

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Attn: Business/ News Editors  
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**SAFARICOM, USIU-AFRICA LAUNCH STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME**

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**Sept 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015...** Safaricom has partnered with USIU–Africa to launch a one-year mentorship programme that will see students undertaking various degree courses at the university paired with mentors from the telecommunications company.

The programme, which is being introduced on a pilot basis, is a first for Safaricom, as the company seeks to take a more proactive approach to building the skills gap between what corporate organisations need and what graduates are trained in.

“There have been widespread discussions on the quality of graduates leaving our universities. Many corporate organisations have raised concerns over graduates’ readiness for the workplace, so it is our responsibility to partner with learning institutions to transform the lives of these students by ensuring that the skills we require are imparted to them before they graduate,” said Safaricom C.E.O. Bob Collymore during the programme launch.

“Failure to do this is an injustice to the hundreds of thousands of graduates released into the Kenyan job market every year,” he added.

The Safaricom USIU-Africa Mentorship Programme will connect 20 students to 20 mentors drawn from Safaricom’s Women in Leadership and Women in Technology teams. The students will also be mentored by Safaricom Rising Stars, a select group of employees recognised for their leadership potential and rapid career growth within the organisation.

“We are extremely pleased to be collaborating with Safaricom to launch this programme, which we feel will be highly beneficial as we seek to prepare our students for the increasingly competitive job market,” said Prof. Freida Brown, USIU-Africa Vice Chancellor.

“I believe this programme is key to achieving USIU-Africa’s vision to be a premier institution of academic excellence with a global perspective and will give our graduates an advantage as they go out into the world,” added Prof. Brown.

The programme is structured to ensure its impact is measurable, and will involve face-to-face interaction between mentors and their protégés each month, as well as regular feedback forums and team building to deliver a holistic approach to personal, academic and career guidance.

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### **About Safaricom**

Safaricom transforms lives. We provide voice, data, TV, financial services and enterprise solutions for a range of subscribers, small businesses and government, using a variety of platforms.

As the biggest communication company in East and Central Africa, Safaricom has delights over 23 million subscribers, providing over 300,000 touch points for its customers and offering over 100 different products under its portfolio.

With annual revenues in excess of Kshs. 160 Billion, Safaricom invested Kshs. 33 billion on infrastructure in the 2014/5 financial year, providing over half of Kenya's population with 3G coverage and providing 2G coverage to 90% of Kenyans. Safaricom owns over 2,000km of proprietary fibre infrastructure and recently launched 4G services in Nairobi and Mombasa. It is in the process of building a dedicated enterprise business to provide managed services to clients in the East African region.

Safaricom pioneered commercial mobile money transfer globally through M-PESA, the most successful such service anywhere in the world. Launched in March 2007 as a money transfer service, M-PESA now has over 19 million customers and over 85,000 Agent outlets countrywide.

### **About USIU Africa**

USIU Africa's mission is to promote the discovery and application of knowledge, the acquisition of skills, and the development of intellect and character in a manner that prepares students to contribute effectively in an increasingly technological world. The institutions vision is to be a premier institution of academic excellence with a global perspective.

USIU-Africa's programs are accredited by the WASC Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of United States and by the Commission for University Education (CUE). This dual accreditation guarantees quality global education and transferability of credits from USIU Africa to any university in Kenya, USA and the rest of the world.