



Participants at the Africa Virtual Hackathon held from October 15-16 at the Incubation and Innovation Center, flanked by School of Science and Technology Laboratory Technologist Max Musau (left). PHOTO: COURTESY

USIU-Africa team through to global tech competition final

By Taigu Muchiri and Dan Muchai

Team BTax - a student and alumni group from the School of Science and Technology - participated in the Africa Virtual Hackathon held on October 15-16 at the Incubation and Innovation Center, emerging among the top 3 teams. The group, comprising Mr. Jayson Musau (Information Systems and Technology, '14), and Mr. Ankit Chhatbar (Applied Computer Technology Junior), will now fly to Cape Town - South Africa in December, to compete for US\$500,000 with other teams from Hong Kong, Sydney, San Francisco and London.

A hackathon is a software-writing sprint-like competition between teams of software developers, who are allocated a limited time to create a functioning product at the end of the event. The Africa Virtual Hackathon was organized Block.one - a provider of business-grade technology solutions, including *blockchain* software development - as one of 5 events leading up to a grand

finale of the *EOSIO Global Blockchain Hackathon* at the end of the year. The grand finale will be a pitch competition and demo day for winning participants of the prior hackathons to compete for the grand prize.

The virtual hackathon's challenge was to create an application on the *EOSIO* platform that will lead to the improvement of the welfare of communities in Africa. Entries were judged based on creativity, scalability, creativity and utilization of *EOSIO* blockchain technology. BTax's application creates a transparent financial eco-system that would prevent corruption, seal tax evasion loopholes and deter tax fraud.

The EOS Global Hackathon series is a first-of-its-kind event in the world of *blockchain* that serves *Block.one's* goal of building a more secure and connected world through hosting a series of initiatives designed to find and give a platform to the most

visionary architects of decentralization in the world.

Blockchain is a decentralization technology, whereby blocks - a record of transactions representing a data structure - are linked in chains to form a distributed network spread throughout the world. Each new transaction must be authenticated by existing nodes in the chain through a consensus model, to protect the chain's integrity without need for a central authority.

Other teams that made it include *Ubuntu Energy Ledger* - also from Kenya - that built an open, decentralized energy data trading platform for African countries, and *Africonnect* whose application will enable small businesses from regions within the continent merge as a single large entity, and bid for a business opportunity on a peer-to-peer platform in order to produce a single output.



ABOVE: DR. KIOKO IRERI

Dr. Ireri appointed to research liaison post for sub-Saharan Africa

The International Communication Division (ICD) of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) has recruited Dr. Kioko Ireri (*left*) as its Research Liaison Officer in Sub-Saharan Africa for the year 2018-2019.

Dr. Kioko, an Associate Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, will work closely with other regional research liaison officers to put together an excellent program for the 2019 AEJMC conference in Toronto, Canada. He will also advance the goals of ICD and AEJMC in Africa.

AEJMC is a non-profit, educational association of journalism and mass communication educators, students and media professionals. Its mission is to promote the highest possible standards for journalism and mass

communication education, to cultivate the widest possible range of communication research, to encourage the implementation of a multi-cultural society in the classroom and curriculum, and to defend and maintain freedom of communication in an effort to achieve better professional practice and a more-informed public.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, he will work with two other liaison officers—Dr. SallyAnn Cruikshank (*Middle Tennessee State University, USA*) and Dr. Uche Onyebadi (*Texas Christian University, USA*). Dr. Ireri's appointment was made in August by the Divisional Chair Dr. Lindita Camaj, an Associate Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Houston, Texas, USA.

Students and faculty present research at communication symposium

A faculty member and two graduate students in the Journalism and Corporate Communication Department have presented research papers at the Communication for Sustainable Development 2018 Symposium held at Daystar University, Nairobi on Monday, October 22.

Dr. Stephen Kimotho (*Assistant Professor of Strategic and Health Communications*) presented a paper titled "*Stakeholders Risk Perceptions and Communication Engagement Strategies Used by Investors During Crisis: A Case of Kinangop Wind Park*". His research, funded through internal university research grants for the Academic Year 2017-2018, examined risk perceptions of the local communities concerning the Kinangop Wind Park Project (KWPP), the nature of communication engagement strategies used by the KWPP prior and during the crisis, the perceptions of the local communities concerning ethicalness of the communication engagement strategies used prior and during crisis, and how stakeholders engagement strategies were used by KWPP to manage anxiety/

uncertainty of the community stakeholders.

The study's data were collected using two qualitative data collection techniques - focus discussion groups (FDGs) and in-depth interviews. In total, six FDGs and 36 in-depth interviews were conducted. Findings indicate that KWPP mainly used one and two asymmetrical communication engagement approaches. The underlying aim of the communication strategies used were largely to disseminate information about the project, with the aim of building social capital and influence favorable outcomes to the organization.

The main risk perceptions highlighted included, health issues, loss of land, and forced relocation. Unethical concerns in the communication engagement included, use of manipulative tactics, withholding critical information, corruption, and generally lack of transparency in the whole project process.

MA in Communication Studies' students Mr. Abdalla Dahir and Mr. David Biwott, presented an analytical paper titled, "*Silent*

Flow of China's Soft Power in Africa". The paper examined the silent flow of China's soft power in Africa to demystify the notion that the West led by the U.S. still retains global dominance.

To understand China's soft power perpetuation, the research further explored strategic moves that the Asian nation has made in most parts of Africa through its economic, political, social, cultural and technological model. For instance, the analysis shows how, through technological moves, China has flexed its economic muscle using mobile phone handsets, in the process taking over the African market.

The paper was written for the *MAC6060: Global Communication* course taught by Associate Professor of Journalism and Marketing Communication and Departmental Chair Dr. Kioko Ireri in Summer 2018.



ABOVE: MR. YUSUF SALEH

By Ernest Anguru

Chief Manager – Human Resources Mr. Yusuf Saleh has been appointed to the ACU Human Resources in Higher Education Community Steering Committee (ACU) as the Regional Representative for the East African region.

HR chief appointed regional ACU community representative

USIU-Africa is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities – an international network of more than 500 universities in 50 countries, that are members of the Commonwealth of Nations - 53 member states that are mostly former territories of the British Empire. ACU Member Communities are special interest groups in the association that are open to all staff at ACU member institutions, wherein colleagues and other stakeholders working in four key areas of university activity, connect to share their experiences, explore ideas, and discover potential avenues for collaboration. The ACU Human Resources in Higher Education Community Steering Committee is tasked with the responsibility of bringing together Human Resource (HR) professionals from ACU member institutions to share and learn from each other.

Mr. Saleh's appointment follows his presentation on "*HR in the new digital age.*" at the ACU HR in HE Community Conference held at the University of Waterloo, in September 2018. In his presentation, Mr. Saleh highlighted how digital practices can enhance workplace communication and assist in managing, learning and retention of employees. His presentation also dealt with the automation of systems would lessen manual labor on repetitive tasks and ease record keeping of employee data. Specifically, digitization of HR systems would lead to real-time employee engagement and quick feedback in any specific development or projects.

The presentation was in line with the soon-to-be-launched Performance Management System (PMS) which is expected to assist the University achieve its human resource goals and aspirations in a sector that is becoming increasingly dynamic.

Students organize drive to alleviate blood shortage

By Antonio Longangi

The USIU-Africa Red Cross Chapter carried out a blood drive in collaboration with Kenya Red Cross Society and the Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service (KNBTS), from Tuesday, October 23 to Wednesday, October 24 behind the Cafeteria. The drive was organized as a contribution by the USIU-Africa Red Cross Chapter to the increasing need of blood transfusion in different health centers in Nairobi County and its environs.

Over 70 students and staff members participated in the drive, donating blood that will be availed to people in need through the Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service Blood Bank. "*It is an honorable service to organize and take part in such an activity...contributing to that effort is a fulfillment of our social responsibility.*" said Ms. Hodan Abdi (Chairperson, Red Cross USIU-Africa Chapter). The activity provided club members and volunteers with the opportunity to develop skill in planning, people and event management, and teamwork. These skills will be tested at a bootcamp the club has organized from Thursday, November 8 to Sunday, November



Mr. Adulbar Hussein (Freshman, Criminal Justice) donates blood during the blood drive hosted by the USIU-Africa Red Cross Club on Tuesday, October 23 and Thursday, October 24 on campus. PHOTO: ANTONIO LONGANGI

11 at Camp Ndunda Falls in Embu County. The boot-camp will also feature first aid and teamwork training, including fire drills.

SPORTS UPDATES

By Antonio Longangi

Basketball

The ladies team claimed the title at the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) tournament held from October 20 - 21 in Kisumu, when they beat Kisumu Bucks 33-27 in the final, though the men's team failed to make it past the quarter-final.

During this weekend's Nairobi Kenya Universities Sports Association (NAKUSA) game scheduled for Saturday, October 27, the men's team will confront the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) on their home court, while the ladies team will play against Kenyatta University on the same day and venue.

Rugby

The men's team defeated Swara Rugby Football Club 17 -13 in the Impala Floodlit varsity semi-finals held on Saturday, October 20 at the Impala Club.

The team has now qualified to meet Kenya Cup side *Mean Machine* this Saturday, October 27 at the Impala Floodlit Tournament finals that will be held at the Impala Club grounds on Ngong Road at 3pm.

Hockey

The men's team won the Kenya Hockey

Union (KHU) Sanaa tournament held in Mombasa from Saturday, October 20 to 21 beating KCA University 2 – 0 in the final. Their female counterparts however, lost 0 – 1 against the Telkom Kenya women's hockey team in the semi-finals.

In the NAKUSA games, the men will play against JKUAT (Nairobi campus), while the ladies are matched against JKUAT (Juja campus) on Saturday, October 27; on Sunday, October 28 the ladies' team will face Daystar University at JKUAT.

Swimming

The USIU-Africa swimming team bagged two gold medals at the conclusion of the invitational Kenya Swimming Federation (KSF) National Gala held in Mombasa from Saturday, October 20 to Sunday, October 21.

The men's swimming team won a team gold medal, while Billy Irakoze (*IBA Junior*), won a gold medal in an individual category.

Soccer

In a Kenyatta University tournament held on Saturday, October 20, the men's team was stopped in the semi-finals 1 – 2 to Kenyatta University (Parklands campus).

On Saturday October 27, they will play against JKUAT (Nairobi campus) on their

home pitch in the NAKUSA League, and Sunday, October 28, they will battle National Youth Service (NYS) and Nairobi Institute of Business Studies (NIBS) at the Kabete Community field, in the Universities and Colleges Football League (UCFL).

The ladies team will also play against Kiriri Women's University of Science and Technology in the NAKUSA league on Sunday, October 28 at JKUAT.

Volleyball

The ladies' team lost 2 – 3 against Moi University in semi-finals of the invitational Kenya Volleyball Federation (KVF) tournament on Saturday, October 20 in Nakuru.

Their next games are scheduled for Saturday, October 27 against Kenyatta University, and on Sunday, October 28 against Mount Kenya University in the NAKUSA League at JKUAT.

Handball

USIU-Africa will play against St. Paul's University and Mount Kenya University on Saturday, October 27 and Sunday, October 28 respectively, as part of the NAKUSA League games to be held at JKUAT.

Media Mentions

October 26: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled *"Best of the best: Top players clash in Kenya's All-Star weekend at Nyayo."*

October 22: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Ulinzi, USIU crowned Biro Lich winners."*

October 21: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Pirates*

ambush opponents to stay in league."

October 20: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"KHU league paves way for De Souza Memorial tourney."*

October 20: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Citizen Digital in an article titled *"Hockey clubs converge in Mombasa for SANA Cup."*

October 19: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled *"Race for playoffs positions intensifies."*

October 19: USIU-Africa was mentioned by Farmers Review Africa in an article titled *"USIU-Africa wins a competitive grant to upscale its training in agri-business."*

Compiled by Taigu Muchiri and Diana Meso

Upcoming Events

Library Open Access Week	October 29 - November 2	Humanities Center Groundbreaking Ceremony	November 8
Mr & Miss USIU-Africa Pre-Judging Event	November 1	ASENTI Summit	November 8 - 9
IDRC/ACIAR Workshop	November 5 - 7	Board of Trustees & University Council Annual Retreat	November 9 -12
Korean Food & Cultural Festival	November 6 - 7	For Loop Conference	November 10
Innovative Knowledge Management Practices for Sustainable Food Security and Nutrition in Kenya Symposium	November 6 - 7	Joy Congress: Conversation on Mental Health	November 13
13 th Annual GBSN Conference	November 7 - 9	Cyber Security Leadership and Innovation Program	November 14 - 16
Rapid Growth Ignition Course	November 7 - 9	Annual Security Summit 2018	November 20 - 21
		Mr & Miss USIU-Africa Beauty Pageant Finals	November 22