Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic and Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono addressed the university community on Friday, November 24 in the auditorium on the state of Academic Affairs during the University’s first ever DVC-ASA Convocation.

Prof. Rono dwelt on the major academic accomplishments within the academic and student affairs division, as well as the division’s priorities for this academic year 2017-18.

She announced the formal approval received from the Commission for University Education for the offering of two new programs within the School of Communication, Creative and Cinematic Arts, (Bachelor of Film Production and Directing, Bachelor of Animation), one program in the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (Bachelor of Epidemiology and Biostatics) and a new graduate program in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy).

Prof. Rono remarked on the growing entrenchment of a doctoral culture, citing the graduation of three doctoral candidates from the Doctor of Psychology and the Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations during this year’s Commencement Ceremony.

She announced the quadrupling of faculty conference travel support and tripling of internal research grants funds from KES 3 million to KES 10 million. She also reported the increasing in training programs to boost faculty research capacity, and teaching excellence.

The University has also made significant increases in the numbers of academic staff across all four schools, including an addition of two new schools: the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extension, and the School of Communication, Creative and Cinematic Arts. The former already has a new Dean - Prof. Amos Njogu - while the search for a substantive holder for the latter is yet to commence. Prof. Rono also took this opportunity to introduce the other new Deans from the other three Schools, including Prof. Njeri Wamae for the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences who officially reports on Friday, December 1, 2017.

Prof. Rono also announced other changes have been informed by regulatory mandates such as the reduction of General Education units from 51 to 39, and other structural changes to the teaching of General Education to ensure consistent delivery of the curriculum in all Schools. According to Prof. Rono, the University has already implemented some interventions.
in line with an improvement plan as submitted to the Commission for University Education with regard to the Institutional Quality Audit in 2016 and the Quality Audit Inspection in 2017.

She also detailed the preparation the university has been making in view of the onsite visit by the WASC Senior College and University Commission in Fall 2018, with a view to having our re-accreditation status reaffirmed. She requested the university community to familiarize itself with the findings of the Institutional Self-Study report filed with the Commission on November 21.

Turning her attention to the current academic year’s priorities, the DVC-ASA informed the community of the University’s intention to introduce an additional five academic programs, three of which will be in the School of Science and Technology (B.Sc. Data Science, M.Sc. Information Technology and Ph.D in Information Science and Technology). The other two will be cover undergraduate studies in agribusiness and analytical chemistry.

Prof. Rono also expressed her concern regarding dropout rates among graduate students, attributed mainly to work-related issues, adding that a committee had investigated and made recommendations, which will be implemented in the Spring 2018 semester.

She also mentioned that the actionable strategies arising from an employability study commissioned by the university, will also be implemented in Spring 2018.

Prof. Rono was also pleased to announce the re-establishment of the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, to assist faculty to update their capacity in both traditional and e-learning methodologies, assessment and evaluation of student learning and effective program assessment and review.

She also noted the need to further assure student success by implementing a faculty mentoring program in all schools, with support from the counseling, placement and career services and academic advisors to ensure its success.

Coupled with the establishment of interdisciplinary research centers and institutes and the review of our research policies and reward structures, Prof. Rono explained the university’s efforts to become reputable research university, included the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extention, which will focus on strengthening graduate research skills beyond the research courses, organize training for faculty in grant writing, thesis and dissertation supervision and publishing.

To promote promoting student and employee recruitment, retention, support and success, the DVC-ASA promised to implement the marketing strategy launched in April this year, as well as boost full-time faculty numbers to meet the target of 1:33 faculty to student ratio by 2020, and maintain the full-time/adjunct faculty ratio at 2:1.

Prof. Rono pledged to continue strengthening a sense of community, inclusion, and responsibility in schools, by providing additional autonomy and authority to Schools in the areas of faculty recruitment, budget management, communications, and external outreach.

Given the necessity of enhancing and diversifying university resources and preparing for the forthcoming capital campaign, she promised to work with the Finance Division in increasing financial literacy among faculty, staff and student leaders, in addition to mandating each School to establish an external advisory board with clearly defined mandates to assist in external relations and fundraising efforts.

Finally, while dwelling on the Division’s priority of improving electronic and physical infrastructure, she echoed the Vice Chancellor’s earlier announcement of the infrastructure projects planned for the near future such as the Humanities Center, the Wellness Hospital and additional student hostels. These projects, she said should meet student and faculty needs, as well as improve student learning.

She also noted the need to ensure expansion of electronic infrastructure to meet teaching and learning, research and scholarship needs as well as for operational and service efficiency.

Prof. Rono concluded by announcing that further Dean’s Convocations will be held in the Spring 2018 semester.
By Joanne Alividza

On Friday, November 17, USIU-Africa hosted the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB), French Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Ministry of Arts and Culture, European Union (EU) for the 2017 edition of the International Film Convention Public Lecture under the theme, "Taking the Audio-visual and Film Industry in East Africa to the next Level".

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza underlined the university’s support for the cinematic arts, which he said was evidenced by the creation of a new School, to house all communication, journalism, creative and cinematic arts programs.

He added that two new undergraduate programs in Animation and Film Production and Directing, had been approved by both of USIU-Africa’s regulators, and would roll out in the new year. The graduates from these programs, he said, are expected to substantially contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the countries in which they will live and work.

KFCB CEO Dr. Ezekiel Mutua expounded on the government’s efforts to promote films that are rich in culture, through a grassroots initiative dubbed “Cinema Mashinani”. He also added that they are looking into incorporating films from schools and colleges that showcase raw talent and creativity.

In delivering the keynote address, Mr. Christopher Foot (Chairman, Kenya Film Commission) enthusiastically expounded on the new ideas, initiatives and opportunities in film production and content distribution available to the upcoming generation of filmmakers and content creators.

He urged his audience to move with the times and engage with other professionals all over the world, including learning institutions such as USIU-Africa.

The lecture was attended by members of the USIU-Africa Management Board; including the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza, DVC-ASA Amb Prof. Ruthie Rono and University Advancement Director Mr. James Ogolla.

It attracted film professionals from across the world including Kenya, Tanzania, United States of America, France, India, Nigeria, and South Africa among others; and facilitated by the University Advancement Division’s engagements with KFCB and the French Embassy in Kenya.
IST Senior Hameed Abdullateef has been selected to join the Fall 2017 Jenzabar Internship Program, offered by Jenzabar - an American leading provider of the higher education management software. This internship program is unique in that it is tailored for campus and student requirements, while the host (university) is responsible for the curriculum customization to fit its own needs and schedules.

The Program was designed to provide students, from various countries in the world, with the opportunity to gain experience working in higher education, while earning a competitive wage throughout the duration of their internship.

Each edition attracts more than 250 applicants from all over the world. To reach the final stage, the candidate evaluated based on Grade Point Average, skills set presented on the resume and recommendations from referees.

Hameed has been assigned to work with the Business Applications department of the ICT division, developing visualizations of the Business Intelligence system based on data from the Jenzabar-developed Enterprise Resource System - CX. He will also design university-wide workbooks that contain views, dashboards and custom reports.
By Payne Griffith and Victor Mshindi

The first annual USIU - Africa Cyber Security Conference, took place on Friday, November 10 on campus, based on the theme; “The Status of Cyber Security in Kenya and the Region: Training And Enterprise”. The conference, which was organized by the USIU-Africa cyber security group in the IT Club, was an attempt to tackle the disconnect between academia and industry.

According to the Kenya Cyber Security Report of 2016 prepared by Serianu Ltd and USIU-Africa, Kenya’s loses upto $175 million annually to cybercrime, illustrating a need for all organizations to invest heavily in recruitment and training of cybersecurity professionals, and assessment of threats.

The conference was able to engage students, faculty, staff and other stakeholders through plenary talks, an open question and answer session and live demonstrations. Dr. Bright Gameli (Head of Cyber Security Services, Internet Solutions Kenya), Mrs. Paula Musuva-Kigen (Lecturer, Forensic Information Technology), Dr. Wamuyu Kanyi (Assistant Professor, Information Systems and Technology), Mr. Gabriel Mathenge (Cybersecurity Consultant), Mr. Christian Kisutsa (Information Security Analyst, Euclid Consultancy) and Onyibe Shalom (IST ‘17) formed a panel of seasoned experts, who produced a rich cyber security discourse, that addressed the role of the student in the cyber security industry, as well as provided insight into what it takes to meet industrial standards set by cyber security professionals.

Mr. Gabriel Mathenge shares his workplace experience since his graduation from USIU-Africa in 2010, with the audience at the USIU-Africa Cyber Security Conference held at the Innovation and Incubation Center, in the Freida Brown Student Center, on Friday, November 10.

Library conducts training on academic journals

By Antonio Longangi

The library held a training on scholarly research communication on Tuesday, November 21 in the Library’s instruction room. The training was designed to introduce library users to the academic research aspects such as citation and referencing; online database searching and retrieval, scholarly communication and understanding of online catalogues.

Reference & Instruction Librarian Mr. Rodney Malesi who led the training, focused on how to identify appropriate academic journals.

Training sessions are available on request, which can be communicated on email (askalibrarian@usiu.ac.ke).

USIU-Africa to celebrate World AIDS Day

This semester’s VCT and Reproductive Health Week will run from Monday, November 27 to Friday, December 1, 2017., all over campus. The selected theme for this year’s activities is “Hands up for #HIVPreventionandTreatment.”
New Mr & Miss USIU-Africa crowned

By Antonio Longangi

Mr. Eric Ongwen (IR Freshman) and Ms. Akual Awer (Criminal Justice Studies Sophomore) are the new Mr. & Miss USIU-Africa 2018.

The duo were crowned during the final of this year’s edition of Mr. & Miss USIU-Africa held on Thursday, November 23 at the CK Square, Two Rivers Mall.

The annual pageant is organized by the Student Affairs Council to select the two students who can best represent their fellow students, as well as raise funds for a recognized charity - for this edition it was the Al Tawoon Education Center located in one of the Nairobi’s informal settlements, Korogocho.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza and the Associate DVC-Student Affairs Prof. Wangari Mwai both congratulated the students for qualifying for the final, while the Student Affairs Council Chair, Mr. Chad Naggii congratulated the organizing team for a job well done.

A panel of judges considered the sixteen contestants’ confidence, stage presence, creativity, and personality not only during the final, but also over the last twelve weeks of preparation for the pageant.

“What inspired me the most about the competition was the fact that through this I have contributed to the education of a child at AlTawoon”

- Mercy Mwendwa (Miss Congeniality)

Joseph Gordon (APT Sophomore) and Mehreen Ahamed (Pharmacy Sophomore) came second, while Feizal Ahmed (HRM Freshman) and Bakashaba Blessing (IR Junior) followed.

Other title winners included APT Senior Aakash Barot (Mr. Community Service), Finance Sophomore Nelly Maina (Miss Community Service); Accounting Sophomore Adan Mohamed (Mr. Talent) and Journalism Junior Mercy Onyango (Miss Talent); IBA Sophomore Ambrose Mugume (Mr. Congeniality) and finally IBA Junior Mercy Mwendwa (Miss Congeniality).

The entrance fees will fund construction of additional classrooms at AlTawoon Education Center, making the institution eligible for government support.
Mr. Congeniality - Ambrose Mugume (IBA Sophomore) - and Miss USIU-Africa 2nd Runners Up, Bakashaba Blessing (IR, Junior) pose during the Couples segment of the beauty pageant.

Contestants showcase designer outfits during a segment of the Mr & Miss USIU-Africa 2017 pageant held on Thursday, November 23, at Two Rivers Mall, Nairobi.

Miss Community Service, Nelly Maina (Finance Sophomore), poses in a ‘Mother Theresa’ outfit for her creative segment presentation during the beauty pageant finals.

Mr. USIU-Africa 2017 hopeful Denver Bagaka (IBA Sophomore) responds to a judge’s question during the Question and Answer session towards the conclusion of the pageant.

Contestants showcase designer outfits during a segment of the Mr & Miss USIU-Africa 2017 pageant held on Thursday, November 23, at Two Rivers Mall, Nairobi.

Miss Congeniality winner Mercy Mwendwa (IBA Junior) catwalks during the creative presentation at the Mr. & Miss USIU-Africa 2017 final on Thursday, November 23 at Two Rivers Mall, Nairobi.

Mr. USIU-Africa 2018 1st Runners-Up, Joseph Gordon (APT Freshman) showcases his creative wear during the creative presentation.

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Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 25
Kenya Swimming Federation Invitational Swimming Championships | Kasarani Aquatic Stadium
Hockey (Men) vs Kenya Police | City Park
Hockey (Ladies) Vs UoN | City Park
TedXRidgeways 1.30pm | Auditorium

Sunday, November 26
Hockey (Men) vs Kenya Police | City Park

Monday, November 27
VCT Week Begins

Tuesday, November 28
Public Holiday: Presidential Inauguration (Kenya)

Friday, December 1
World AIDS Days Celebration | 9am
High Performance Computing Forum | Auditorium | 8am

Media Mentions
Compiled by Diana Meso

(Click on text to link to story)

24 November: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Co-op ready to close out Umoja in basketball play-offs.”

23 November: Dr. Scott Bellows was invited as a guest on NTV’s morning show AM Live, to discuss US-Africa relations.

21 November: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “It all started with my periods, and then my lungs gave up.”

20 November: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Runaway leaders Telkom and Police march on in title race.”

20 November: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Brave Warriors, Co-op Bank reach play-off semi-finals of basketball leagues.”

19 November: USIU-Africa was mentioned in the Sunday Nation in a photo caption: “Prof. Scott Bellows from USIU-Africa presents an award to Brian Jibbo-Mungatana of Media Edge during the 2017 Public Relations Society of Kenya Awards for Excellence.”

17 November: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Impala, KCB to battle for priced title.”

Forty-eight International Relations students from eight nationalities recently concluded a successful Field Research study trip to Rwanda and Uganda, held between November 3-12. While in Rwanda, the students accompanied by Mr. Dan Odaba (Lecturer, International Relations) and Mr. Wilberforce Tonui (Academic Advisor), visited and engaged professionals from Kenyan Embassy, The Rwanda Development Board, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Imbuto Foundation, the Acts of Gratitude, the Genocide Memorial, National Unity and Reconciliation Commission as well as the Rwandan Senate.

In Uganda, they visited the Buganda Kingdom’s Parliament and King’s Palace. The trip are organized to provide the students practical experiences and knowledge into their specific concentrations in Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, Peace and Conflict Studies as well as Development Studies, as part of USIU-Africa’s renowned International Relations programs. PHOTO: DAN ODABA