullying. The same research also shows that introverted workers, very agreeable individuals, those with low self-esteem, minorities, and women all sadly receive more bullying on average.

Upon reading the above, do you wonder whether your workplace experiences constitute bullying? Ask yourself the following seventeen statements and answer on a five (5) point scale whereby 1 equals “never occurs”, 2 “yes, occasionally”, 3 stands for “yes, at least once a month”, 4 equates to “yes, at least once a week”, and 5 means “yes, every day”.

You are ordered to do work clearly below your level of competence. You are systematically required to carry out tasks which clearly fall outside your job description. Someone withholding information which affects your performance. You are given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines. Key areas of responsibility are removed or replaced with trivial or meaningless tasks. You are ignored or excluded. You are exposed to an unmanageable workload. You are subjected to false allegations. Rumors and gossip are spread about you. Somebody tries to sabotage your performance. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job. Threats of making your life difficult (e.g. overtime, unpopular tasks). You experience intimidating behaviour, such as invasion of personal space, shoving, or overt violence. Somebody causes you economic or material damages. Pressure not to claim something which by right you are entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses). Persistent criticism of your work and effort. Your work is excessively monitored.

Look through your responses. If you scored above or equal to a 3.0 on more than five questions, you survive in your job as a victim of workplace bullying. If you scored a 4.0 or higher on six or more questions, then you experience serious workplace bullying and need to exit your current employment. If you scored a 5.0 on six or more questions, you suffer from severe workplace bullying and should consider immediate intervention assistance and psychological counselling to overcome the effects.

In summary, organizations must proactively stamp out entity-induced causes for workplace bullying all the while looking out for individual counterproductive behaviour with clear anti-bullying policies and incident reporting mechanisms. Individual victims of bullying should document instances of each bullying incident, and seek professional counseling.
**SPORTS UPDATE**

Our sports team recorded mixed results in various games they participated in this past weekend. The men’s rugby team whitewashed Thika Millars 41-5 in the on-going Kenya Rugby Union (KRU) Championship League that took place on campus last weekend. Their female counterparts who again teamed up with Kenyatta University to form the Varsity Warriors, squashed Comras 15-5, but lost to Top Fry Nakuru, Mwamba, Shamas and Impala at the KCB rugby grounds on Sunday, March 5.

The men’s team will meet South Coast Pirates in Mombasa while the Varsity Warriors take on Top Fry Nakuru, Mwamba, Shamas Comras and Impala at the Impala Grounds this weekend.

Our cricket team are the new champions of the 6-A-Side cricket tournament after they beat African Nazarene University, Mount Kenya University, Cooperative University, Kenyatta University, Multimedia University and JKUAT, in the joint Cricket Kenya - Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA) league match that took place at the Lenana School in Nairobi this past weekend.

On Saturday March 4, the ladies hockey team triumphed against Daystar University and Mount Kenya University 6-0 and 5-0 respectively, in the ongoing Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA) league at Kenyatta University. The men’s hockey team on the other hand, had a goalless match against Kenyatta University.

Meanwhile during the KUSA league at Kenyatta University, the ladies volleyball team beat Kenyatta University 3-0 but lost to St. Paul's University and Daystar University 3-0 and 3-1 respectively.

In basketball, the men’s team thrashed Mt. Kenya University 58-19 and narrowly lost to Zetech University 36-38 during an internal league and KUSA league respectively held at the USIU-Africa basketball pitch last weekend. The ladies team also recorded a 43-15 win against St. Paul's University and a slight loss to Daystar University, 20-22.

The soccer men won against Daystar University in the KUSA league and drew with University of Nairobi (CAV) but lost to National Youth Service (NYS-VTI) in the Universities and Colleges Federation league (UCFL) while their female counterparts won against Daystar University and drew with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) in the ongoing KUSA league. The team further lost University of Nairobi and drew with JKUAT University in the UCFL.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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<tr>
<th>Monday, March 13</th>
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<td>#IamCompassionate Campaign begins</td>
<td>Student Affairs Council Elections Voting @ 9am - 8pm</td>
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<td>Student Affairs Council Elections Debate Day</td>
<td>Cafeteria (Upstairs)</td>
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<td>Staff Council By-Election @ 1pm</td>
<td>Culture Week 2017</td>
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<td>Office of Human Resources</td>
<td>Behind Cafeteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture Week 2017</td>
<td>Culture Week Night 2017 @ 6pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behind Cafeteria</td>
<td>Dome, Soccer Pitch</td>
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<th>Student Affairs Council Elections Voting Cafeteria (Upstairs)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Affairs Council Elections Voting Cafeteria (Upstairs)</td>
<td>Embassy of Colombia Talk @ 10am</td>
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<td>Lecture Theater II</td>
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**MEDIA MENTIONS**

March 5: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Standard Digital in an article titled “Gun drama at rallies raises security fears ahead of polls.”


Members of the Jazzika Music Band during a practice session at the Music Room in the auditorium on Friday, March 3. The band comprised entirely of six USIU-Africa students was formed in August 2016. The band can perform music from all genres, though it does have a preference for afropop and afrosoul music. Their most recent performance was at the Mr. & Miss USIU-Africa 2016 beauty pageant in November 2016.