

CAMPUS THIS WEEK

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USIU-Africa hosts Blackboard forum



Assistant Professor of Management Dr. Caren Ouma makes her presentation during the Blackboard Education Forum held on Wednesday, May 23, at the Freida Brown Student Center. Photo: Antonio Longangi

By Antonio Longangi

USIU-Africa hosted the Blackboard Education Forum on Wednesday, May 23, 2018, at the Freida Brown Student Center, in collaboration with Blackboard Inc., the U.S Embassy in Kenya and Kabarak University. The forum held under the theme "Growing online while retaining your residential students" aimed to facilitate an exchange of experience with e-learning between invited institutions and organizations.

Facilitated by Blackboard Inc., the forum welcomed professionals in education from a dozen of local universities, government agencies, and supporting organizations. The Blackboard LMS, is a learning management system launched in 1997 and currently serving over 100 million users in over 19,000 institutions in 100 countries, and owned by Blackboard Inc. - an educational technology company with corporate headquarters in Washington D.C.

"It is important for the university to gather various perspectives on electronic learning as we are mapping the next steps required to launch our first online program," said Dr. Paul Okanda (Director of ICT) while addressing the forum. The statement resonated with the welcome address from Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono (DVC - Academic & Student Affairs), in which she pointed out the significant initiatives and programs undertaken by the University to harvest the power of technology in creating the best academic experience for the entire community.

From the introduction of Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) in 1997, the university has been at the forefront of technological development. In line with this, Dr. Caren Ouma (Assistant Professor of Management) announced at the workshop, that the Chandaria School of Business is planning to launch the online Master of Business Administration (eMBA) program in Fall 2019, to take

advantage of the technology available and provide options to students.

The program is expected to rely on the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) to provide content consisting of Lesson Plan, Slides, Handouts, Videos, Audios, Web Links, eResources, online video and case studies.

Addressing the disruptive effect of technology on residential or campus-based learning, Dr. Okanda clarified that nothing can beat a face to face experience, *"That's why we are starting on a graduate level as we explore the ability of technology to provide face to face like experiences."*

The Blackboard system will also facilitate collaboration through Discussion Boards and Groups; Email, Announcements, Grade center integration; file exchange; and finally assessing students through assignments, tests, surveys and other exam administration tools.

Legal Services organizes second annual awareness workshop

By Eric Maragua

From Tuesday May 8 to Wednesday May 9, the Division of Legal Services, successfully organized the second edition of the Legal Awareness Workshop. This followed last year's auspicious event also held in May. The theme for this year's workshop was "Empowerment through the Law" and the Division lined up yet another high profile list of guest speakers composed of Prof. Tom Ojienda - a Commissioner at the Judicial Service Commission, Senior Counsel and Advocate of the High Court of Kenya; Ms. Maria Goretti Nyariki - Head of Legal Services and Corporation Secretary at Kenya Bureau of Standards; Ms. Patricia Kiwanuka, a Chartered Financial Analyst, President of the Chartered Financial Analyst Society of East Africa and also a Member of the University Council at USIU-Africa; Mr. Elisha Ongoya, an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and Senior Lecturer at the Kabarak University Law School; Mr. Alex Gakuru, Executive Director, Content Development and Intellectual Property (CODE-IP) Trust; Mr. Victor Nzomo, an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, a Patent agent and celebrated blogger on Intellectual Property matters; Ms. MarySheila Onyango - Oduor, Partner and Head of the Family Law Department at TripleOKLaw Advocates and Mr. Samson Atandi, the Senior Insurance Officer at USIU-Africa.

In his brief remarks the Chancellor Dr. Manu Chandaria, underscored the importance of saving and accumulating money as part of financial intelligence.

Participants at the workshop were taken through various issues of topical interest, such as Alternative Dispute Resolution in Kenya, Financial Intelligence Quotient, Constitutional rights and their enforcement in courts, E-Conveyancing, Internet Governance, Intellectual Property Rights, Succession law, Marriage law, Children &



Partner and Head of the Family Law Department at TripleOKLaw Advocates Ms. MarySheila Onyango - Oduor, answers a question posed to her during her Legal Awareness Workshop presentation on Succession Law and Family Law on Wednesday, May 9. PHOTO: DAN MUCHAI

the Law, Sexual Harassment in the aftermath of #MeToo campaign, and Insurance.

Key highlights included the ten lessons one needs to learn and practice in order to achieve financial intelligence, *inter alia*: accumulating money; giving money to the less fortunate; creation of wealth; and making a distinction between good and bad debt.

The current changes effected by the Ministry of Lands on the digitization of conveyancing transactions were broken down in detail with key emphasis being placed on the due diligence that parties to any conveyancing transaction ought to undertake. Participants were also informed that The Movable Property Security Rights Act, which was assented into law on May 10 2017, will facilitate the use of movable property such as intellectual property rights, as security for loan facilities.

Participants also got to learn about the different modes of alternative dispute resolution including but not limited to negotiation, mediation, conciliation, adjudication and arbitration. It also emerged that there are only 11 Child Protection Units in Kenya and that USIU-Africa played a major role towards the establishment of the Child Protection Unit at Kasarani Police Station.

While elaborating "Internet Governance", Mr. Gakuru pointed out that the rapid evolution of the internet needs to be accompanied by development of robust policies and systems that govern their use. Of particular concern was the ethical and legal challenges inherent in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.

With the numerous risks faced by everyone including old age, death, accidents and disabilities, participants were advised to plan their future carefully by including life insurance in their financial decisions. Further, in the wake of natural disasters like floods and bursting of dams, participants were informed that taking out a Fire Insurance policy is important as it helps secure your household properties against such risks.

In her closing remarks, Ms Hellen P. Ambasa, the Director-Legal Services & Company Secretary, thanked the facilitators for taking time out to share their skills and expertise, as well as the university fraternity for honoring the invitation to attend the workshop. She also extended a heartfelt appreciation to her team for the work done in ensuring that the event was a success.

FEATURE

Why I became a Career Peer Advisor

By Sarah Ngetha



Career Peers Advisors are outstanding students, drawn from various majors, who are interested in helping their peers in career planning, *Curriculum Vitae* or cover letter writing.

Advisors who meet the necessary requirements are trained on how to handle various issues concerning careers, how to conduct themselves on and off campus and how to draw up their own career plans.

I interviewed one of our outstanding Career Peer Advisors Winnie Waithira (above), regarding her experience as an advisor.

Sarah: Briefly introduce yourself

Winnie: My name is Winnie Waithira, a Psychology Junior working as a Career Peer Advisor in the Office of Placement and Career Services.

Sarah: How and why did you become an advisor?

Winnie: I had not intended to become a career advisor - I stumbled upon the opportunity when I was looking for Work Study Opportunity on campus.

I had been called for a work study interview in another department and failed to get the

position. In my search for alternative Work Study slots, I sent my CV to then Head of Placement and Career Services Ms. Lilian Bogonko and after an interview, I got the position.

I had no idea what the work was about, but I was pretty excited to work at the just completed Freida Brown Student Center (FBSC) and the fact that I had a work study option, meant it would ease my school fee load.

Sarah: What does a typical day for a Career Peer Advisor look like?

Winnie: (*laughing*) I have never had a typical day at Career Services. Every day is different, because you have different students with different needs walking in. Sometimes you have many clients, other times the traffic is low, especially around exam time.

Sarah: What are some of the responsibilities of an advisor?

Winnie: Guiding a student through major or minor course selection, CV and/or cover letter critique, career advising, as well as creating awareness for the services the department offers.

Sarah: What impact has your position had on you?

Winnie: It has had such a positive impact! Where skills are concerned, I have learnt how to communicate effectively. It has also helped me build on my interpersonal skills, learn how to efficiently run an office, and how to plan and market an event.

Personally, I have learnt how to better manage my time as well as how to balance my academic work and responsibilities as an advisor; something I never thought I was capable of.

Sarah: Please share some of your highlights at the PACS office?

Winnie: Just the other day, I helped one of my friends write a motivational letter to an international university as part of her admission application for graduate studies. She not only got the slot, but also two semesters free!

I also have another friend who came in and together we worked on her application to a job that she finally landed following our discussions. Such stories keep me going, knowing that I am positively influencing my peers.

Sarah: What advice would you give someone who would like to join the team, but is still unsure?

Winnie: I would ask them to go for it! This is one of the most fulfilling experiences one can get on campus. The wealth of knowledge and skills that one gathers are tremendous! Indeed, we are currently looking to recruit Career Peer Advisors and are hoping that someone will take the leap of faith and sign up.

Applications can be made at the Office of Placement and Career Services on the first floor of the Freida Brown Student Center. Interested students may also apply through email: careersoffice@usiu.ac.ke.

Requirements include the following:

- GPA of 3.0 and above, consistent good academic standing and a clear judicial history.
- A sophomore or junior who is able to dedicate a full academic year
- Possess well-developed interpersonal and communication skills.
- Be willing to aid and counsel peers on career matters.

FEATURE

Community involvement can help end GBV in Kenya

By Janes Amond Owuor

Gender-based violence (GBV) has largely been understood as the act of violence against women. Hence society forgets that men also suffer the same way that women do, or even worse.

It wasn't until I began to share my own story of survival that I realized how vulnerable men were to GBV. Two years ago, I was raped and I conceived a child as a result. I was 19-years-old at the time, but since the incident, I have written and spoken extensively about the aftermath of my rape. I cannot say that I don't think about my rape on a regular basis, instead it has just become a part of my primordial goo that courses through my veins and makes me who I am.

Every now and then, when my rape comes up in a conversation, I can tell by the look on people's faces that they feel I talk about it too casually. Through the years, I have come to realize that what happened to me, happened to me. I did not cause it, I did not do it, I did not earn it, and I did not ask for it.

When invited for talks, I often ask, "Does rape or GBV target men or women?" Well, 95% of the audience say that it is women, and only 5% of them say GBV affects both sexes. This is what society has reduced us

to - how we have been made to feel like men should not be vulnerable. But what they do not understand is that they suffer the weight too.

Sharing what I went through inspired me to start different support groups for the men and women who shared their stories with me. Since then, I realized that GBV could be reduced through the following:

Ending violence against women and men ties in with the original idea that everybody has a role to positively shape the current narrative around gender-based violence (GBV). Ordinary citizens can ensure that we all help end GBV and speak out to support outreach to the most overlooked survivors of violence, including women and men living in informal settlements

The growing numbers of women, and in some instances men, who are coming forward with accusations of years of GBV are household names, such as actors and even directors. This has revealed the depth of the situation in the society, once again pointing to the global nature of GBV. It also reveals another concern, that the true picture is often obscured by under reporting - a culture of silence and impunity. At the heart of the violence is power, and how it



is used by an individual or individuals, to subdue and control another person.

Laws on their own will not have the intended impact if ordinary citizens do not join the fight against GBV. We also call on Kenyan men and boys to find their space and use their voice. Their role is important in shaping the narrative. We urge them to speak out. Speak out because it is the right thing to do. GBV is a human rights violation that has no place in our homes, workplaces or public spaces.

This blog article first appeared on the World Bank blog as the winning submission from Kenya for the Blogs4Dev competition.

SPORT UPDATE

BY Antonio Longangi

USIU-Africa teams had an eventful weekend with eight games in basketball, hockey, karate, and taekwondo.

The men's rugby team participated in the 14th edition of the French tournament *Centrale Sevens* held from May 22 - 23 in Paris, France.

The tournament, which brought together university students and corporate organizations is an annual invitational, where attendees are expected to network and as well as bridge the gap between students and future employers.

Basketball

Kenya Basketball Federation League

The ladies basketball team earned 6 points from their two first games through a walkover following the failure of their two opponents, Co-operative Bank and Masaku Sparks, to show up.

"With 13 more games to play and intensive training, we will be able to secure our place to the top of the chart" reassured Ms. Nicole Walters, Team Manager.

In an international friendly match organized by Sports Connect Africa, the men's basketball team lost to the Ghanaian national team (52 - 69) on Sunday, May 20.

This weekend May 26 - 27 both teams will face Storms, KU Oryx, Blades, and Trailblazers, in the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) Premier League.

In the Nairobi Basketball Association Division III, the men's team will battle Strathmore University and Dagoretti High School.

Hockey

Last Sunday May 20, the men's hockey team defeated the Western Jaguars 1 - 0 in a Kenya Hockey Union Premier League game held in the western town of Kakamega. This victory strengthens their position in the first leg of the League after four games with 2 defeats and 2 victories.

They expect to battle Nakuru Hockey Club on May 26 in Nakuru, and the Parklands Sports Club on Wednesday, May 20 at the Parkland hockey pitch in Nairobi.

Karate

The Karate team completed the Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA) 2017/18 play-offs in position 5 out of 7, during the games held on May 19 and 20 at Kibabii University in Bungoma.

Taekwondo

The Taekwondo team emerged second, overall, at the conclusion of the first KUSA Indoors play-offs held at Kibabii University in Bungoma from May 19 to 20. *"The competition was not too easy, or too difficult, but we are glad we did our best,"* commented their team manager Mr. Brian Kinyua.

The current East African Taekwondo Champions, are gearing up to defend their title in Tanzania.

Media mentions

Compiled by Diana Meso

May 25: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Champions KPA host Equity Bank sides in Mombasa."*

May 23: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Coach Ochieng purring as Strathmore end Ulinzi's run."*

May 22: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled *"KUSA games: Zetech teams shine in university championships."*

May 22: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Nson backs Thunder to stop GRA in friendly."*

May 21: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Ulinzi Warriors corner USIU in league match."*

May 21: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Citizen Digital in an article titled *"Ochieng lauds Blades for stopping 'vicious' Ulinzi Warriors."*

May 21: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Touring Ghanaians win."*

May 21: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Capital FM in an article titled *"USIU set to guide Carnegie-funded African Diaspora Fellowship Program."*

May 20: KTN News featured USIU-Africa in Score Live news segment titled *"KBF League action at USIU-Scoreline"*

May 20: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Coach Balonzi hails Ulinzi spirit in dramatic USIU win."*

May 20: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Michezo Afrika in an article titled *"Ghana Basketball teams set for Kenyan friendly matches."*

May 20: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Kenya on Israel-Palestine row: Consistency or pragmatism?."*

May 20: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Daily Nation in an article titled *"Strathmore leave Eagle Wings no room to flutter."*

May 19: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Mount Kenya University wins two research grants."*

May 19: NTV mentioned USIU-Africa in the NTV Weekend Sports news segment titled *"Kenya Basketball League: Strathmore University School Daystar."*

May 19: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Greensharks hope to go top as they face Nakuru Club."*

May 18: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Citizen Digital in an article titled *"Coach Kedogo to miss Eagle Wings weekend clashes."*

May 18: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"KUSA forced to postpone Kings of Rugby 7s."*

May 18: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled *"Greensharks eye top spot as hockey league gathers momentum."*

May 18: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Title-chasing Ulinzi Warriors face USIU, Blades."*

May 18: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled *"Warriors out to stop opponents in league duels."*

May 18: The University World News mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Diaspora fellows head back to Africa for joint research."*

May 17: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Strathmore Blades eyeing Ulinzi scalp."*