Government to support policy development to implement devolution

By Taigu Muchiri

The second Devolution for Sustainable Development Conference was held from September 26-28, 2018 at the auditorium. The conference hosted over 300 participants drawn from the national and county governments, development partners, private sector and institutions of higher learning.

The theme of the conference centered around policy and legislative coherence for advancing partnerships in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SDGs in the context of devolution. The conference aimed to providing a truly dynamic platform for bringing the best minds together to solve the most pressing and complex local problems through global mindsets.

In 2015, 193 member states including Kenya, signed onto the United Nations seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are to be achieved by 2030. This year’s event focused on the role that policy plays in the implementation and actualization of these goals, in line with Kenya’s Vision 2030 agenda that is driven by national and county governments.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza, in his remarks recognized the role played by Universities and institutions of higher learning, in preparing learners towards the achievement of the sustainable development agenda. He added that all SDGs require technical know-how to actualize them and meet desired outcomes. Universities provide the space to teach and acquire skills that students can use to implement SDGs.

“The university community of researchers and thinkers have a unique opportunity to generate new knowledge on new approaches, models, tools and engagements we need, to better realize the effective implementation of the SDGs” said Prof. Zeleza. He noted that the human capital from Universities should support SDGs at county, national and international level.

The Vice Chancellor also noted that the University’s partnerships with such companies as Devki Steel Mills Ltd. and Microsoft Skills4Afrika have increased the employability of its graduates, by providing skill-based training that prepares students for the modern workplace. These partnerships fulfill the fourth Sustainable Development Goal which is access to quality education.

Prof. Zeleza also noted in line with the third SDG which is access to good health and well-being, the Kenya Women’s and Children’s Wellness Center currently under construction on the University’s southern boundary, is expected to serve the needs of residents of Nairobi and Kiambu counties.

The guest of honor, Cabinet Secretary, Devolution, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa noted that the government’s overall Big Four Agenda is aligned to these goals. He asserted that the government is keen to see the successful implementation of SDGs well beyond 2030. The government has embarked on an ambitious development agenda that focuses on healthcare, manufacturing, food security and affordable housing. He assured the delegates that his (Continued on page 2)
Ministry will support the implementation of SDGs through planning and budgeting at county and national level.

He further appreciated the role played by policy in actualizing devolution in Kenya, noting that the process of devolution started with a policy change coupled with legislation that provides clear guidelines from the national government, necessary to strengthen devolution. Thus, the national government needs the support of the county government to ensure that every Kenyan has the opportunity to participate in implementing the SDGs.

The PS, State Department of Devolution, Mr. Charles Sunkuli lauded the conference for bringing together sectorial policy and legislative silos to advance the implementation mechanism and partnerships for SDGs. He mentioned the importance of establishing and implementing several policy themes, as well as designing implementation models for SDGs at the county level. He urged all stakeholders involved to plug into the mission and understand the importance of SDGs and that of providing civic engagement opportunities that will strengthen partnerships and collaborations.


Africa Development Bank launches Center of Excellence Design Competition

The Africa Development Bank (AfDB) has offered a grand prize of an Apple Macbook Air laptop and sponsorship to attend an Innovative Youth Forum in Africa to the winner of its Center of Excellence design competition. The competition, invites youthful citizens from one of the AfDB’s member countries, to design a 3D model of the interior of a 21st century digital literacy Center of Excellence, that captures the feelings of contemporary young people.

The AfDB is in the process of establishing 130 Centers of Excellence across Africa to implement its ambitious Coding for Employment program, one of which will be hosted at USIU-Africa. The centers aim to impart digital literacy and entrepreneurial skills in an effort to reduce youth unemployment that is currently estimated at 40% in Kenya.

Once unveiled, the design will be applied in all the centers across Africa with the evaluation criteria focusing on user friendliness, innovation, aesthetic qualities, functional and emotional aspects. Applicants have up to Monday, October 22, 2018 to submit their applications through a Google Drive Link: http://bit.ly/coedesign

In addition to the Apple Macbook Air laptop grand prize, the first runner-up will walk away with a Samsung Galaxy S9 or Apple Iphone X, while the second runners up will join the winner and the first runners up for a sponsored Innovative Youth Forum in Africa. Lucrative prizes will also be awarded for the designs that achieve high social media visibility voted through #AfDB; #Jobs4YouthinAfrica and #CoEDesignChallenge. Certificates of participation will be awarded to the applicants.

More information on the design competition is available on the notice boards and website.

Trustees appoint new University Council members

The Board of Trustees recently appointed the following distinguished individuals, new members of the University Council.

Mr. Gordon Odundo
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
NAIROBI HOSPITAL

Mr. Paul Kasimu
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES,
SAFARICOM PLC

Prof. Rwekaza Mukandala
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION,
UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM
By Dr. Sylvia Ogolla

For the second year running, USIU-Africa has scooped the award for the ‘Best User Institution’ at the 6th Knowledge Ambassadors Workshop held at Daystar University. USIU-Africa was recognized as having the highest usage statistics in the country during the workshop which brought together 150 participating students and librarians from 17 public and private universities.

Students were given a chance to make competitive and innovative presentations around the workshop’s theme Open Access by showcased their creativity in creating awareness of available electronic resources, and how they promote the library as a brand. Other awards offered included Best Creative Award and Best Presentation Award.

The Emerald Ambassadors Workshop is an annual event that was first held in 2013 for all universities in the country that are members of the Kenya Libraries and Information Services Consortium. Participants at these workshops interact with an exciting team of librarians, diverse peers and representatives from Emerald Publishing, who provide creative presentations on the benefits of electronic resources. In addition, the informal conversations and discussions allow the students to exchange ideas and build potentially lifelong networks.

The Knowledge Ambassadors Program in Kenya was started to address the unsatisfactory use of electronic information resources in universities. Several academic libraries have begun engaging students in their promotional activities, in an attempt to maximize their use - students who are then known as knowledge ambassadors. The event is sponsored by Emerald Publishing and the hosting institution.
PsyD candidate emerges Africa region first runner-up at global psychology convention

By Dan Muchai and Aamrah Khan

Doctor of Psychology, PsyD Clinical Psychology candidate Ms. Joyce Ngugi, presentation was honored at the 126th American Psychological Association Convention held at the Moscone Center, in San Francisco from August 9-12, 2018. Ms. Ngugi’s presentation “Barriers to Mental Health Access of Deaf Adults in Kenya: A Review” co-authored with Ms. Anne Mwiti (Ph.D Candidate in Clinical Psychology, Daystar University) received a 2nd Place Africa Region poster contest award from the APA’s Division 52 - International Psychology Student Poster Committee official, Ms. Roberta Grudtna (right).

According to the research reviewed by the two doctoral candidates, the deaf in Kenya suffered from communication difficulties between mental health care providers and patients, lack of access to health care in their preferred language and finally poor health-related information in sign language.

Expressing her joy on receiving the award, Ms. Ngugi was ecstatic, “I consider this a great honor in bringing immense value to our institution USIU-Africa, to my country Kenya and continent Africa.” She was not the only USIU-Africa student who attended the convention. A group of graduate and doctoral psychology students also attended, participated and volunteered at the annual conference, accompanied by Assistant Professor of Psychology Dr. Oscar Githua.

A full copy of the award-winning abstract is available here.

HR invites applications for vacant positions

By Ernest Mwanza

On Friday, October 9, 2018 the Department of Human Resources announced four vacancies which included three newly created positions.

The new positions include that of Director E-Learning, who will have an overall responsibility of leading the University towards developing and operationalizing a strategic approach to technology-enhanced e-Learning in support of student learning outcomes. The successful candidate will report to Deputy Vice Chancellor-Academic and Student Affairs.

The second position is that of a Principal Office Administrator and will be tasked with the day to day administrative support functions in the Vice Chancellor’s Office and will be reporting to the Chief Office Administrator in the same office.

The university is also seeking a suitable candidate to occupy the vacant position of Principal Officer - Gender Equity & Protection, whose duty will be to ensure adherence to the current legislation and international conventions in matters of gender equity and protection within the university. The new officer will be reporting to the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor - Student Affairs.

Finally, there is an open vacancy for the existing position of a Chief Manager – Fundraising who will be reporting to the Director of University Advancement. The Chief Manager, will, upon successful recruitment will charged with the responsibility of developing strategic and operational goals of the Fundraising Department; and ensuring effective implementation of fundraising programs.

Further details regarding key responsibilities, minimum educational and professional qualifications, as well as desirable personal attributes and competencies are to be found on our website at www.usiu.ac.ke/jobs.

Interested persons have until Friday, October 19, 2018, to apply for these positions.
USIU-Africa hosts largest Sub-Saharan Google developer conference

By Max Musau

On Saturday, September 22, the Incubation and Innovation Center in conjunction with the School of Science & Technology hosted a Google Developer Group (GDG) Developers’ Festival (DevFest) 2018 – which is arguably one of the biggest Google tech conference in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The annual gathering featured over 1000 developers, technologists, engineers, managers, and entrepreneurs, who are shaping the future of Android, Web, IoT, AI and Cloud technologies for a day of sessions, workshops and networking.

DevFests are community-led, developer events hosted by GDG chapters around the globe, which are focused on community building and learning about Google’s technologies. Each DevFest is inspired by, and uniquely tailored to, the needs of the developer community and region that hosts it.
USIU-Africa was represented in 13 games played over the weekend of October 6 and 7, 2018. 8 games were played in the ongoing Nairobi Conference Kenya Universities Sports Association (NAKUSA) League and Championship and 5 games in the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) Premier League.

NAKUSA League and Championship
The ladies’ basketball team defeated Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and St. Paul’s University 32 – 28 and 54 – 30 respectively, while the men’s team also defeated Mount Kenya University, by a thin margin 43 – 38.

USIU-Africa emerged overall Karate winners in both the men and ladies categories clinching 7 gold medals (men) and 4 gold medals (ladies), but finished fourth out of the 11 teams participating in the chess championship.

In Taekwondo, USIU-Africa also emerged overall winners in both men and ladies categories bagging 5 gold and 2 silver medals for the men and 4 gold medals for the ladies, while the men’s soccer team lost to Pioneer International University by a solitary goal.

This Saturday, October 13, the action will be at the USIU-Africa’s basketball court, where the ladies team will battle Strathmore University, while the men tackle World Hope. On Sunday, October 14, the men’s team will face Western Delight right here on campus.

Kenya Basketball Federation Premier League
On the same Saturday, October 6, the USIU-Africa ladies’ team bested Masaku ladies basketball team 51 – 49 while their male counterparts narrowly lost 51 – 53 to Equity Bank. The very next day, the men’s basketball team bounced back with a 67 – 49 win against Thunder Basketball Club, though their female counterparts fell to Zetech University 27 – 54.

Universities & Colleges Football League
The ladies’ team is scheduled to play against the National Youth Service in the Universities and Colleges Football League (UCFL) at the Kabete community field on Saturday, October 13.

Upcoming fixtures
On Saturday and Sunday, October 13 and 14, the ladies volleyball team and the men’s handball team will be participating in an invitational tournament at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

Finally, the men’s rugby team will be in action on Saturday, October 13 at the Impala Grounds during a Kenya Rugby Union Championship fixture.

Media Mentions
Compiled by Diana Meso

October 12: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Star in an article titled “USIU coach upbeat as they brace up for Africa show in December.”

October 11: Citizen Digital mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Blades seek redemption after Zone Five failure.”

October 10: USIU-Africa was mentioned by The Standard in an article titled “Bankers ready to activate title defence.”

October 10: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Champs Telkom seek to recapture Africa trophy: USIU-A Spartans set to make their maiden appearance.”

October 9: The Standard mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Zetech and Strathmore win KBF women’s league.”

October 7: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Rising like a phoenix”

October 7: The Daily Nation mentioned USIU-Africa in an article titled “Thunder rock Lakeside in basketball tie.”

October 6: USIU-Africa was mentioned the Daily Nation in an article titled “How Karugu ended up as Nyeri deputy governor.”

October 5: USIU-Africa was mentioned by the Daily Nation in an article titled “Butali out to extend lead as Police stalk.”