Professor Ngugi Wa Thiong’o honored during book launch at USIU-Africa

By Taigu Muchiri

The School of Humanities and Social Science had the privilege to host Professor Ngugi Wa Thiong’o during a book launch in his honor on Thursday, June 13. The book entitled ‘NGUGI: Reflections on his life of writing’ is written by Prof. Simon Gikandi and Prof. Ndirangu Wachanga and reflects on his writings since the early 1960s. The book is a collection of essays that document the life and work of Ngugi wa Thiong’o and includes a variety of contributors such as writers, activists, publishers, critics and emphasizes on his contribution to African literature. Professor Gikandi is the Robert Schirmer Professor and Chair of English at Princeton University. Prof Wachanga teaches Media Studies and Information Science at the University of Wisconsin.

Speaking during the event, the Vice Chancellor mentioned that this was a great opportunity for Kenya and the world to recognize the author. He said that this was an indeed proud moment for USIU-Africa to host the author at a special occasion when the university is commemorating 50 years of academic excellence. “We cannot ignore the work of Professor Ngugi Wa Thiong’o and his contributions that he has made towards African literature by putting Africa on the map.”

Dr. Willy Mutunga, the former Chief Justice, acknowledged the author and his great work that has spanned over fifty years and continues to make a great impact on African literature. He said, “This book is indeed a reflection of a great author who continues to receive prestigious awards across the globe.” In making his remarks, Professor Wachanga said that it was an honor to have worked with Professor Gikandi on this project to highlight the works of Professor Ngugi and that this project will forever remain close to his heart. Professor Ngugi recognized and appreciated the two professors who chose to focus writing career and added that he was grateful to the USIU-Africa community for hosting the book launch. He emphasized that African language must be preserved otherwise we are at risk of losing our heritage. He encouraged students to write in their native language and translate the books to English and other languages as opposed to authoring books in English. He said that even after 50 years of writing, he continues to write his books in Gikuyu language and they have translated to many languages. At the end of his speech, the Professor received a standing ovation from the attendees who appreciated his work.

The renowned writer is a distinguished professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. He has published over thirty books and is a recipient of over seven global awards in literature.
Just imagine, continuously getting American Education at a local cost! Well, this is what it means to be re-accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), not only that, it also means that a degree acquired from USIU-Africa is recognized globally and students can transfer credits to any university across the globe where WSCUC accreditation is recognized. Additionally, it means that the university as a whole: its programs, institutional structures, processes and resources are continuously improved to meet international standards and clear procedures are set to encourage good practices and provide quality education.

A report by WSCUC after a rigorous re-accreditation visit that began in Fall last year, and a re-affirmation of re-accreditation in March this year, shows that USIU-Africa has the ability to provide American Education at a local cost for the next 8 years.

The WSCUC report further applauds the university for meeting the requirement of general education, community service, and internships as distinctive elements of undergraduate education; contributions to improving and enhancing higher education that are respected in East Africa; the establishment of assessment plans and learning outcomes for all programs with vertical alignment and the extraordinary commitment to students exhibited by the faculty staff and administration.

At the same time, the report recommends that the university should explore more opportunities to diversity revenue streams, redouble its effort to fully implement the General Education program and provide clear roles of various governing bodies brought about by structural changes among others. This report was presented by Dr. Angelina Kioko (Professor of English and Linguistics) who was the Accreditation Liaison Officer during a meeting held at the Library bookshop on Thursday, June 13.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Paul Zeleza and the ASA DVC Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono who were present at the event pointed out that the report comes at an ideal time when the university is celebrating 50 years of academic excellence and that there should be a joint effort by all members of the USIU-Africa community to ensure that the recommendations by WSCUC are well executed so that the legacy will still go on 50 years to come.

The annual AIESEC week was held on June 11-13, 2019 with the objective to enroll students for the global cross-cultural exchange program during Summer. This is an initiative that provides opportunities for students to meet, engage and interact with other global AIESEC members through global volunteer, global talent and global entrepreneur.

The global volunteer is a cross-cultural experience for youth who want to gain personal development and leave an impact on the world. It brings together international youth from around the world to work on social impact projects that contribute toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The program works closely with local AIESEC members who assist in culturally inducting the volunteers as well as facilitating an enjoyable experience for them. The global talent program allows students searching for the next opportunity and differentiate themselves through an international internship and gain professional experience. This allows organizations across the world to fulfill their human resources needs with skilled young talent, hire global interns and gain a
On Thursday, June 6, the School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extension hosted a colloquium on Social Enterprise Development towards Urban Livability and Safe AgriFood Supply, a research that was done to evaluate implications of urban Agri-social enterprises on urban poverty, food safety, and livability at the Chandaria School of Business.

This research focused on the current practices and implications of marginalized urban populations AgriFood practices with respect to urban poverty, food safety and livability; the challenges poor urban populations face in practicing urban AgriFood activities; and the effective strategies and policy interventions for mitigating challenges against poor urban populations’ AgriFood practices.

The study showed the challenges which the poor urban populations face in practicing urban AgriFood activities which included, exposure of crops cultivated along urban roadsides to pollution; crops being irrigated with contaminated water; and underground farmers illegally producing unsafe, unhealthy and environmentally unfriendly foods.

As a result, four policy interventions for mitigating challenges against poor urban populations’ AgriFood practices were covered. The first policy area was on inclusive industrialization and innovation and the support of providing urban farming supportive infrastructure; providing information on city-owned properties suitable for urban farming; and providing publicity markets and large international food logistics terminals and how they can support more inclusive practices.

The second policy area focused on general enhancement of urban farming, calling for holistic incentive strategies through establishing food enterprise zones; and reducing use of trucks by increasing alternative non-polluting means to distribute urban produced foods.

The third policy area was on using urban farming as a sustainable economic growth and decent work and a call to support local food processors by marketing their products through targeted branding and campaigning, as well as agri-tourism initiatives; holistic incentive strategies where financial and zoning incentives are offered in designated parts of the city; and holistic incentive strategies to stimulate integration of urban farming, healthy food retail, and value-added food processing.

The final policy issue was on management of water and sanitation. It emphasizes on educating professional planners to create healthy, livable and sustainable communities; selection and use of drought-resistant plants, use of soil that retain humidity and can increase water efficiency in urban projects; and educating planners about the current disconnect between planning and food systems.

This research was conducted by Prof. Francis Wambalaba, Professor of Economics, Dr. Gabriel Okello, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Akosa Wambalaba, Lecturer, French, Yogo Carol, Senior Research Officer and Mark Namasake Graduate Assistant and funded through an internal grant from USIU-Africa.
Upcoming events

African Film Night – June 18
2019 Agripreneurs Conference June 27-28

Sport Updates

By Ernest Mwanzi

Basketball
On Saturday, June 8, 2019 during the Nairobi Basketball Association league match at Nyayo Gymnasium, the men’s team (Tigers) lost 66 – 74 to Equity Bank, while the ladies team lost 41 – 52 against Eagle Wings in a Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) league match also played at Nyayo the following day.

Soccer
In football the ladies team beat the National Youth Service (NYS) by two goals to zero during the Universities and Colleges Football League match (UCFL), on Saturday, June 8. Still on the same league their male counterpart lost by three goals to zero against NYS Engineering. All matches were played at University of Nairobi Upper Kabete Campus.

Hockey
In Hockey during the Kenya Hockey Union league matches, the men’s team drew by two goals against Kenya Police, while the ladies team lost by two goals to one against Telkom. All games were played at City Park on June 8.

Rugby
The USIU-Africa Rugby team lost to Uganda select 3 – 14 in Kampala, on Saturday, June 8.

Rugby
The USIU-Africa Rugby Martials finished third in the Kenya Rugby Championship.

Media Mentions

Compiled by Diana Meso

June 14: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Seize the Big Data moment to revolutionise education sector.”

June 14: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “KPA teams in the city for crucial matches.”

June 12: The New Vision mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “National rugby coach Sseguya uses friendly to select bench.”

June 11: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Equity end Strathmore’s unbeaten run.”

June 11: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled “Ataro tips duo for greatness after impressive show.”

June 11: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Butali go top as Jaguars gore Wazalendo.”

June 11: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Citizen Digital in an article titled “We’ll stick to our noble game as we seek a top-four finish: Odhiambo.”

June 11: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Champions Butali return top of Kenya Hockey Union men’s Premier League standings.”

June 9: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled “Hawks beat UoN as dockers edge out Lakeside in Kisumu.”

June 9: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Telkom tighten grip atop the table.”

June 9: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Citizen Digital in an article titled “Coach Mbulo hails Telkom.”

June 9: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “KPA leave Delight deflated.”

June 8: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “KPA tackle Lakeside as Dynamites face Equity Hawks test.”

June 8: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled “Telkom clash with Spartans.”

June 8: The Daily Monitor mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Rugby Cranes host USIU in trial game.”

June 8: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled “Telkom to line up rookies against USIU as they seek to return to winning ways.”

June 8: The New Vision mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “President’s Select 15s ready to compete.”

June 8: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Western Jaguars end Wazalendo’s unbeaten run.”

June 7: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Equity Hawks Coach Maina confident ahead of weekend double.”

June 7: USIU-Africa was mentioned online in an article titled “President’s Select To Face USIU Martials named.”

June 7: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Equity sides eager to bank all 8 points.”