By Taigu Muchiri

Acting Dean Prof. Angelina Kioko outlined the School of Humanities and Social Sciences’ vision for the 2018-2019 academic year during the School’s convocation held on Wednesday, October 31 at the Lecture Theater I.

She highlighted the achievements that the School was able to deliver in the previous academic year, before going on to describe the School’s expansion plans.

In the 2017/2018 academic year, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences graduated 385 undergraduate, 86 graduate and 6 doctoral students. During the same period, the School hired nine full time faculty: two in the Languages and Literature Department; four in the International Relations Department and three in the Psychology Department.

The Dean highlighted the key achievements of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences that are aligned to the University’s strategic goals. The first achievement was to enrich and expand academic programs. The Dean noted that program review and assessment showed that six of the nine programs successfully completed their assessment - an improvement from the last academic year which was estimated to be at 62.5%.

The school has been undertaking review of the Master of Arts in International Relations and the review will be sent to the Commission of University Education by the end of 2018.

The second achievement was to develop new programs. The school has made great strides in this process and have proposed to develop new graduate degree programs in Criminal Justice and Industrial Psychology. To add on to the two new programs, the School has also started laying the foundation to introduce Bachelor of Law degree.

The department is working hard to ensure that the MA in Criminal Justice and that of BA in Sociology proposals are ready for submission to the accrediting bodies by Fall 2018 semester. The Dean mentioned that 13 students have already enrolled for the newly introduced MA in Marriage and Family Therapy.

The third achievement was to contribute towards the overall goal of becoming a reputable research University. During the 2017/2018 academic year, the School published 46 publications. This was a great improvement from last year’s 40 publications.

(Continued on page 2)
Dean outlines vision for School at convocation

(Continued from page 1)

The Faculty in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences have also been recipients of both internal and external research grants.

In March 2018, Associate Professor of International Relations Dr. Kennedy Mkutu received a four-year research project (2018-2021) from Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), Germany. The research project is part of a Collaborative Research Center (CRC) initiated by the Universities of Bonn and Cologne funded by the German research association DFG, that will run for four years.

On the other hand, two faculty members, Dr. Naom Nyarigoti (Assistant Professor of English and Linguistics) and Dr. Michelle Karume (Assistant Professor of Psychology) were among the awardees of internal grants.

The fourth achievement was ensuring that the School promotes student success by enriching their learning experience. Faculty teaching foreign languages promoted “learning beyond the classroom” interaction, by organizing and facilitating programs that provided students with cultural learning experiences as part of foreign language teaching offered at the School. Such programs entailed cultural activities on campus and the “Windows to the World” field studies program.

Faculty in the International Relations, Psychology and Criminal justice programs were singled out for excelling in providing students with unique out-of-class learning experiences, such as the educational field trips offered that have been integrated in coursework.

Prof. Kioko also announced plans for the School to roll out training in university-wide effective strategies for student mentoring.

The Dean highlighted the key priorities for the 2018/2019 academic year that will center on pursuit of academic, operational and service excellence.

She noted with great pride that the School will continue to offer quality education through its diverse programs. This will be achieved by planning high-level conferences and workshops for doctoral students and new members of faculty.

The School will pursue service excellence by ensuring that effective implementation of the mentoring program to assist students achieve their goals. In conclusion, Prof. Kioko invited her audience to join the School at a ground breaking ceremony for the new building, this Thursday, November 8 at 12pm.

Ground breaking ceremony for new building set for Thursday

By Diana Meso and Dan Muchai

The university has announced the ground breaking of the new School of Humanities and Social Science building scheduled to take place on Thursday, November 8 from 12.00 noon behind the Science Center, at what was formerly the hockey pitch.

The ceremony will be presided over by the Guest of Honor Dr. Peter Munga (former Chairman, Equity Bank) and the Chancellor Dr. Manu Chandaria, as well as members of the Board of Trustees and University Council.

The new building has been necessitated by the need to increase classroom and faculty spaces, as well as provide for specialized learning facilities to support the teaching of criminology, psychology, language and technology. Additional facilities will allow for expansion of meeting and dining spaces.

The building is expected to be ready for occupation by the end of the Fall 2020 semester.
High performance computing awareness workshop reignites interest on campus

By Dan Muchai

On Friday, October 26, the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extension organized an awareness workshop to train members of staff and faculty on the basic concepts, and applications of High Performance Computing. High Performance Computing is the practice of aggregating computing power in a way that delivers much higher performance than one could get out of a typical desktop computer or workstation in order to solve large problems in science, engineering, or business.

According to the trainer, Mr. Francis Ochieng, a postgraduate student at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China, the training was intended to prepare the university workforce and student population by elucidating the concepts of high performance computing and big data, as well as provide case studies in the application of high performance computing in the environment & climate, health, business analytics and research.

One of the case studies presented at the awareness workshop, dwelt with using a weather research and forecasting model to predict how the evolution of weather patterns, and thus created a visualization of how elements such as temperature, rainfall and wind can affect the spread of disease and food security, in a spatial space.

Another case study involved the Interlinking of Internet of Things (IoT) connected devices - drones, air quality monitor sensors and mobile phones - to predict and visualize particulate matter in urban spaces; data that is quite useful in Geospatial Information Systems.

Yet another case study involved big data crunching to provide business analytics that can then enable firms understand their market, and thus develop products that respond to consumer needs.

USIU-Africa is no stranger to the potential that exists in harnessing High Performance Computing. The University organized in collaboration with other partners, the Conference on the Role of the Diaspora in the Revitalization of African Higher Education, at Harvard University in March 2017, in which High Performance Computing (HPC) was identified as a key enabler in transforming learning, research and innovation.

USIU-Africa in partnership with Intel, also hosted the HPC for Research and Innovation Forum in December 2017 to deliberate on creating a framework for academia, government, private sector, development partners, foundations and civil society, to engage and harness the power of HPC to provide support for research, policy making and innovation across Africa. Under the umbrella of the High Performance Computing Consortium-Africa (HPC2-Africa) the partners together with the Carnegie Africa Diaspora Fellowship Program (CADFP) agreed to create a platform through which key stakeholders such as universities, technology companies, industry, government, research bodies and development partners will help establish a network of HPCs across Africa.

Later that month, a meeting held at the behest of the United Nations Environmental Assembly, stakeholders who included members from Citizen Science Associations in Europe, Asia, and the United States, resolved to form a technical committee to start the process leading up to the setting up of the Citizen Science Association for Africa, with the ultimate goal of mobilizing a global compact of citizen science associations to produce further research on pollution, such as monitoring of air, marine, freshwater, chemical, land and soil, and waste pollution.

This workshop was the first in a series of activities marking a new drive to intensify the utilization of high performance computing to increase the University’s research and innovation capacity, and to support home grown solutions to socio-economic challenges.
Human Resources organizes disaster management training  By Diana Meso

Over sixty members of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Committee were trained on disaster management by professionals from the Kenyan National Disaster Management Unit (NDMU) on October 23 and 24 at the TV room 1 in Freida Brown Student Center. The two-day training covered the basics of preparing for unexpected catastrophic events such as natural or human made disasters, outbreak of pandemic illnesses, as well as the need to return the University as quickly as possible to its normal operations should such events occur.

Through practical and illustrative examples and activities, participants were equipped with basic knowledge on fire safety awareness, emergency preparedness evacuation and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) awareness and terrorism.

The university’s OSHA Committee comprises of students, staff and faculty who ensure that the University maintains a conducive work and learning environment by setting and enforcing standards, and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.

The training workshop further equipped members of the OSHA Committee to guide members of the University in a safety drill and thereafter measure the effectiveness of University safety rules and procedures.

Established in 2013, the NDMU is charged with formulating the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for national emergency and disaster plan aligned to the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government that protects social, economic and political pillars of our country and provides leadership, command, control and coordinated approach to disaster mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.
Media Mentions

November 2: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “TAKE 5: Cherie Lindive.”

November 1: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the People Daily in an article titled “Microsoft 4Afrika deepening Data & AI capabilities in Africa to enhance employability and entrepreneurship.”

October 31: The Business Daily mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “2 Kenyans to compete for Sh50m hackathon prize.”

October 31: USIU-Africa was mentioned by C.I.O East Africa in an article titled “Kenya gets representation at the global blockchain hackathon.”

Compiled by Taigu Muchiri and Diana Meso

October 30: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “League heads for the homestretch as top guns plot play-off success.”

October 30: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled “Limping Jaguars face top league extinction.”

October 30: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Police hammer KCA-U to draw level with leaders Butali.”

October 30: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled “Survival hope for Nakuru as they register mixed results.”

October 29: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Champions KPA land USIU Tigers in playoff quarters.”

October 28: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Nakuru edge Wazalendo to steer to safety.”

October 27: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Relegated Trailblazers fail to show up for KPA showdown.”

Upcoming Events

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