

CAMPUS THIS WEEK

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL EDITION

Fundraising Department launches Annual Month of Giving to benefit students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

By Brenda Odhiambo



The USIU-Africa Fundraising Department has launched an Annual Month of Giving designed to benefit students affected by the ongoing pandemic. The fund hopes to raise Kes 10 million that will go towards the support of needy students and keeping them in class.

In his comments following the launch of the initiative, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Paul Zeleza noted that the initiative was part of USIU-Africa's commitment to supporting its students in the access of quality education.

"As we adapt to these unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are committed to keep our students in class and pursue their education uninterrupted. The University's COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund was set up to help students experiencing financial constraints during this challenging times to continue with their classes in Summer 2020 and beyond. We have over 215 students who can no-longer access work study opportunity and over 800 students who are on semester break majorly as a result of financial constraints arising from covid-19 global pandemic. Even those in session are not finding it easy and we would want to come together as a community to assist our very own to cope with this crisis while continuing with their education uninterrupted," he said.

"Like every other institution in the world, USIU-Africa has been

affected by COVID-19, and despite this, we want all our students to achieve their educational goals. Over the years, our staff, students, parents, alumni, faculty and partners have lent us their unconditional support that has ensured the success of the overall USIU-Africa community. While this challenge affects us in different ways, USIU-Africa has set its focus on ensuring that no student abandons their dreams of achieving their dreams," he added.

Participation in the initiative can be done through the following ways:

1. Personal giving/donation which can be done through:
 - a. MPESA Paybill (Business no: 516900, Account no: Giving2020) or
 - b. Visit us at: www.usiu.ac.ke/giving
2. Sharing about the campaign within your network/circle through Facebook, Instagram, email, WhatsApp and text
3. Volunteer to support the campaign. Kindly reach out through devt@usiu.ac.ke or call +254 730 116 640
4. Any other support that may be accorded towards the campaign.

For any inquiries, contact the campaign team on devt@usiu.ac.ke or call them on +254730116640/ +254730116326/ +254730116205.

The Human Rights Club hosts inaugural webinar on police brutality in Kenya

By Sandrine Wambura and Sarah Masila

The USIU-A Human Rights Club launched its first-ever webinar on police brutality in Kenya, on Friday, June 19, 2020, with a total of 60 participants. The webinar was designed as a platform for students and professionals to talk about the current violations in human rights and how we could all be involved to stop police brutality.

Also in attendance at the webinar were several panelists, who included:

Ms. Julie Wanjira Wanjiru, Co-Founder and Secretariat Member of the Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC), Ms. Ruth Mumbi, a Human Rights Defender and a Convener at the Grassroots Women Initiative Network (GRAWINET), and Ms. Gacheke Gachichi, a coordinator at the Mathare Social Justice Center (MSJC).

Speaking during the webinar, the Human Rights Club Patron, Dr. Njoki Wamai noted that police brutality was a hot button issue globally that needed swift resolution, a point that was supported by the panelists.

Ms. Wanjiru noted that for people in certain areas, the presence of police did not necessarily guarantee their safety, meaning that their day to day lives were made more difficult with the addition of trying to keep themselves safe from the police.

"In an area that is filled with four police stations one would agree it is the safest place to live in, whilst it is in the same place increased rate of deaths appear unlike in any other areas," she said.



"The police brutality that we have seen in the United States, as well as in our country, not only during the lockdown period but also in several other instances, reinforces the notion that poor people deserve such callous treatment. It would therefore be an achievement for us as a nation if we ended police brutality," said Ms. Mumbi.

Ms. Gachichi noted that it was time for each individual to take a firm stand in addressing the injustices in our society, adding that the need for documentation when such tragedies happen is vital. "Each of us must volunteer to become the voice of future activism, without any doubt, because our wellbeing as a community depends on the amplification of our collective voices on the issues closest to our hearts," she noted.

The hosts of the webinar, International Relations students, Sandrine and David Mugambi, said that they hoped to have the webinar as a monthly series that would educate and integrate all voices from the community.

The Division of Legal Services organizes a webinar on Entertainment and Copyright Law

By Diana Meso

Just how well do you understand the borders of Intellectual Property (IP)? In a webinar dubbed "Entertainment and Copyright Law-The New Frontier" organized and moderated by Hellen Ambasa (Director Legal Services and Company Secretary) on Wednesday, June 24, four great minds came together to give insights on matters IP.

The event which was live-streamed on Facebook saw close to 1000 participants get engaged about what it means to have an idea, how to express it legally and make a living out of it, and when, where, and how it should be used. Kicking off the discussion was Sharon Chahale-Wata (Advocate of the High Court) who explained what Copyright Law entails.

Advocate Chahale-Wata said that Copyright Law is the right to protection of someone's moral and material interest resulting from any scientific, literary, or artistic production of which he/she is the author. In simple terms, the law gives you the right to control the use of your work, to control who can reproduce it and who can distribute it. It is considered a fundamental human right and has provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



In Kenya, this is recognized and supported by articles 11, 40, and 69 of the Kenyan Constitution (2010) and the Copyright Amendment Act (2019), which recognizes and enhances intellectual property, and states that Copyright encompasses moral and economic rights.

Advocate Wata also noted that copyright is supposed to be a bridge between the creator and the user and should not be viewed as a way to punish one party, because the idea is not to bar people from accessing and using someone's work but for the creator to receive some reward for what they have created.

On the other hand, Liz Lenjo Kags who is also an Advocate of the High Court took on Entertainment law stating that among other things, this protects one's idea after it has been expressed in a material form. The law governs the transactions with your idea; how it is shared, marketed, distributed, broadcasted, and so on.

From the discussion, it is important to take note of the following key points;

- Having a well-researched and written contract is a must; you should issue or get issued with a contract before agreeing to anything despite the relationship between the parties.
- Intellectual property (IP) will earn you a living if you seek help from the right people to help you develop an effective intellectual property management strategy. Do not just view it as a hobby or something to make you famous.
- Collaboration and working together are key if success is to be achieved. Being a jack of all trades (you are the producer, the director, the songwriter, the lawyer, the accountant) will land you in many problems than you could ever imagine, so let the experts help you.
- Artists should engage lawyers more.
- We need to appreciate and understand the importance of different law bodies in the entertainment and copyright law sector and how they can be of help to us.

- You work can be registered under more than one IP; trademark, patent, copyright; explore all options.
- Copyright lasts a lifetime and 50 years after you die in Kenya.
- Copyright is different in countries; thus, you need to adhere to the regulations of a particular jurisdiction.
- Musicians should develop a music split sheet (shows the author, composer, and arranger) before producing their songs.
- You can register your work through National Rights Registry nrr.copyright.go.ke Always acknowledge the owner of the work you are using, ask permission to use their work.
- Sportsmen and women are also considered as entertainers, you can't just use their pictures anyhow without their consent.
- In Animation, you have the right to protect the cartoon or character you have created and the name you have given it but not the technique of how you came up with the cartoon.
- Any commercial gain from someone's work should be paid for
- If you create a meme from someone's work, it is infringing on their IP rights.
- On online platforms, you have to be careful not to introduce new audiences to the piece of art, all credits should go back to the owner.
- Copyright does not protect your idea but the expression of that idea needs to be in a material form.
- Do not fear lawyers, there are here to make your life better, if not sure approach them before signing or agreeing to anything.

Also present as a moderator was Advocate Susan Obunga Guya who specializes in Intellectual Property and Data Protection.

COVID-19 will continue to severely impact Africa's Agricultural and Economic Landscape; Countries urged to put in place policies that will promote growth

By Taigu Muchiri

University leaders from the United States and Africa came together to discuss the extent to which COVID-19 has negatively impacted global, continental, national, and individual trends during the fourth series of the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) public dialogue. The panelists included Dr. Mame Samba Mbaye, Head of the Plant Biology Department, Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD), Dr. David Tschirley, Co-Director, Food Security Group, and Director, Feed the Future Innovation Lab, Michigan State University, Godfrey Bahiigwa, Director, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission and Prof. Agnes Mwangwela, Dean and Acting Principal of Bunda Campus, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR).

Global economic meltdown

The impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt across the globe as the death toll rises and countries experience an economic meltdown. The International Monetary Fund has projected the global growth will fall to -3 percent in 2020 resulting from the health and economic crisis brought by COVID-19 and predicted to be worse than the 2008 global financial crisis. This twin crisis disproportionately affects the informal economy that employs over 2 billion individuals, 93 percent of them in developing and emerging economies. In Africa, the sector consists of over 85 percent of the labor market and is a great source of employment for women (58.5 percent). In Kenya, it has employed 15 million workers, created nine out of ten new jobs, and absorbed over 60 percent of women. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 94 percent of the workforce across the globe were experiencing closures by the end of May which have led to



massive job losses. In the US alone, job losses are on the rise with over 44 million people applying for unemployment benefits by end of May. In Kenya, a study conducted in April by the Network of Impact Evaluation Researchers in Africa (NIERA) shows that the overall average weekly income has decreased by 51.2 percent (pre-crisis Kshs. 2,380 to Kshs. 1,220 during the crisis) in the informal sector.

The study further shows that workers in the Kenyan informal economy have suffered a substantial loss of income thirty days after the first COVID-19 case was announced in Kenya. The pandemic has also affected trade as more and more countries continue to restrict movement across borders. The specialized healthcare agency of the African Union (AU) Commission indicates that African countries have been severely affected by the pandemic and have led to the closure of borders in 43 African countries and more countries are expected to close their borders as the infections continue to rise.

Threats to food security

Food security during this period has been severely affected as a result of global closures, cessation of movement orders, and curfews implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This is especially the case in Sub Saharan Africa which is very food insecure and most people are already facing food shortages. Prof. Agnes Mwangwela highlighted that 45 million people in Eastern and Southern Africa are at risk of experiencing food deficit in 2020 and 2021. "The global shutdown has affected small traders, businesses, and unskilled workers who have lost their source of income. Border closures have affected food imports and processing aids, the export of commodities, and the importation of agricultural inputs. Limited operations of markets have led to low prices of agricultural produce in rural markets and in some areas led to a poor harvest," she said.

A regional response to the crisis

Godfrey Bahigwa said that the AU Commission is leading efforts to respond to the pandemic by mobilizing member states, the eight regional economic communities, and development partners to put together systematic and coordinated efforts towards the pandemic to build resilient food systems in Africa. Some of these measures include short term interventions for social protections, supporting farmers to plant, protecting domestic markets by keeping them

open during this period, leverage on intra-Africa regional trade especially the newly created Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and to ensure supply of agricultural farm inputs to support small-scale farmers. He noted with great concern that Africa has been facing severe food security challenges since 2018 adding that, "the invasion of Fall armyworms in 2018 and the locust invasion in 2019 and 2020 which started in the Horn Africa and has now spread to West Africa that has severely affected food production in Africa and if these issues are not addressed, the continent risks loss of lives due to hunger." He further urged African governments to prioritize mitigation measures by providing stimulus packages especially to vulnerable groups and implement policies that will focus on agricultural outputs to boost economic growth. To do so, they need to allocate sufficient budget to the agriculture sector to meet this goal. Studies show that the allocations are still below the 2003 African Union's Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, which requires African states to allocate 10 percent of their annual budgets to agriculture to ease poverty.

Opportunities that lie ahead

Dr. David Tschirley noted that the virus is starting to spread to rural areas in developing countries and that these cases are on the rise. The majority of the agriculture supply chain and especially the critical part of planting and harvesting is localized in rural areas. "The growing infections will severely impact the transmission, mobility and mortality, behavioral trends such as government actions (shutdown and curfews) and impact spending power and livelihoods," but this could prove to be an advantage by "making a case for investment in the retail and wholesale market to strengthen systems and infrastructure," he said. In addition, MSU has put in place a group for food security to inform policy to strengthen systems, especially during this period. The Food Security Group believes that good food and nutrition policy, informed by solid empirical evidence that is generated jointly with local partners, can transform economies and lives in low-income countries.

USIU-Africa's Research Department hosts colloquium on governance in public hospitals

By Winnie Nyakio and Sarah Masila

The USIU-Africa Research Department recently held a colloquium that addressed the governance of the country's public hospitals. The colloquium saw Dr. Veronicah Kaluyu present a paper titled "The Influence of Quality Improvement and Performance Evaluation Practices on Creative Governance Success in Public Healthcare Sector; A Case of Public Hospitals in Kenya", which highlighted how Kenya's public health sector continues to face challenges in governance and the delivery of quality services.

In her presentation, Dr. Kaluyu noted that the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic not only caught hospitals in deplorable situations, but also brought about an outcry for the improvement of certain aspects, such as malpractice and the improvement in the overall quality of services in the public health sector.

Her sentiments were echoed by Dr. Bernard Omboi, a USIU-Africa

member of faculty, who quoted a recent study showed that the Kenyan healthcare system was in danger.

"This study showed that healthcare professionals are scarce in the country, which can lead to low quality treatment, especially in remote regions of the country. We are not doing well in terms of health, if we are talking of ratios such as 1 nurse to 1,000 patients," he said.

In conclusion of the colloquium, Dr. Kaluyu noted that there was a need to increase training and deliberately create a culture among Kenyan public hospitals that would lead to the adoption of better governance at these hospitals, which would have a direct impact on their output.

Upcoming events

Social Media Consumption in Kenya report Launch
July 7, 2020 at 3:00pm EAT live on Zoom