

CAMPUS THIS WEEK

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA NEWSLETTER

18 - 24 FEBRUARY 2017

Over four hundred pupils attend Admissions Open Day



A volunteer student leads high school pupils through a tour of the campus on Saturday, February 18. Over four hundred pupils from six schools attended the Admissions Open Day, where they were not only taken through the various thirteen undergraduate programs offered by the university, but also what makes USIU-Africa such a world-class choice for a quality international education.

USIU-Africa signs deals to expand international footprint

Loyola Marymount University and the University of Koblenz-Landau have signed agreements with the university to formalize their partnership in student and academic affairs. The Memorandum of Understanding between USIU-Africa and Loyola Marymount University (LMU) was formally signed on Monday, January 23, during a week-long visit by USIU-Africa officials to the LMU's Los Angeles campus led by Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic and Student Affairs Ambassador Prof. Ruthie Rono.

The agreement will establish a framework to support envisaged joint activities such as student exchanges and faculty collaborations in the areas of teaching and curriculum development, internships and community service, research and consultancy services.

Professor Ruthie Rono pointed out that this partnership is in line with the institution's goal of providing education with a global perspective. "We are keen on exposing the students internationally and we have entered into this cross-border collaborative agreement with the aim of sharing resources and expertise as well as providing opportunities for faculty and student exchange", she added.

The memorandum of understanding between the University of Koblenz-Landau in Germany and USIU-Africa is expected to foster cooperation in teaching, research and promotion of joint professional development and research activities, as well as faculty and students exchange programs.



The Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza (second left) holds a copy of the memorandum of understanding between USIU-Africa and the University of Koblenz-Landau he signed together with Prof. Dr. Claudia Quaiser – Pohl, (Dean of Faculty - Educational Sciences and Professor of Developmental Psychology & Psychological Assessment, University of Koblenz-Landau), on Wednesday, February 15. Looking on is DVC-Academic & Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono (left) and Assistant Professor of Psychology Dr. Josephine Arasa (right).

School to lead seminar on philosophy, film and literature



The sixth Seminar on Postmodernism and Post-colonialism in Philosophy, Film and Literature hosted by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences will be held from March 3-9 on campus.

The annual event is organized by Javier Serrano (Assistant Professor of Spanish and Literature), and this year will provide a multidisciplinary introduction to the two major theoretical trends and how they have impacted current ways of thinking and lifestyles.

Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic and Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono will open the first seminar on Friday, March 3 at 9.45am and will then be followed by Mr. Serrano's "Introduction to Contemporary Philosophical Thinking" and a further discussion on "Post-modernism and Critical Theories". Dr. Fatma Ali (Associate Professor of

International Relations) will also introduce Post-Colonialism during the Monday, March 6 session at 3pm.

Other speakers during the week-long seminar include the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza, who will speak on "Post-Colonialism in Africa" on Tuesday, March 7 (3-5pm), while Prof. Mathew Buyu (Professor of Literature) will speak on "The Cityscape in Postcolonial Writing" on Thursday, March 9 (3pm-5pm).

Dr. Mikhail Gromov (Assistant Professor of Literature) is expected to discuss "Hybridity in Kenyan Women's Short Story", while Mr. Serrano will close out the seminar with a discussion of Touki Bouki - a 1973 Senegalese drama film, directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty – from a post-colonial perspective.

Human anatomy lab set to start full operations

The Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Board (KMPDB) on Wednesday, March 22 made an inspection and ratification of compliance visit to the recently unveiled Human Anatomy lab in the Science Center. Led by Professor of Surgery and Chairman of both KMPDB and the Kenya National Examinations Council Prof. George Magoha, the inspection team was impressed by the quality of the facility, and the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences' preparedness to offer a world-class Bachelor of Pharmacy degree program.

On hand to receive the team was Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono, the Acting Dean of the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Dr. Apollo Maima and other School and university officials. Prof. Magoha was accompanied by Dr. Daniel Yumbya (KMPDB Chief Executive Officer).

The new lab will begin to offer Bachelor of Pharmacy students the opportunity to study such biological systems as the muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory and endocrine systems, once the university receives an expected Letter of Authority this Friday, March 3.



Members of the inspection team from the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Board (KMPDB) led by board chair Prof. George Magoha (center) in a discussion with lab technicians during their visit on Wednesday, February 22. Looking on is DVC-Academic & Student Affairs Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono (center left), Ag. Dean – School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Dr. Apollo Maima (third left) and Associate Professor of Natural Sciences Dr. Maina Muniafu (second right).

ICT introduce password management application

The Division of Information Communications and Technology (ICT) has introduced a password management mobile application, to make it easier for USIU-Africa network users to reset passwords and unlock accounts conveniently.

AD SelfService Plus whose iOS and Android versions are available on both the Apple Store and the Google Play store, also has the ability to synchronize passwords across a variety of cloud-based applications and on-premise systems such as Office 365 and Google applications.

The IT Helpdesk has already began benefiting from decreased workload from user calls related to managing passwords.

AfroMUN to hold preparatory simulation exercise this Saturday

A preparatory simulation exercise for the 4th Africa Model United Nations Conference will be held on this Saturday, February 25 between 10am and 4pm at the auditorium. The exercise is intended to provide local delegates with an opportunity to be trained on rules of procedures and the code of conduct of the United Nations.

The simulation exercise will focus on one of the global body's most controversial topics: "Neglect of State-Sponsored Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Schemes." through a simulation of the UN's General Assembly Committee.

SST to offer certification in Predictive Analytics

The School of Science and Technology (SST) is inviting applications for students interested in learning how to use data to predict future outcomes!

Beginning Friday, March 3, Ms. Paula Musuva will be taking participants through five-week Friday sessions on how to use IBM's SPSS Modeler to create broad, deep descriptive and predictive data analytics, that have wide industry applications.

The training has direct relevance for professionals in marketing campaign management, customer retention, demand planning, fraud detection and financial forecasting. To register, applicants must sign-up at www.usiu.ac.ke/IBM and pay a course fee of KES 5000 on or before Friday, March 3.



Center hosts week-long awareness activities

The Counselling Center will host a week-long open day to promote awareness of services offered by the department as well as create a platform for interaction with counselors. Activities will commence from Tuesday, February 28 outside the cafeteria and the Freida Brown Student Center, and will focus on enhancing self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and relationship and life skills among the university community.



Colombian ambassador holds talk with Dr. Onditi

Her Excellency Elizabeth Taylor, the Colombian Ambassador to Kenya, made her maiden visit to USIU-Africa, when she held a meeting with the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) Dr. Tom Onditi on Tuesday, February 21.

The meeting, which was attended by Dr. Fatma Ali (Program Director and Associate Professor of International Relations) and Mr. Javier Avilas Serrano (Assistant Professor of Spanish and Literature), dwelt on the modalities of the organizing a conference to be hosted by SHSS on Friday, March 17, which will feature a presentation by the ambassador and an address by prolific Colombian writer and researcher Maria Matilde Rodriguez.

The meeting also involved a discussion revolving around a proposed memorandum of understanding between the university and the embassy, which would enable collaboration on a variety of activities such as internships for international relations majors, shadowing opportunities for members of the Young Diplomats Club lectures by visiting experts in International Relations and Spanish from Colombia, among other relevant areas.



The Colombian Ambassador to Kenya Her Excellency Elizabeth Taylor (third left), paid a courtesy call on the Dean – School of Humanities and Social Sciences Dr. Tom Onditi (second right) on Tuesday, February 21. From left: Mr. Javier Serrano (Assistant Professor of Spanish and Literature), Mr. Kelvin Njagi (Chairman, Young Diplomats Forum and Secretary General – Africa Model UN Conference), H.E. Elizabeth Taylor, Dr. Fatma Ali (Program Director and Associate Professor of International Relations), Dr. Tom Onditi and Mr. Ivan Mendoza Benitez (Multilateral, Commercial and Cultural Affairs Protocol Officer, Embassy of Colombia).

The ambassador also paid a brief call on the Management Board where she met the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza. Before she left, Her Excellency extended an invitation to students to visit the embassy

during the annual USIU-Africa Cultural Week slated to take place from March 14-16 on campus.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMMUNITY DAY HOSTED BY LOCAL ART GALLERY

The Paa Ya Paa Art & Cultural Center on hosted the Black History Month Family Fun Day last Saturday, March 18 where over a hundred pupils from six local primary schools took part in music, film, dance, poetry, crafts and games.

The university was represented by members of the Black History Month Committee led by their Patron Ella D. King (Assistant Professor of Management), in the day-long event dubbed “Pambazuka Afrika”.

A day earlier, a cross-section of students, staff and faculty attended a pre-screening of the Academy Award nominated 2016 American biographical drama film – Hidden Figures – starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer and Janelle Monáe. The film tells of the African-American women mathematicians who served a vital role in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) during the early years of the United States space program.



A scene from the the Academy Award nominated 2016 American biographical drama film – Hidden Figures – starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer and Janelle Monáe. The film tells of the African-American women mathematicians who served a vital role in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) during the early years of the United States space program.

FEATURE

Interpersonal communication within the workplace

In our highly globalized world, businesses continuously look for ways to gain competitive edge over their increasing numbers of rival firms. It is clear that the way to differentiate a business' operations from its many competitors is by ensuring that the working situation of employees is continually improved. Such actions ensure that firms meet the requirements of both the business as well as the company's market in question. In so doing, it would improve delivery of goods and services to customers and hence long-run prosperity for the organization. Among the factors that fall within the working situation of employees entails both manager and staff interpersonal communication. Proper interpersonal communication improves both efficiency as well as effectiveness of a firm.

Vojin Lilic, Irena Popovic and Vojin Popovic define interpersonal communication as the process by which two or more people in a firm send and receive information as well as give feedback on the material that they received. The vital importance stems from the fact that it ensures smooth running of employees at work. Therefore, it is the base process by which, as Stuart Leung delineates, employees are able to coordinate the activities that allow for the production of goods and services sold to customers. Through interpersonal communication within a firm, employees may be engaged in verbal cues, non-verbal gestures, heeding skills, concession activities, problem-solving activities, choice-making activities, and boldness activities, among others.

In order for proper interpersonal communication to occur there must be a sender who first conceptualizes the idea in their mind. They then chose means of communicating it and actualize the message tangibly, through transferring, the message is then delivered to the recipient. The receiver then decodes the message and may or may not give feedback on the information that they received back to the sender.

Managers, unfortunately, often flippantly make statements to their staff while in a hurry or upset. Communicating while in such a state causes a sender to, as researcher Neale Martin uncovers, lose tact,

grace, and concern for consequences. While stressed or angry, the brain's prefrontal cortex supremacy in conscious thought loses its place and more primordial areas of the mind take over and focus only on the pith of the point. In order for there to be proper communication in the business, the sender has to put great consideration into the message. That is in terms of how the message is properly constructed, the most efficient way of transmitting the message, who is the recipient of the message, and will the recipient understand and receive it well. If disturbed, supervisors should recognize their excited state and intentionally wait to calm down before delivering a communication.

Communicators must also look at noise. Investigate not just the physical noise that is heard by the ear but also anything that interferes with the transmission of the message, such as the health, age, or stress level of the recipient. Noise might interrupt the transmission or receiving of the message. Managers must look to how to alleviate or reduce noise in order to maximize communication effectiveness.

Companies also need to ensure that the message within interpersonal communication is adapted to contend with each arising situation. Stale, tired, over-used communication immediately gets filtered out of the employees' minds upon receipt. Make verbal and written communication content fresh, new, and interesting so as to compete with varying levels of noise in the employees' lives.

Also, firms must take into consideration how an employee might interpret a communication. As an example, a boss ought not to continuously remind the employee through interpersonal communication that the boss is superior. The golden rule applies in that only communicate to others how you would like to receive communication. Furthermore, in interpersonal communication, truth without empathy may be seen as brutality but empathy without truth could be seen as hypocrisy. There is therefore need to communicate in business the "truth" with "empathy."

Last but not least, interpersonal communication in the organization articulates and translates the entity's objectives and goals into action plans. Action plans stem from new and improved business strategies only ascertained through both bottom-up and top-down communication. Unfortunately, most bosses only perform directional communication instead of collaborative listening, restating, and adjusting communication to and from employees. In so doing, most managers fail to incorporate employee feedback into organizational strategy and, in turn, reduce the effectiveness of the firm. A good supervisor does not fear constructive criticism communication that allows for corrective measures to be initialized amongst him or herself as well as the employees of the firm. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. established that 50% of firms that engage effective communication are more likely to have low employee turnover rates.

Lyman Ostlund details that impactful training in interpersonal communication revolve around learning how to be interested in communication, education on how to take an integral role in guiding communication in positive directions, getting knowledge on how to attentively focus on what is communicated, learning to give open ended questions to allow for positive interactions, getting to know how to clearly articulate missing links in the communication, having a sense of reflection, and respecting that there might be differences in opinions as well as being able to deliver the message in a short and concise model.

In summary, through the above mentioned interpersonal communication points, it is clear that proper interpersonal communication exists as a salient integral aspect of successful businesses. It should be properly implemented if the organization is to achieve lofty goals.

Brian Mumuli conducts primary and secondary business research and may be reached on brianmumuli@gmail.com.

SPORTS UPDATE

Rugby

The men's rugby team recorded a 41-19 win against Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology (JKUAT) in the Kenya Rugby Union Championship (KRU) league that took last weekend at JKUAT. Meanwhile their female counterparts teamed up with Kenyatta University to form the 'Varsity Warriors', but lost all their five games against Mwamba, Shamas, Impala, Homeboys and Comras in the ongoing KRU women 10-a-side tournament.



Basketball

The ladies basketball team beat Kenyatta University (Ruiru Campus) and JKUAT 39-20 and 20-18 respectively, while the men's basketball team defeated Mount Kenya University 31-24, but lost 33-41 against



Kenyatta University in the ongoing Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA) League on Saturday February 18 and Sunday February 19 at JKUAT. The ladies team will this weekend take on Daystar University and St. Paul's University, while the men's team will tackle Zetech University.

Soccer

The soccer men and ladies' teams came out victorious in the ongoing KUSA and Universities and Colleges Federation League (UCFL) leagues that took place in JKUAT and University of Nairobi (Lower Kabete Campus) respectively last weekend.



The men's team defeated Mount Kenya University 1-0 and Kenyatta University 2-0, while the ladies team outplayed the National Youth Service 3-1. This Saturday March 4, the soccer men will meet Daystar University at Kenyatta University.

Volleyball

The ladies volleyball team lost to Mount Kenya University 0-3 in the KUSA league games that took place at JKUAT on Saturday, February 18. The two teams will meet again this coming weekend at JKUAT.



Hockey

The men's hockey team defeated the Kenya Defence Force (KDF) by a solitary goal in the Nabungolo Peace Tournament held at St. Anthony's Boys, Kitale on Saturday, February 18. The ladies hockey lost narrowly to JKUAT in the same tourney.

Later on the ladies team split into two groups; USIU A and USIU B, which then took on different teams in sub-competitions of the same tournament, in order to avail every team member an equal opportunity to showcase their talent. USIU A beat four teams; Bishop Njenga Girls, Trans Nzoia Girls, Misikhu Girls and Kitale Girls, before going on to defeat USIU B to emerge the winners in the finals of the minor tourney.

Both the ladies and men's teams will meet Mount Kenya University and Kenyatta University (Ruiru Campus) respectively this coming weekend in KUSA league matches.



UPCOMING EVENTS

AIIESEC WEEK

February 28- March 3

CHATS

Hospitality Forum
Thursday, March 2
@ Library Bookshop.

SPORTS

February 24-26

Swimming

National Age group Swimming Championships
@ Kasarani Sports Complex.

February 25

Rugby

USIU-Africa men vs Thika RFC
@ USIU-Africa

Cricket

USIU-Africa vs African Nazarene
@ Ruaraka Sports Club.

MEDIA MENTIONS



February 24: Daily Nation featured one of our alumni in an article titled "Yes we're beauticians, and we are proud of our jobs."

<http://www.usiu.ac.ke/on-campus/news/media-mentions/666-daily-nation-yes-we-re-beauticians-and-we-are-proud-of-our-jobs>

February 23: Daily Nation featured an opinion piece from one of our faculty titled "Electoral fraud in Africa increasingly harder to pull off."

<http://www.usiu.ac.ke/on-campus/news/media-mentions/667-daily-nation-electoral-fraud-in-africa-increasingly-harder-to-pull-off>

February 19: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "Student kills self after surviving road accident."
<http://www.usiu.ac.ke/on-campus/news/media-mentions/668-standard-student-kills-self-after-surviving-road-accident>

February 18: An opinion piece by one of our students was featured by the Standard Newspaper titled "The calm and Beautiful Mendera you didn't know."
<http://www.usiu.ac.ke/on-campus/news/media-mentions/669-standard-the-calm-and-beautiful-mendera-you-didn-t-know>