Intel donates high performance computing device to boost student research

By Dan Muchai

The High Performance Computing Group at Intel Corporation’s East Africa Office has donated a High Performance Computing (HPC) device worth over KES 5 million, to the School of Science and Technology for use by students in their research projects.

High Performance Computing (HPC) is the practice of aggregating computing power to achieve much higher performance in comparison to performance that could be delivered from a single computing device. High Performance Computing makes possible the harnessing of data, advancing research and drawing of insights.

The device was presented to the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza on Friday, July 24 by the Director of the Corporate Affairs Group at Intel East Africa Mr. Mark Matunga, to aid in the processing of large amounts of data, collected as part of student research projects.

While presented the device, Mr. Matunga reiterated Intel’s commitment to the partnership with USIU-Africa that will extend to the hosting of a HPC Conference on campus from 3-5 October 2017.

The Conference to be themed “The Role of HPCs in Accelerating Research and Innovation in Africa” will invite participation from all over the world, and is expected to lead to the creation of a five-node HPC network across Africa.

Speaking during the event, Prof. Zeleza hailed the budding partnership between the University and Intel Corporation, pointing at the myriad opportunities that have now available for students of the Information Systems and Technology, and Applied Computer Technology programs.

Under the aegis of the High Performance Computing Consortium-Africa (HPC2-Africa), USIU-Africa has partnered with the Carnegie Africa Diaspora Fellowship Program (CADFP) and Intel Corporation to champion the development and harnessing of HPC and its benefits in the African continent.

The consortium will provide a platform through which key stakeholders such as universities, technology companies, industry, government, research bodies and development partners will help establish the African HPC network.

Students interested in utilizing the device to be housed in the Innovation and Incubation Center, may contact the School of Science and Technology on email (sst@usiu.ac.ke). Registration for the HPC Conference is expected to be open before the end of July 2017.
Senate confirms appointment of Dr. Arasa as acting Associate DVC-Student Affairs

By Dan Muchai

Friday, July 21 — In an email to the university community, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza announced the University Senate’s approval of the appointment of Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Josephine Nyaboke Arasa as Acting Associate DVC (Student Affairs).

Dr. Arasa is no stranger to the management of student affairs. She has been involved in peer mentoring, academic wardenship and a club patron, since she joined the then School of Arts and Sciences as an Assistant Professor of Psychology ten years ago. She was also the first Coordinator for Psychology programs in the School of Humanities and Social Science between 2007 and 2010.

Since then she has acted as university lead for quality assurance, participating in quality assurance training in the university and all over East Africa, as part of the development of quality assurance processes on behalf of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

Dr. Arasa holds a Bachelor of Education (Science), a Master of Education in Educational Psychology, and a PhD in Educational Psychology all from Kenyatta University, as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Neuro-Psychology from the Niilomaki Institute in Finland. Her research interests revolve around issues of quality of postgraduate research and training, involvement of student leadership in the governance of higher education, ethnic identity and psychological wellbeing, and reproductive health.

The new acting Associate DVC will be responsible for strategic direction, oversight, coordination, leadership, and active participation in activities that relate to and promote a positive and quality student experience across the university.

As such, the heads of the department of Student Affairs and the Offices of the University Registrar and Counseling Services all report to the Associate DVC. Dr. Arasa will also provide oversight to the student government; the Student Affairs Council.

While congratulating Dr. Arasa for agreeing to serve in this new position from Monday, July 24, Prof. Zeleza reiterated that the search for an Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will continue to be a top priority.

Michezo Afrika’s play to wind up this weekend

Michezo Afrika’s play - Uncommon Room - directed by Sam Kanja (IBA, 2015), Timothy Ndlisi and Joy Wanjeri (Criminal Justice Studies Sophomore), will be performed for the last time this Saturday, July 22 at 3pm and 6pm. Advance tickets retail at KES 200, while those sold at the entrance will be charged at KES 400.
Ambassador organizes first Dockers workshop

By Victor Mshindi and Antonio Longangi

Former IT Club president and current Dockers Campus Ambassador Mr. Victor Mshindi (Information Systems and Technology Senior) hosted an IT training workshop on Friday July 21 at the Freida Brown Student Center. The workshop introduced IST and Applied Computer Technology students to Docker - a software container service built to simplify and automate the process of software development and deployment. The session, which ran from 9 am to 4 pm and was attended by students from Technical University of Kenya, the Kenya Methodist University and USIU-Africa.

Software containers allow the developer to build several software applications inside insulated environments therefore reducing interferences between those applications. This reduction enables developers to build faster, richer and more efficient applications for a variety of environments. This is probably why Docker is ranked as the second fastest growing tech skill on demand by employers in a survey conducted by Stack Overflow – the “largest, most trusted online community for developers to learn, share their programming knowledge, and build their careers”.

This will eventually allow them to hold regular and more advanced activities at USIU-Africa, which will provide a deeper insight into Docker and its benefits in managing applications at scale.

USIU-Africa wins Universities Sustainability Innovation Challenge

By Dan Muchai

USIU-Africa’s Amos Njiraini’s startup Eco-Create and Innovate (ECANDI) - an environmentally conscious and economically efficient recycling solutions startup that combines the aesthetics of recycled glass with the durability of the glass’s structure - is the winner of final round of the ‘My Little Big Thing’ Universities Sustainability Innovation Challenge.

The sustainability competition targeted university & polytechnic students across Kenya aimed at pushing for the development of alternative technologies, that allow for existing lifestyles and patterns of consumption and development to remain relatively unchanged, while modifying product technologies to reduce their impact on the climate.

Mr. Njiraini’s prize includes a place in the Sustainability Practitioners Program that is run by University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership in Gauteng, South Africa next month.
USIU-Africa Psychology alumni organized a Pre-Election Anxiety and Trauma Conference on Saturday, July 15 at the auditorium. The conference which was attended by about 150 alumni and other psychology professionals aimed at managing anxiety and trauma ahead of the forthcoming Kenyan General Elections scheduled for August 8.

A panel of experts comprising of Dr. Joseph Nasongo (Commissioner, National Cohesion and Integration Commission), Major (Rtd.) Wairimu Mukuria (for Kenya Defense Forces military psychologist), Sandra TwinoMugisha (Founder, Kaitesi Psychology Services), Arthur Muriuki (Director of Clinical Services, Brain Initiative) and Dr. Oscar Githua (Assistant Professor of Psychology, School of Humanities & Social Sciences) came together to talk about complex trauma and historical injustices, surviving and coping after trauma, impact of armed violence, perpetrators and disciplined forces as well as the history and trajectory of psychological responses to traumatic events in Kenya.

In his keynote address titled “How politically-themed statements can lead to anxiety in individuals”, Dr. Nasongo admitted that tension was high in the country a fact he attributed to hate speech and provocative statements being posted across social media platforms. He confirmed the government’s preparedness to counter any tension that arises and urged the general public to be responsible especially with what they post on social media. “We have devised a mechanism that tracks perpetrators of this offense,” he said.

Dr. Nasongo also applauded the university’s efforts to offer counseling services during previous crises. Dr. Githua was keen to highlight the Psychology programs commitment to providing counseling to trauma survivors and their families. He gave an example of the Westgate Mail attack where USIU-Africa psychology professionals and students offered counseling services to victims of the attack.

In his parting shot, Dr. Githua encouraged young psychologists to be focused and empathetic even as they involve themselves in offering counseling services to calm down pre-election tensions that are already on the rise. He also emphasized the need for them to further their studies and form professional psychology groupings.

Major (Rtd.) Wairimu Mukuria spoke about the trauma that soldiers go through while handling casualties during terror attacks reiterating that it was important for psychologists to offer counseling services to such groups. She said that it was easy for people to judge soldiers during crisis but the public should also realize that they too get traumatized.

On her part, Ms. TwinoMugisha asserted that there is need to constitute an entity that deals with pre-and post-crisis trauma, while Mr. Muriuki shed light on how the brain functions when dealing with complex trauma and historical injustices.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Paul Zeleza, applauded the organizers of the conference for such an informative forum and urged alumni to continue supporting and participating in their alma mater’s activities. The alumni of USIU-Africa’s various psychology programs are awaiting approval from the Alumni Association’s Executive Committee to form a Chapter. Moving forward, they plan to hold additional conferences to address national issues, offer mentoring services to current students and engage in psychological research activities.
Mr. Richard Njau (Director, 4UP Digital) was invited by the New Economy Venture Accelerator to speak participants in the entrepreneurship program about a “Mental Digital Shift”, on Thursday, July 20. The session held at the Innovation and Incubation Center, focused on getting participants to begin thinking of new opportunities made available through digital platforms such as social media.

“Digitally advertising is not an option, it’s a must for small and medium size enterprises”, said Mr. Njau.

He urged his audience to be clear on their vision and target audience and thus be able to select an appropriate digital strategy. This, he said, will bring about cheaper and more effecting marketing of goods and services.

NEVA, whose core mission is training and mentoring entrepreneurs on campus, hosts training sessions every Thursday from 2pm to 3.30pm, in the Innovation and Incubation Center. Sessions are led by NEVA Chair Scott Bellows.

USIU-Africa Alumni Association in partnership with SwivelBox held a week-long academy whose aim was to equip 14-18 year olds with entrepreneurial skills from July 17-21 on campus. Swivelbox trainers guided the eleven teenagers on how to develop ideas, nurture them and bring them to life. They were taught about the importance of customer relationships and were equipped with skills to pitch their ideas to interested parties as well as to develop sustainable financial business models.

The participants were also exposed to guest speakers who are excelling in their fields of entrepreneurship. One such speaker, Director of Vacay Holiday Deals Mr. David Kimani, recounted his journey as an entrepreneur highlighting how springing back from failure contributed to his success. He reiterated the importance of putting one’s customers first to ensure that their needs are well attended.

Participants were provided with the opportunity to pitch business ideas which they had developed during the academy, to their parents as part of their learning outcomes. Chair of the New Economy Venture Accelerator Mr. Scott Bellows spoke to the teenagers and their parents regarding the key features that make USIU-Africa unique. He highlighted how USIU-Africa supports entrepreneurial innovations through the Innovation and Incubation Center that presents a platform where students can develop their ideas.

An admissions department representative guided participants through a campus tour to familiarize them with the facilities and programs available at USIU-Africa. To conclude the training, all participants were offered an opportunity to pitch their business ideas to successful local entrepreneurs with the best group receiving an award.
Cholera is an acute diarrheal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium Vibrio cholerae.

**Key Symptoms**
- Most infected people do not develop any symptoms.
- A minority develop acute watery diarrhea with severe dehydration.

**Reporting**
- Should you experience any diarrhea-like symptoms such as a bout of loose watery stools, with or without the presence of fever, please report to the Health Center reception (Ground Floor, Freida Brown Student Center) immediately for emergency assistance.

**Treatment**
- Cholera is an easily treatable disease. The majority of people can be treated successfully through prompt administration of oral rehydration solution.
- Severely dehydrated patients are at risk of shock and require the rapid administration of intravenous fluids.

**Prevention**
- Wash hands with soap and clean water at all times (especially before handling food and after visiting restrooms).
- Only drink treated water from a clean and covered container.

**Food Facilities**
- Clean and wash fruits before consumption with clean water.
- Prepare food in a clean environment with clean water.
- Eat at places that have evident sanitation features (sink and hand wash/sanitizer).
- Avoid open-air eating joints

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[www.usiu.ac.ke/health/cholera](http://www.usiu.ac.ke/health/cholera)
Students commemorate International Nelson Mandela Day with community service

By Antonio Longangi & Dan Muchai

Students from USIU-Africa joined the High Commission of the Republic of South Africa in Kenya and the United Nations Information Center (UNIC) to conduct a cleanup of Roysambu Primary School on Tuesday, July 18. The cleanup was organized by the United Nations Information Center to commemorate International Nelson Mandela Day - where each year on July 18, people all over the world spend 67 minutes in community service.

Present were officials of the High Commission of the Republic of South Africa in Kenya led by the High Commissioner Her Excellency Ms. Koleka A. Mqulwana, officials from the United Nations Information Center led by their Deputy Director Mr. Newton Kanhema, and USIU-Africa students led by the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Dr. Tom Onditi.

Her Excellency Ms. Mqulwana challenged the attendees to make each day a Nelson Mandela Day, while Dean Onditi reiterated the university’s long-standing commitment to giving back to the community. Roysambu Primary School Principal Ms. Nelius Njoroge, expressed her delight to having hosted the commemoration and committed the school to continue celebrating International Nelson Mandela Day in partnership with the South African High Commission.

The International Nelson Mandela Day was established on 18 July 2009 through a unanimous decision by the United Nations General Assembly, in remembrance of the 67 years of public service by the late South African President and anti-apartheid icon Dr. Nelson Mandela.

Students engage with pastoralists during trip to Amboseli

By Donald Musobozi & Antonio Longangi

The USIU-Africa Club for Hotel and Restaurant Students (CHATS) organized a camping trip to the Amboseli National Park from Friday July 14 to Sunday July 16, to provide a practical experience on management of park visitors.

With their patron, Mr. Godwin Njeru (Lecturer of Tourism Management), the students interacted with Maasai pastoralists, and gained a deeper understanding of community based conservation, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and the level of environmental awareness among the pastoralists.

The Amboseli National Park is located along the southern boundary between Kenya and Tanzania, at the base of the northern slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro – Africa’s tallest mountain. It is currently ranked second most popular tourist attraction in Kenya and provides some of the most-unique experiences for safaris, such as its large elephant herds and over 400 bird species.
Peer educators organize ‘ladies only’ talk show

By Antonio Longangi

The Peer Educators and Counseling Club organized a “Ladies Only Talk Session” on Thursday 20 July from 12:40 pm at the auditorium. Themed “Be the Woman”, the talk hosted a panel that shared on specific topics of relevance to the female members of the university community.

USIU-Africa’s Principal Counselor Mrs. Lucy Kung’u who is also the Vice Chairperson of the Kenya Guidance, Counseling and Psychological Association (KGCPA) provided a counselor’s perspective on the daily challenges faced by women in relation to identity, values and role in relationships. Voluntary Counseling and Testing Counselor Ms. Lydia Winda, spoke on the role of female students in addressing issues of sexual and reproductive health, while former Ms. USIU-Africa Ms. Kalpa Vrikshika, who has founded the Women in Tech Fund shared the common social and economic challenges facing her fellow students.

Others on the panel included Dr. Loice Okello (Adjunct psychology faculty in the School of Humanities & Social Sciences) dwelt on the workings of the female mind, while professional dancer Ms. Marion Munga focused on the need for financial independence. The final panelist Ms. Maggie Kahihi, who works as a presenter and digital content producer for Citizen Digital, emphasized the balance required between career, family and other engagements women have in society.

Journalism student concludes terror awareness campaign

By Antonio Longangi and Dan Muchai

Ms. Rachel Osewe (Journalism Senior) organized a campaign dubbed “Stay Woke: Say No to Terrorism” to increase awareness of terrorism among college students, from June 13 to July 20. Using social media and radio, Ms. Osewe’s campaign sought to encourage students to remain vigilant, in the face of on-going threats to personal and national security. The climax of the campaign was a panel discussion held in the cafeteria’s executive dining room on Monday, July 17.

The panel featured contributions from Mr. David Ayora (Chief Manager, Security) who urged his audience to be aware of the vulnerabilities that exist in their environment, while Mr. Teddy Eugene (Graduate student of Communications Studies and Presenter at Hot 96 Radio), demonstrated the relationship between the media and terrorism. Miss Montet Jebet (Founder of Real Talk Kenya), gave a detailed description of her experiences of the terrorist attack on the Westgate Mall in September 2013.
Upcoming Events

Saturday, July 22

Uncommon Room - A Play by Michezo Afrika
3pm & 6pm | Auditorium

USIU-Africa downs Strathmore in premier basketball match-up

By Dan Muchai

USIU-Africa’s ladies basketball team defeated Strathmore University 54-39 during a Kenya Basketball Federation Women’s Premier League match on Saturday July 15 at the Nyayo Gymnasium.

Their male Division III counterparts, however, fared poorly against the Wodley Knights (46-58) and the Sharks (47-50) during the matches also played at the University of Nairobi, last weekend.

The USIU-Africa men’s rugby team is assured of clinching the overall university 7s title when they compete in the final round this weekend in Mombasa.

The men’s hockey team had a successful weekend trip west, where they best the Western Jaguars by a solitary goal during their Kenya Hockey Union Men’s Premier League match in Kakamega.

The ladies and men’s soccer teams performed dismally losing their matches against the Technical University of Kenya (0-3) and (1-2) during the weekend matches at Kabete Technical Institute.

This weekend (July 22-23) the ladies basketball team will take on former champions Eagle Wings at the Nyayo Gymnasium, while the Men’s Division III side take on the Technical University of Kenya at the University of Nairobi, and the very next day against the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, at Upperhill.

The ladies hockey team will on Sunday July 23, be back in action at City Park against the University of Nairobi, in the Kenya Hockey Union Women’s Premier League.

Media Mentions

Compiled by Antonio Longangi

Wednesday, July 19: USIU-Africa is mentioned in the Daily Nation under the headline, “USIU aim fire on Badgers in men’s hockey league”

Tuesday, July 18: USIU-Africa is mentioned in The Star under the heading, “Strathmore close gap on Telkom to four points”

Monday, July 17: USIU-Africa is mentioned in The Star under the headline “Jkuat fall to Strathmore”