

Study recommends robust action to improve internship experience



Psychology Lecturer Ms. Elsie Opiyo Nwa (center right) listens keenly to feedback from Associate DVC-Academic Affairs Prof. Munyae Mulinge, during the Question and Answer segment of her research presentation on Thursday, March 14 in the DVC-ASA boardroom. PHOTO: DAN MUCHAI

By Taigu Muchiri and Dan Muchai

Psychology Lecturer, Ms. Elsie Opiyo Nwa presented findings on Thursday March 14, based on research carried out on perceptions of the University community concerning the internship program. The research conducted together with Psychology Department Chair and Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Josephine Arasa, revealed overall positive perceptions by the University community concerning the internship program.

The internship program is integrated in undergraduate study and managed by the Internship Office, which is responsible for preparing students for a smooth transition to the work environment, as well as secure internship placements.

The researchers noted that over the years, students, faculty and the Internship Office have expressed their views on the process

and how it can be improved to better the students' experience. Funded by a KES 500,000 internal grant, the study sought to find out students' rating of the delivery of the internship program, benefits that students receive, strengths and weaknesses of the program, challenges and strategies for improving the internship experience.

Their evaluation tool indicated that the internship program is highly rated by over 60 percent of interns who completed the program by the end of the Spring 2017 semester. On the other hand, the research also revealed the challenges faced by students such as securing placements, poor orientation by several companies and university supervisors, a failure by interns to integrate into their internship site's organization culture, inaccessibility of sites, to mention but a few.

The findings also cited inadequate

supervision of students either due to an inadequate travel stipend for faculty, which affected their ability to meet basic travel costs, or students who change their duty stations without informing instructors. The study also noted some students failed to adhere to professional dress codes, while client organizations did not uphold professional and ethical standards.

The Internship Office also expressed challenges in finding suitable internship sites for the large number of students seeking internships every semester, a fact that placed the burden of searching for the limited internship opportunities available, to the students.

To counter this challenge, the internship office mentioned that it had entered into partnerships with several companies to

(Continued on page 4)

VC hails U.S. accrediting body's seal of approval

By Diana Meso

On Thursday, March 7, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza, announced that the university has been re-accredited for another eight years by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). This was the first re-accreditation since the university received accreditation as an independent institution in 2008.

This commendation follows an accreditation visit by a team from WSCUC to inspect USIU- Africa's systems for re-affirmation of accreditation which commenced in 2016. This process reaffirms to the stakeholders that USIU-Africa is an accredited institution that has been rigorously evaluated and meets or exceeds the criteria required to maintain accreditation.

It further means that USIU-Africa programs are relevant in the market,

and that the education offered is fair and accurate, including the description of services available to students and the accomplishments of its graduates,

It affirms that a student graduating from USIU-Africa meets the threshold expectations of quality to practice their professions which places them as the preferred candidate to employers. Additionally, this confirms that the university is in a position to keep improving its products, services and processes based on the guidelines provided by WSCUC.

The reaffirmation process takes two-to-three years which usually involves the completion of an institutional self-study and institutional report, an off-site review by WSCUC, and an on-site visit from the WSCUC team.

Prof. Zeleza thanked Board of Trustees, University Council, Management Board, University Senate, faculty, staff, students and the Alumni Association for their efforts and participation in the important process.

He specifically thanked Prof. Angelina Kioko (Professor of English and Linguistics) who was the Accreditation Liaison Officer, the Steering Committee and Taskforce and the group of editors that went through the submissions.

The WSCUC Action Letter together with an analysis of the Letter can be accessed through the University intranet: <https://cx.usiu.ac.ke/ICS/>

Employee giving campaign sets new records

By Christine Kamala

In a first of its kind, University employees were given the opportunity to fundraise for various causes of their choice as part of an annual giving campaign which run from February 25 to March 15 2019. Donors were also offered the opportunity to select the recipients of their donations, such as Research, the Freida Brown Scholarship Fund, Educate Your Own, student academic tours and travel, the Alumni Endowment Fund and any other.

Counting donations and pledges, employees are expected to contribute KES 1.54 million by February 25, 2020 when the campaign officially ends. 31.4% of employees have so far donated to the campaign totaling KES 581,600 from faculty and KES 960,700 from staff.

Of note are the 95 donors who have elected to contribute to the student fundraising initiative known as Educate Your Own, which received donations totaling KES

460,800, thus pointing to the resonance the initiative has had with employees since its inception in 2016.

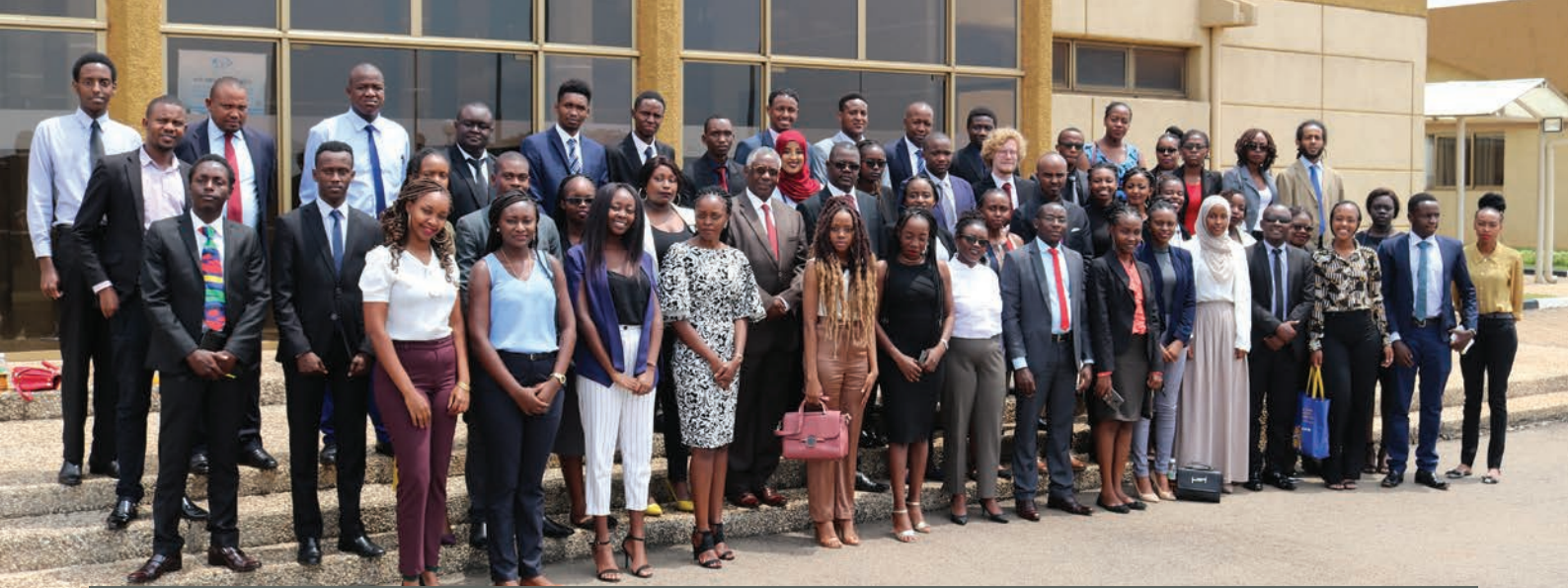
This campaign underlined the special connection employees feel with the university. Their choose to donate not only sent the message that they believe in USIU-Africa's mission, but also are willing to support it above and beyond their contractual obligations to the University.

Indeed the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza in announcing the campaign's success singled out 5 departments for have registered 100% participation: Fundraising, Institutional Research, Internal Audit, Marketing and Communications, Office of the Registrar and the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

For further information on how to make a gift through this campaign, the fundraising team is available on email (fundraising@usiu.ac.ke) or phone (0730116326/205).



LEFT: An Educate Your Own Car Wash exercise in progress at the bus park during the fundraising drive by the students' initiative that began on Thursday, March 21 and will conclude on April 6. PHOTO: DAN MUCHAI



Students posing outside the Rwandan Senate with Amb. Rugema Michel, Rwandese Senator and Chairperson of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Security on March 7, 2019. PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAN ODABA

IR students undertake comprehensive field study tour of Rwanda and Uganda

By Dan Odaba and Dan Muchai

Forty-eight International Relations majors representing 9 nationalities (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, the Netherlands, Somalia, Ethiopia and Sweden) successfully concluded the Spring Semester Field Study trip to the Republics of Rwanda and Uganda respectively.

During the trip, which commenced on March 1-10, the students visited the Kenyan Embassy in Rwanda where they were addressed by Amb. John Mwangemi on Kenya's Mission operations and implementation of Kenya's foreign policy.

A trip to the Kigali Genocide Memorial - which honors the memory of the more than one million Rwandans killed in 1994 through education and peace-building - was an important site for the students to learn about Peacebuilding initiatives and the history of activities that took place prior to the 1994 genocide.

The students' trip to the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) was especially

crucial to the students specializing in Development Studies, since the RDB's vision is to transform Rwanda into a dynamic global hub for business, investment, and innovation.

At the Never Again Rwanda (NAR) - a peace building and social justice organization that arose in response to the 1994 genocide perpetrated against Tutsis - the students were exposed to the the organization's vision of a nation where citizens are agents of positive change and work together towards sustainable peace and development. The NAR aims to empower Rwandans with opportunities to become active citizens through peacebuilding and development, while placing a particular emphasis on the youth as the future of a peaceful society.

Next on the list was the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) where the students learnt of how the idea of establishing a commission for national unity and reconciliation was first thought of by the Arusha Peace Accord signed in 1993, to assist the government of national unity - then anticipated - to foster unity and reconciliation among the people of Rwanda who had experienced long periods of bad governance characterized by divisions, discriminations, human rights abuse and acts of violence. After the tragic genocide of 1994, the establishment of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission was made even more necessary, culminating in its inclusion in the national Constitution adopted in 2003. This visit to the NURC thus provided insights to the students on Rwandese reconciliation initiatives and healing process after the 1994 genocide.

Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs students

as well as the rest of the students had an opportunity to understand Rwanda's Foreign Policy implementation strategies at the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINAFFET) Headquarters.

At the Senate (Upper Chamber) of Rwanda, the students were delighted to learn and discuss the increasing number of women in parliament and experiencing parliament operations. They were addressed by Amb. Rugema Michel, who is a Senator and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Security.

At the African Leadership University, the students explored strategies used by the university to empower students to take ownership of their own learning.

The trip also included a visit to the Kabaka's Palace at Mengo, near the capital city of Kampala in neighbouring Uganda. The subnational Kingdom of the Ganda people, is the largest of the traditional kingdoms in present-day Uganda.

Built in 1922, the Palace has remained empty since 1966 when Kabaka Mutesa II, then president of Uganda, was ousted and forced into exile. Though the building's interior is closed to visitors, the students toured the notorious prison beneath the palace, which was especially active during the regime of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, learning how Uganda went through the period successfully, before returning to Nairobi.

The class is taught by International Relations Lecturer, Dan Odaba, who was accompanied by School of Humanities and Social Sciences Administrator Ms. Fenny W. Muthusi.

Criminal Justice Club commemorates Social Justice Day

By Waceke Njoroge and Dan Muchai

USIU-Africa in conjunction with Criminal Justice Club commemorated the World Social Justice Day on February 27 for the first time. The General Assembly of the United Nations declared the World Day of Social Justice as an annual commemoration on February 20, to support social justice as an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations.

This year's theme: 'If you want peace and

development, work for social justice" was marked by a talk in the auditorium where the club hosted Dr. Angeline Kinuthia, and alumni Ms. Wambui Kahara and Mr. Nickson Ngigi, as well as students from Strathmore University and USIU-Africa.

In his opening remarks, Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic Affairs Prof Mulinge Munyae, commended club officials for organizing the event, further encouraging them - in partnership with their Schools - to create awareness regarding various issues in campus and around the world.

Criminal Justice alum Mr. Ngige emphasized the need for economic empowerment for all, in order to eradicate inequality in job markets. Noting the number of unemployed graduates in the country, he urged action to address the inaccessibility of justice to the poor and less privileged.

Dr. Angeline Kinuthia of A.W. Kinuthia & Co. Advocates, pointed out that in order for peace and justice to prevail in the society

three basic principles must be observed; What we want (this means creating opportunities for all); What we need (making basic needs amenities available to all ie education, shelter and health facilities); and Equality (No discrimination regardless of race, gender, tribe or religion).

International Relations alumna Wambui Kahara from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime elaborated on a few projects the UN is running to promote social Justice in Kenya and encouraged the students to volunteer and help the less privileged in the society.

Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Department Chair, Sociology and Criminal Justice Dr. Simeon Sungi, closed out the event by thanking everyone for taking the time out to attend and encouraged all participants to embrace and practice the tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

Study highlights challenges and opportunities for University internship program

(Continued from page 1)

ensure that students secure internship opportunities but it had not eased the process.

Overall, the results of this study suggested that USIU-Africa runs a well-organized and executed internship program that has the potential to effectively deliver most of the benefits expected of a good internship program.

The study found that the internship program was perceived as providing interns with benefits associated with a good internship program the world over. In this respect, respondents indicated the program integrated theory with practice, by enabling

learners acquire the new knowledge, and skills from a work environment, that adequately prepares them for the world of work, as well as bolster their professional and career growth.

The study's recommendations invited the careful curation of ideas from internal stakeholders on how the program could be improved, and proposed the adoption of the work integrated learning model that effectively links industry with academia. It also recommended strengthening of in-the-classroom and on-site orientation of interns, including rigorous training of students in report writing.

The study finally concluded that if the internship program's challenges are not properly addressed through concerted efforts by internal and external stakeholders, they may undermine its potential to present a learning experience of lasting positive effects on interns.

The presentation was attended by Associate DVC-Academic Affairs Prof. Munyae Mulinge, and officials from the Internship Office, Placement and Career Services and faculty undertaking supervision of internship classes.

Admissions office holds open day

By Taigu Muchiri

The Admissions Office held their annual Open Day on March 8, 2019 which attracted a total of 13 schools, 470 students who were accompanied by their teachers.

The department aims to market the University to students in their last year of high school, including providing career advice to attendees, clarifying issues about the university and strengthening existing relationships with high schools.

Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, gave a brief background of USIU-Africa and explained to the students why USIU-Africa programs are the most sought after in private universities.

She also mentioned the holistic experience provided by USIU-Africa, which focuses both on academic and personal growth in such areas of student life as sports, and student club activities. She urged the students to continue working hard in their studies in order to qualify for USIU-Africa admission.

Most enquires from the high school students concerned the financial aid programs, as well as various programs offered at the university. A majority of them were interested in student activities, and how

they would interact with fellow students.

The Admissions Office also explained to the students the enrollment process and basic minimum requirements that they needed to meet before they are enrolled for any program.

The students were able to interact with various aspects of the University governance units such as admissions office, student leaders, placement and career services, alumni who all gave the students valuable information concerning life on campus, academics, student activities and clubs.

At the end of the open day, the students were taken on a campus tour by the staff from Admissions Office, to gain a feel of the world-class experience offered at USIU-Africa.



Some of the high schools students who accepted the University's invitation to an open day from Friday, March 8, 2019. PHOTO: ERNEST A. MWANZI

Students elect new set of leaders

By Ernest A. Mwanzi and Vivian Lisper

Every spring semester the University's Electoral Commission conducts elections to usher in a new set of leaders of student organizations and government between the fifth and twelfth week of the semester.

This year's Commission was led by Faculty Council Chair Dr. Naom Nyarigoti, and included Staff Council Secretary Ms. Faith Mugambi, three student commissioners (International Relations Sophomore Vivian Lispa Kiberenge, Psychology Junior Samuel Maina and International Relations Sophomore Hannah Wasidiwa) who

together they planned, conducted and oversaw the elections.

The vigorous exercise that is the electioneering period started right after the Annual General Assembly which was held on February 14, when aspirants for both the Electoral College and the Student Council picked then presented their nomination papers to the Electoral Commission within a period of one week.

Following vetting of the nomination forms, eligible candidates with the approval of DVC – Academic and Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono, conducted campaigns and sold their agenda to fellow students for another one week. Electoral College aspirants were then required to present and defend their manifestos in a debate-style town hall meeting at the auditorium prior to Election Day.

This year's election had a total voter turnout of 1333 students who voted electronically over a two day period, from among 29 student aspirants for the Electoral College representing the five schools. The Electoral Commission announced the newly-elected Electoral College representatives, who were then sworn in on March 12 at the auditorium by the Director - Legal Services/ Company Secretary Ms. Helen Ambasa in the presence of senior university officials, and their fellow students.

Afterwards, the Electoral College proceeded to elect members of the Student Council as required by the constitution, following another debate-style town hall presentation of manifestos. The council is set to be sworn in the first week of Summer 2019 semester.

The table below presents the newly-elected members of the Electoral College and Student Council.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE		
Incoming Leaders		Predecessors
Chandaria School of Business		
Owiti Peter Odunga	Finance Junior	Abba Sharu
Frank Mukendi	IBA Junior	Abdiweli Hussein
Ann Mutio Kiilu	IBA Junior	Grace Mugo
School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences		
Ochieng Myra Lorna	Pharmacy Senior	Husain Khuzema
Ghazi Yusuf	Pharmacy Junior	Sania Zainab
Wambugha Sarafina	Pharmacy Sophomore	Sandra Gitonga
School of Humanities and Social Sciences		
Kirigano Charles Ochieng	International Relations Junior	Ali Nuru Amin
Ray Ngugi	International Relations Junior	Vishal Nagda
Ong'ondo O. Judethedeus	International Relations Junior	
School of Science and Technology		
James Ng'ang'a	Applied Computer Technology Junior	Mohamed Ifra
Kiong'o Ceasar Mwangi	Applied Computer Technology Junior	Shah Karam Suhaam
Ismahan Abdulahi	Applied Computer Technology Sophomore	Ali Faffar
School of Communication, Cinematics and Creative Arts		
Ekta Naresh Dodhia	Journalism Junior	
Andy Marion Wairimu	Journalism Junior	
Nicole Marie Desa	Journalism Sophomore	

STUDENT COUNCIL		
Incoming Leaders		Predecessors
CHAIR PERSON: Omar Chandarana. A	IBA Junior	Kisanet Hadgu
VICE CHAIR PERSON: Warda Ali Mohammed	Finance Junior	Deko Awel
SECRETARY GENERAL: Hudson Amanya	Journalism Junior	Riddhi Umakant
SOCIAL WELFARE: Nickson Kiptoo Metto	Finance Junior	Njuguna Victor Mburu
TREASURER: Brian Wekesa	IBA Junior	Adan Ahmedarif Mohamed
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE: Elizabeth Sarima Crisp	International Relations Junior	Kuel, Ajak Martha
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REPRESENTATIVE: Whitney Njeri	Psychology Junior	Mugure Regina



Dr. Scott Bellows engages a member of a visiting group of pupils from the MPESA Foundation Academy, as his peers look on. The group accompanied by some of their instructors paid a visit to the Incubation and Innovation Center in the Freida Brown Student Center on Thursday, February 21 to understand the practical aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship, which are part of their high school's outcomes. PHOTO: DAN MUCHAI

Media Mentions

Compiled by Diana Meso

March 19: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "Catholic Monks reclaim top spot as Western Bulls lose in Kisii."

March 18: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled "Butali, Wazalendo in winning starts."

March 8: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "Battle-hardened Warriors sound early warning."

March 17: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-

Africa in an article titled "Champs Warriors off to a flying start."

March 17: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled "Kisii RFC targets return to Kenya Cup after narrow win over Bulls."

March 17: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "Joy as residents get free information services."

March 17: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled "Gain for

higher education as Kenya and France sign pacts."

March 16: Mediamax mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "Western Bulls take on Monks in tough KRU league match."

March 15: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled "Revamped Butali eye Sailors scalp at City Park."

March 15: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "The family property thorn in Eugene Wamalwa's flesh."

SPORT UPDATES

By Diana Meso

The ladies' soccer team recorded mixed reactions after winning 2-0 against Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences (TSMHS) and losing 0-1 to NYS (Engineering) in the Universities and Colleges Football League (UCFL) on Saturday, March 16. Meanwhile, the men's soccer team lost to Kenyatta University 0-1 and 0-1 KCA university in the Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA). They further lost 0-1

to National Youth Service-(NYS) Nairobi Holding Unit- (NHU) in the UCFL.

The men's and ladies' basketball teams will have to go back to the drawing board to salvage their performances in the ongoing Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) league. This is after the men's basketball team lost to Eldonets 64-69 while their female counterparts lost to Western Delight 37-42 on Saturday, March 16 in Eldoret and

Kakamega respectively.

United States International University-Africa students and faculty now have a chance to showcase their film productions to local, regional and international film festivals and markets as the university following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kenya Film Commission (KFC).