



MMUST NEWS

A Weekly Digital Publication of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

Post

Vol. 2 Issue 6: 17th February-23rd February 2019

In Quest for International Collaborations



Inside: Fight Against Terror

UPCOMING

EVENTS



- Career Week 11th March 2019
- National Youth Summit- 18th March 2019



Editor's Pen



Dear MMUST Community,

We bring you the sixth issue of the MMUST NewsPost.

We are particularly grateful to the Directorate of International Relations and Academic Linkages (DIAL) for their effort in putting MMUST on the world map. We thank them for involving the Editorial Team in telling their story.

We welcome more sections of the University to do the same.

Together, let us tell our stories.

Nashilluh Brendah Kabindio

Chief Editor/Ag. Public Relations Officer



Meshack Nyambane
Editor, Creative Design & Layout



Dorcas Sandra Awuor
Writer



Wambugu Mary Wangari
Writer



Simon Mwema
Photography

“Every problem is a learning opportunity,”
Prof Ganesh.



In Quest for International Collaborations

By Wangari Mary Wambugu

The Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan lists Internationalization, Collaboration and Linkages as one of its strategic issue. Under this Strategic Issue Nine, the University undertakes to enhance collaborative and linkage activities with local, national and international partners. Through the Directorate of International Relations and Academic Linkages, the University received and hosted Prof. Ganesh Koramannil of Charles Darwin University (CDU), Australia, as from 18th to 22nd February 2019. The visit by Prof. Ganesh came as a follow-up of visit to Australia by Dr. Catherine Aurah, the Director, International Relations and Academic Linkages in November 2018.

Charles Darwin University is located in the Northern Territory of Australia, which is closer, in many respects, to the vast populations of Asia than to the Southern Australian states. CDU is deeply engaged with, and informed by, Australia’s indigenous people. It operates on the lands of many strong indigenous nations hence respecting the knowledge and culture of aboriginal people. Due to this, the institution has set up the College of Indigenous Futures, Arts and Society which seeks to promote people, communities and cultures. CDU is also in partnership with indigenous businesses such as fishing, tourism, crocodile farming, agriculture and horticulture.

It is against the background of forging linkages with people, communities and cultures that Prof. Ganesh interacted with a number of MMUST academic and non-academic staff, as well as the community in quest of potential areas of collaboration between the two institutions. One of the topics of discussion by Prof. Ganesh was on Internationalization Activities at iQuery Australia programme. iQuery is an organization in Australia which connects freshly arriving students, to institutions in order to create opportunities for them in Australia. It helps students in making informed decisions in terms of course application, visa success, arrival and settlement.

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According to Prof. Ganesh, Australia, being the second most popular destination for international students after the United States of America (USA), has, for over twenty years, led the world in putting in place systems and processes to ensure that international students receive the high quality education they expect. This was the message he passed on to MMUST students in a session where he outlined the opportunities found in Australia in terms of studying, working and living in Australia. The Professor advised them on what to consider when looking for an overseas education. These considerations included; the quality of the institution, the language spoken in the destination country, whether or not the destination country offers further stay including long-term visas, work rights and citizenship, and the law, order and living conditions of the destination country.

Prof. Ganesh went further to point out opportunities for students particularly found in the Northern Territory of Australia.

'The Northern Territory is a warm and welcoming part of Australia, where people, from many different lands, have made a home. They are attracted by the thriving economy, stunning natural landscapes, relaxed lifestyle, culturally rich society and unique employment and education opportunities,' said Prof. Ganesh.

The Northern Territory has the lowest unemployment rates in the country with excellent part-time employment opportunities for students and exciting career prospects for graduates.

"Australia teaches people to become independent. Children as young as 14 years old can start working part time with permission from their parents. Students are given driving licenses at the age of 16 in school through driving tests," he said.

The Professor also described Australia as an innovative continent. Over one billion people around the world rely on Australian discoveries and innovations everyday. They include; In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), Ultrasound, WIFI, Cervical Cancer Vaccine, Black Box and Penicillin.

Prof. Ganesh Koramannil later held a meeting with various University heads of sections and lecturers where he discussed on Transforming Teaching Practice mainly focusing on the teaching system in Australia, particularly

Charles Darwin University. He said that CDU has greatly adopted online learning which offers the flexibility of studying at one's comfort. Lecturers teach through videos, discussion boards and online classrooms, that is, from students' homes at agreed or specified times. When it comes to examinations, they are open book due to online students who cannot be physically monitored. Assignments are also administered online and lecturers are able to use Plagiarism Detection software which gives a report once a student has submitted his or her work.

He also touched on the issue of connectivity, urging different sections of MMUST to come together to provide solutions. He gave an example of making it a project for students to provide solutions, that is, a problem-based learning.

"Every problem is a learning opportunity," he stated.

Prof. Ganesh went ahead to insist on making an education system that allows students to fetch on their own and have a voice. He also pointed out on the need to empower students on what they are studying to do, and to change the way of teaching and learning in MMUST, and Kenya at large, in order to make students marketable.

On Friday 22nd February 2019, Prof. Ganesh met with members of various non-governmental organizations. During this session, he held fruitful discussions on poverty reduction. He emphasized on the need to use Community Capacity Building strategies to eradicate poverty. This strategy focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from realizing their development goals and enhancing abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results. He gave an example of a program in India known as Kudumbashree which was implemented to eradicate poverty and to empower women. Kudumbashree is one of the largest women's community networks in the world. This community has helped many women to set up successful businesses, locally and internationally. The Professor gave this example as a challenge for people to work together in order to reduce poverty in Kenya.

Kevin Ichingwa,
Founder, The Youth Against
Drug Initiative (YADI)



YADI forges war Against Drug Abuse Amongst Youth and Street Children

By Sandra Dorcas Awuor

The Office of the Dean of Students at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) has the mandate to provide assistance to students and provide a conducive learning environment for them to achieve the best out of their educational opportunities. In its quest to be a world class student-centered University, MMUST recognizes its students as the most important clientele, hence, seeks to provide a suitable academic and social environment.

The Youth Against Drug Initiative (YADI), under the Peer Counseling Club, is one of the youth-led passionate and transformative programs founded by MMUST students- Kevin Ichingwa, Tobias Nairuki and Dennis Kirui with an aim of empowering youths in Kakamega County to overcome the abuse of drugs and substances. According to Kevin Ichingwa, the high poverty levels in Kakamega, peer pressure, unemployment, broken families and poor educational backgrounds are some of the leading causes of abuse of drugs and substances amongst the youths.

“Two out of five youths, mostly in high schools and universities, abuse drugs. This is why school programs need to incorporate specialized education on drug abuse. We plan to visit as many schools as possible with an aim of making our schools drug-free zones but we can’t achieve this overnight. Other stakeholders such as school administrators, spiritual leaders, medical practitioners, street children, students, the community and the County Government of Kakamega have a role to play in the fight against drugs and substance abuse amongst the youths,” said Ichingwa.

YADI student members together with other charity initiatives such as Bread4Street take part in various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities such as donation of food and essentials to street children and advising them against drug and substance abuse. The Youth Against Drug Initiative also provides mentorship to high school students and communities within Kakamega by creating awareness and education against drug and substance abuse with an aim of reducing the number of school dropouts, early teenage pregnancies, spread of HIV/AIDS and crime rate amongst the youths.

Mr. Julius Mabia; the
University Security
Officer



MMUST joins in fight Against Terrorism

By Mary Wangari Wambugu

For many years now, Kenya has been the scene of various attacks attributed to terrorist elements. The most recent incident was at the DusitD2 Complex at 14 Riverside Drive Junction, on 15th January 2019, where four gunmen killed a number of people and left others injured. These attacks have become a challenge to both intelligence and security services in Kenya, prompting the country to place counter terrorism strategies. Security remains crucial for the well being of Kenyans thus the need to create terrorism awareness.

From 20th to 23rd February, 2019, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, in conjunction with the Kenya National Counter Terrorism Center (KNCTC) and police officers from the regional office, conducted a security and counter terrorism training to promote terrorism awareness. The training, led by Mr. Songok (KNCTC) and Sergeant Koech, mainly involved the Cobra security officers and other University security personnel.

During the training, the officers were taught on how to implement security procedures and operations professionally, how to ensure safety of students, staff and the public, how to facilitate good order and proper control in the University and how to carry out risk assessment as they perform security duties, among others.

In an interview with the University's Acting Chief Security Officer, Mr. Julius Mabia, he gave an overview of some of the challenges they face as the Security Department. These include; lack of a perimeter wall around the institution, incomplete security lighting, lack of CCTV cameras and attacks to non-resident students at night. To counter these challenges, the University's management has approved the construction of a wall around MMUST, installation of more security lights and CCTV cameras. The University is also in the process of implementing a Biometric System which is an automated form of identification or verification of individuals based on their unique physiological or behavioral characteristics such as fingerprints. Mr. Mabia also stated that the Department has rolled out a plan to involve student leaders to help in managing petty crimes. He also called upon the MMUST community to support the Department in order to enhance security.



Newly Activated Students' Smart Cards to ease access to HELB Funds

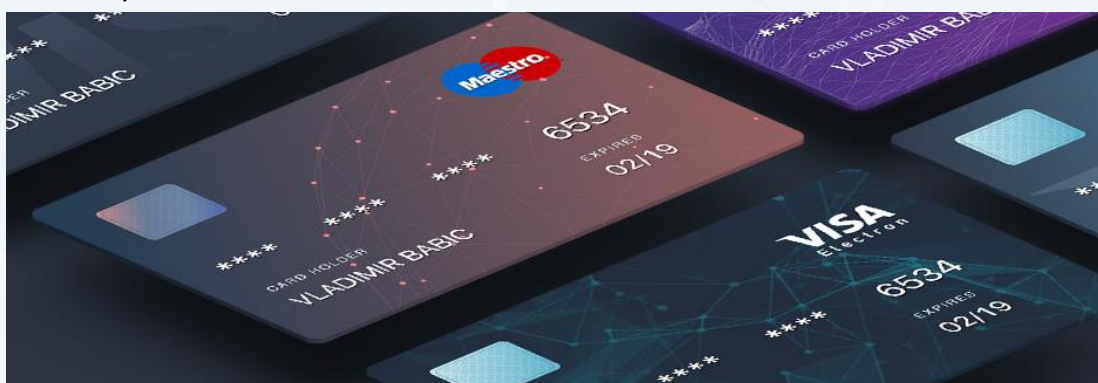
By Sandra Dorcas Awuor

Continuing students at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) were issued activated smart cards at the Graduation Square on 21st February 2018.

The new prepaid smart cards can be used as ATM cards and for students' identification purposes. Using these cards, students will also be able to check their loan status. Speaking to Mr. George Olang-Equity Bank, Kakamega Branch (Payment Services), he said that the smart cards had bank-generated pins unique to each account. However, students have the option of changing the pins once the smart cards are activated. Mr. Olang added that the smart cards were divided into three sections; tuition, upkeep, and general use, but no withdrawal can be made from the tuition part.

The smart cards have important features such as students' official names and passport photos, the name of the institution (MMUST), campus, course and registration number, card network logo (MasterCard) and card number. Transactions such as withdrawal can be made at any Equity Bank agent and payment of goods using the PDQ machine at any retail shop/supermarket.

Students are advised to use the funds for stationery, meals, subsistence and accommodation rather than leisure activities or other family obligations. The issuing and activation of the smart cards comes in the wake of ongoing 2018/19 HELB loan disbursement for the Second Semester.





MMUST students being addressed by Mr. Hiroyuki Futaki from Japan Information and Cultural Centre. Mr. Futaki shared about Japanese culture and available Japanese Government Scholarships.





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A publication of Masinde Muliro
University of Science and Technology
P.O Box 190-50100
Kakamega, Kenya
Tel No: +254 702 597360/1,
+254 733 120020/2
Email: pr@mmust.ac.ke