

Board of Trustees Chair is Principal Secretary nominee



Dr. Kevit Desai has been nominated by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta to serve as Principal Secretary in charge of Technical and Vocational Training in the Ministry of Education.

Photo: Dan Muchai

By Dan Muchai

Chairman of the Board of Trustees Dr. Kevit Desai has been nominated by His Excellency the President Uhuru Kenyatta as Principal Secretary in charge of Technical and Vocational Training in the Ministry of Education.

In a letter to the Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Justin Muturi on Friday, February 9, the Head of Public Service Mr. Joseph Kinyua, requested the Speaker to submit Dr. Desai name for consideration by the National Assembly as required by Law.

If confirmed by Parliament, Dr. Desai expects to use his new position to enable the government to become responsive to the changing needs of vocational training, as well as lead a legislative agenda that will cement competency-based training.

Pointing at his 20 years of involvement in crafting policy around vocation and technical training, Dr. Desai hoped that his new posting will finally give him the opportunity to develop a structure and mechanism that will establish the standards, curriculum and tools to accelerate integrated learning.

Dr. Desai also felt his history of participation in governance of public, private and not-for-profit organizations, placed him at the fulcrum of industry and academia, where

he can drive an agenda of work-based training, academia-industry linkages and government policy.

"Skill training, education and research are key requisites to have gainful employment and promotion of entrepreneurship," said Dr. Desai, adding that he hoped that his new position will play a key role in achieving Kenya's national development goals as set out in Vision 2030, and the Kenyan President's four main goals of food security, affordable healthcare, affordable housing and manufacturing.

Dr. Desai sought to dispel the myth that vocational training was inferior to higher education. *"I would like to see vocation training and university education placed on an equal footing, as each addresses separate career paths based on one's talents,"* he added.

Dr. Desai holds a Ph.D. in Robotics Systems Engineering, and is the owner and founder of Centurion Systems Limited, and has also founded and chairs Linking Industry with Academia (LIWA).

Dr. Kevit Desai is also the Chairman of the Permanent Working Group on Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) in Kenya - an initiative that is promoting continuous communication, a common agenda and cross sector coordination throughout different stakeholder networks.

Retired Chief Justice discusses challenges to democracy and governance in Africa



Retired Chief Justice Dr. Willy Mutunga makes a point during the guest lecture to the Democracy and Governance class, hosted by Dr. Simeon Sungi, on Wednesday, February 7.

By Dr. Simeon Sungi

Dr. Simeon Sungi (Associate Professor of Criminal Justice) invited Dr. Willy Mutunga, Kenya's retired Chief Justice and first President of the Supreme Court, to his Democracy and Governance class, where the retired judge discussed paper he had authored, *"Politics, the Media and Independence of the Judiciary: A Personal Footnote"*, on Wednesday, February 7.

The discussion dwelt on the conceptual and practical parameters of the traditional analysis of the principle of the independence of the Judiciary. His thesis was that African judges needed to be aware they engaged in politics. He also discussed the interaction between politics and the media with regard to how they impact the theory and practice of the independence of the judiciary.

Dr. Mutunga elicited feedback from the 8 students in the class as the basis for discussion, while members of other International Relations classes who had been invited, were allowed to attend and ask questions after the session.

Issues raised by the Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations class were activism (relevance to the teaching profession and how scholars draw the line); separation of powers; Pan-Africanism and its relevance (pragmatism); public trust (distinction between issues in 2013 and 2017 in Kenya); the role of the media in judicial independence; and the Constitution of Kenya 2010 (ownership and interpretation).

Some of the highlights arising out of the discussion were the need for everyone to be alive to the different ways in which personal influences and interactions impact on how we make decisions.

Dr. Mutunga pointed at the increasing adoption of a humanistic approach by

He emphasized the need to identify the forces which undermine judicial independence and deal with them and by so doing build public trust.

activists. In his view, politics is appropriation of value and everyone is involved all the time regardless of whether one is conscious of it or not. He emphasized the need to identify the forces which undermine judicial independence and deal with them, and by so doing build public trust.



Doctoral International Relations students listen keenly during the guest lecture by retired Chief Justice Dr. Willy Mutunga on Wednesday, February 7.

From right: Dr. Simeon Sungi (Associate Professor of Criminal Justice), Prof. Paul Zeleza (Vice Chancellor) and Dr. Ylonen Alexsi (Associate Professor of International Relations) listen as Dr. Mutunga makes a point during the guest lecture on Wednesday, February 7. Hidden: Prof. Macharia Munene (Professor of History & International Relations).

Beyond this, he reiterated the importance of Kenya as a nation identifying its national interests and ensuring that all are aware of those interests. He further emphasized the importance of public officers acting in the interest of the state rather than their personal interest.

Dr. Mutunga noted that ethnicity had impacted Kenya deeply and that we need to focus on the real issue – economic marginalization and poverty. Politicians he said use different aspects of identity to divide the electorate. "Kenya needs," he felt, "to move to issue-based politics." He pointed at devolution as one of the most prominent features of Kenya's Constitution arguing further that if successfully implemented devolution would ease the increasingly ethnic struggle for ascendancy to the Presidency.

He also hit out at the media for undermining devolution, emphasizing the need for the fourth estate to highlight the Constitution's existing success stories. He underlined the excellent position that the Judiciary was in to reinforce and consolidate devolution's gains.

With regard to Pan Africanism, Dr. Mutunga argued that there is a great need for Africa to speak with one voice, singling out the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar (to form the nation of Tanzania), as the basis for regional and continental bodies such as the East African Community and the African Union

Photos by Dan Muchai

USIU-Africa seeks partnerships with foreign universities



By Joanne Alividza

Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza on Wednesday, February 7, paid a courtesy call on the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Kenya, His Excellency Dr. Slaiman Arabiat, at the country's embassy here in Nairobi.

The representatives of the university sought to partner with the Embassy on a number of issues centering security, program and curriculum development in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), student and faculty exchanges, faculty development and research. The Ambassador was excited at the possibility of collaborating with the university, stating that he is keen to see a partnership realized that will open doors for both institutions in the areas of guest lectures, internships, cultural promotions, research collaborations and student recruitment amongst others.

The meeting between USIU-Africa and Embassy of Jordan was held as part of efforts to enlarge the university's Partnerships and External Linkages portfolio; a strategic move that will aid USIU-Africa's agenda as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

The Vice Chancellor was accompanied by Mr. James Ogolla (University Advancement Director), Prof. Njeri Wamae (Dean, School of Pharmacy & Health Sciences), as well as Carren Jumba and Joanne Alividza both from Fundraising & Partnerships.

The next day Prof. Zeleza hosted László Nádai, PhD (Vice Chancellor for Research and International Affairs) and Tamás Kersánszki (Deputy Rector Adviser) from Óbuda University in Hungary, as well as Judit Galambos (Deputy Head of Mission,

From Left: Prof. Njeri Wamae (Dean, School of Pharmacy & Health Sciences), Prof. Paul Zeleza (Vice Chancellor), H.E. Amb. Dr. Slaiman Arabiat (Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Kenya), Ms. Joanne Alividza (Fundraising & Partnerships) and Mr. James Ogolla (Director of University Advancement) pose for a photo after a meeting between USIU-Africa officials and the Jordanian Ambassador to Kenya, on Wednesday, February 7.

Photo: Carren Jumba



From left Tamás Kersánszki (Deputy Rector Adviser, Óbuda University), Prof. Valerie Adema (Dean, School of Science & Technology), László Nádai, Ph.D. (Vice Chancellor for Research and International Affairs, Óbuda University), Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs), Prof. Paul Zeleza (Vice Chancellor) and Prof. Njeri Wamae (Dean, School of Pharmacy & Health Sciences) pose for a group photo following the conclusion of a meeting between USIU-Africa and Óbuda University.

Photo: Carren Jumba

Embassy of Hungary in Nairobi).

The Óbuda University officials were visiting USIU-Africa, drawn by the university's interest in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), in areas of curricula development with an emphasis in engineering, faculty development, program development (specific to health sciences), student scientific research (involving undergraduate students) and student exchanges.

Óbuda University is especially keen to collaborate with universities in East Africa

and South East Asia regions in talent development, facilitating students from these regions to study in each other's countries; an opportunity USIU-Africa is likely to explore owing to the diverse cultural orientation of its student population - now representative of 74 nations from around the world.

Present at the meeting were Amb. Prof. Ruthie Rono (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs), Mr. Ogolla, Prof. Wamae, Prof. Valerie Adema (Dean, School of Science & Technology) and Ms. Alividza.

Chandaria School of Business engages World Bank team on new industry-academia collaboration

By Dan Muchai

Prof. Peter Lewa (Dean – Chandaria School of Business) and faculty from his School hosted a team of officials from the World Bank, on Wednesday, February 14.

Dr. Emmy Chirchir and her colleagues Professor Mikko Korja and Dr. Roberto Osorno, were accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Trade, to discuss the School's engagement in the industry-academia subcomponent of a new project known



Dean Prof. Peter Lewa (left) and Associate Dean Dr. Teresia Linge (second left) listen as World Bank officials describe elements of the Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project, during a brief meeting hosted by the Chandaria School of Business on Wednesday, February 14.

Photo: Antonio Longangi

as “Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project, (KIEP)”.

The purpose of the project is to grow Kenya's competitiveness and productivity, by enabling the industry to gain from ideas and innovation present in academia, as well as provide a platform for students to gain work experience.

Other School officials who attended the

brief meeting included the Associate Dean Dr. Teresia Linge, Program Director Dr. Francis Gatumo, Incubation and Innovation Center Chair Dr. Scott Bellows, Assistant Professor of Organizational Development Dr. Kefah Njenga, Assistant Professor of Project Management and Implementation Dr. Paul Wachana, Principal Academic Advisor Mr. Isaac Chuma and Academic Advisor Mr. Christopher Barak.

University co-sponsors governance summit



Prof. Peter Lewa (Dean, Chandaria School of Business) speaks at the conclusion of a panel conversation during the “Governance Summit with Prof. Mervyn King, SC” on Monday, February 12 at Safari Park Hotel.

By Antonio Longangi

Prof. Peter Lewa (Dean, Chandaria School of Business) hosted a panel at the “Governance Summit with Prof. Mervyn King, SC” on Monday, February 12 at Safari Park Hotel.

The Summit whose theme was “Relational Thinking and Corporate Governance,” featured discussions that pivoted around the concept of relational thinking, promotion of

better linkages between teaching, research and practice of corporate governance in Kenya, and possibilities of increasing citizen participation in national and county governance.

Prof. Mervyn King – the headline speaker at the Summit, is considered a global corporate governance guru. He is the author of King Reports - widely considered the

international gold standard for corporate governance and corporate reporting. He paid a courtesy call on the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza, and some members of the Management Board, where they held fruitful discussions over lunch at the Freida Brown Student Center's training restaurant.

Later on, Prof. Lewa's panel conversation which dwelt on *Corporate Governance Research and Practice in Kenya*, featured a case study by the University of Nairobi's Prof. Kiarie Mwaura (Dean, School of Law), and contributions from panel members Mr. Nzomo Mutuku (*Acting Chief Executive Officer, Retirement Benefits Authority*) and Dr. Joshua Okumbe (*Chief Executive Officer, Center for Corporate Governance*).

The two-day Summit was organized by the Institute of Certified Public Secretaries of Kenya (ICPSK) and HESABIKA Trust, in collaboration with 14 other local organizations including USIU-Africa, to bring together professionals from various sectors, to stimulate a greater commitment by regulators and institutions to streamline governance framework and codes.

Photo: Antonio Longangi



Dr. Juliana Namada takes participants through an introductory class on writing a research proposal on Friday, January 26. **Photo: Dan Muchai**

Graduate school launches grant writing training workshop

By Carol Yogo

The School of Graduate Studies, Research & Extension has launched a training workshop for 19 faculty members, 8 members of staff, 7 undergraduate and 46 graduate students. The program which has been running since January 26, will train participants on how to write for grants as well as how to use *IBM SPSS Statistics* software, for a period of eight weeks.

Each Friday, participants will go through a single topic beginning with Introduction to Research Proposal; to be followed by Literature Review; Research Methodology; Research Findings and Results; Conclusion

and Recommendations.

SPSS - which stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - is the "world's leading statistical software for business, government, research and academic organizations", and is largely used by graduate and doctoral students to analyze data collected for their academic research projects. SPSS training will involve, Introduction to SPSS; data coding; data entry; graphs and tables; and data analysis.

It is expected that workshop participants will be fully equipped to submit proposals for research funding at the end of this training program.

Student leaders participate in six-week training program

By Julius Nderitu & Antonio Longangi

The Student Affairs Council in collaboration with the Peer Educators and Counseling Club has been hosting a six-week leadership training program which began on February 2, at the Freida Brown Student Center.

Facilitated by Olive International, the sessions aim at equipping current and aspiring student leaders with required skills, while promoting the exchange of knowledge through interactive sessions.

On Friday, February 9, Mr. Raymer Chebosi (*Director, Robrans Enterprise*), discussed "Values Based Leadership" by drawing from personal experience, to illustrate leadership

lessons, types and trends, personal and cultural values and how they impact human behavior.

Journalism alumna Ms. Juliet Achieng Otieno (*Communications Officer, Rockefeller Foundation*)'s session covered "The Personal Identity of a Leader". She dwelt on how self-awareness is necessary in knowing a leader's strengths and weaknesses, pointing out how such awareness enables the leader, "to get the best out of his or her effort, while learning how to manage their weaknesses." She also offered examples demonstrating how important it is to know one's own personality type in order to be

the most effective leader possible.

Ms. Selina Waliaula (*Business Analyst, Jhpiego*)'s session covered The "What" and the "How" of Leadership. by training the student leaders on managing and motivating teams and people, including providing an opportunity for students to practice the mechanics of leading meetings.

Training sessions resume after the Mid-Semester Exams, from Friday, March 2, where topics such as Financial Literacy; Public Policy; Community Involvement and Cultural Awareness; and Succession Planning, will be tackled.

Career Services successfully concludes new freshman guidance program

By Minah Kaburu

According to a research done by Duke University, students joining universities struggle to develop habits such as time management, prioritization and setting realistic and attainable goals.

Thus the Career Services Department successfully concluded a three-week training program dubbed "Jumpstart", on Friday, February 2. *Jumpstart* was designed to assist freshmen get the best out of their campus experience and make it more meaningful. Program participants

were provided with tools that would enable them make better personal plans as well as become more self-aware and informed on career paths they would like to pursue.

The first cohort of '*Jumpstarters*' were trained on vision articulation, goal setting, self-awareness and planning through tools such as vision boards (an arrangement of pictures, words and quotes that help keep you concentrated on your objective), personality tests and career assessment tests.

Principal Counselor Mrs. Lucy Kung'u guided participants through a personality test, where their strengths and personality constructs were assessed and described. Alumna Ms. Christine Muthamia - an expert on personal branding and adjunct faculty member, also guided the students on how to develop their personal brands, and how to manifest them online, on campus and as individuals.



The USIU-Africa men's rugby team poses for a group photo just before they defeated University of Nairobi's Mean Machine II 19-12 during a Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA) league match at USIU-Africa on Saturday, February 10. Photo: *Courtesy of @usiurfc*

Sports Update

By Diana Meso

Following the USIU-Africa ladies hockey team second place finish in the current season of the Kenya Hockey Union (KHU) Women's Premier League, the team will be receive their trophy during the League's Closing Ceremony on Sunday, February 18 at City Park Hockey Stadium.

Meanwhile, USIU-Africa cricket team won the University Cricket Tournament after beating Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology (JKUAT) and Kenyatta University in the Nairobi Province Cricket Association (NPCA) League at the Sir Ali Sports Club in Ruaraka. The team will commence the tournament's second phase this coming weekend.

The men's rugby team cemented their title hopes, when they defeated University of Nairobi's Mean Machine II 19-12 in the ongoing Kenya Rugby Union (KRU)

Championship that took place at the USIU-Africa rugby pitch. The team is set to play against their hosts JKUAT on Saturday, February 17.

Last weekend, the men's basketball team recorded mixed results beating Kenyatta University (Parklands Campus) 59-46, but losing 41-10 to Kenyatta University (City Campus) in the on-going Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA) League at USIU-Africa.

The men's soccer team secured a 2-1 win against Pan African Christian University but lost by a similar margin (1-2) against KCA University in the KUSA League.

Meanwhile, the men's handball team were held to a goalless match against Kenyatta University (Parklands), while the ladies volleyball team lost 1-3 to Kenyatta University (*Ruiru Campus*).

Media Mentions

Compiled by Diana Meso

February 13: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "*Strathmore's Onyango claims golden stick in men's league.*"

February 12: USIU-Africa was mentioned by MicrosoftCare GH in an article titled "*First Microsoft 4Afrika AppFactory Launched in Kenya in Partnership with USIU-Africa.*"

February 12: The Star mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "*We showed character in win over Nakuru, says Ndong.*"

February 12: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard Digital in an article titled "*Lessons China has for the rest of the world.*"

February 11: The Standard Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled "*The hard task of searching for a job amid scams.*"

February 10: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard Digital in an article titled "*Parents contributing to unrest in schools.*"