

SU Digest



January - February 2010 Volume 4, No.1 The Strathmore University Staff & Students Newsletter

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COMMUNITY
OUTREACH

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ENTERPRISE
PROGRAMME
LAUNCHED

ELATED LEOS CELEBRATE WINNING THE 2009 RUGBY NATIONAL 7S CIRCUIT

Leos, the University's rugby team won the 2009 Western Union National Sevens Circuit. **Continued on page 2**



Jubilant Leos! With the trophy is Leos 7s captain Davis Nyarige. With him are Leo Peter Mukera (partly hidden), Seth Machuki (extreme left) and Maurice Otieno (extreme right). Photo by Cris Kinini



Brian Okwomi with the ball



Clockwise: Elated Leos celebrate winning the 2009 rugby national 7s circuit. Nyarige receives the Drift wood trophy
Leos team with their trophies and technical bench after Kabeberi 7s. Front row left to right: Crispin Kinini, Arnold Onyango, Kennedy Andola, Davis Nyarige (Captain), Geoffrey Githaiga, Michael Wanjala, Teddy Salano, Paul Mwashigadi (Physiotherapist)
Standing from Left to right: Paul Ochieng (Dean of Students), Anthony Nyandigisi, Felix Ayange, Peter Kepher, Brian Okwomi, Seth Machuki, Peter Kimeu, Oscar Otindo, Maurice Mbai, Felix Osiemo, Mitch Ocholla (Coach).

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The team outclassed Kenya Harlequin 17-10 in the final of the Driftwood Sevens at Mombasa Sports Club on Sunday, 13th December to claim the crown.

Leos with an average age of 20, powered to a swift 12-0 lead at half-time before clipping Quins to wrap up their third consecutive title in the five-leg circuit. The victory was a result of four years of hard work, sacrifice and discipline spearheaded by Coach Mitch Ocholla.

Leos also bagged the MVP of the tournament which went to Ken Andola as well as the Top try scorer title that went to Maurice Mbai and Felix Ayange who were tied at five tries apiece. Felix Ayange took the overall Top Try Scorer award of the circuit. Ken Andola was voted the overall MVP for the 2009 National 7s circuit.

The Driftwood victory followed other impressive shows with two consecutive successes at Prinsloo and Kabeberi Sevens. Leos reached the main cup semi-finals at the Dala and Christie respectively. Leos humbled Quins 21-14 at the Prinsloo final before edging out Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) 10-5 at the Kabeberi final.

Strathmore and Quins embraced

cautious approach in the

Driftwood final showpiece but it took individual brilliance of Maurice Mbai, who outwitted Quins' defense before off-loading to Mike Wanjala. Wanjala grounded the ball before Ken Andola converted for a 7-0 lead.

Quins' effort for a comeback was foiled by Leos, who regained their territory to easily score their second try through Maurice Mbai. Andola missed this conversion as Leos led 12-0 at the break.

Quins brought the battle to Leos den and it paid when Patrice Agunda strode past the try line but Dave Gitau missed the conversion. Victor Sudi was to give them their second try but Andola silenced Quins with a late unconverted try.

Mitch attributed his side's success to God, the University administration and his disciplined, determined and dedicated players. He also praised Quins for putting up a good fight during the 2009 Western Union National Sevens Champion.

Leos captain Davis Nyarige echoed his coach: "It all depends on the work you put in and how much you prayed to God, it is only through the Almighty that one is able to accomplish such feats."

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COP GIVES MUKUMU HOSPITAL A FRESH COAT OF PAINT

"We are very grateful and proud of the good work and the sacrifice that you made. Be blessed!" was the message COP members received from Sister Julie Moraa the hospital administrator at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Mukumu in the Kakamega area of Western province.

Mukumu Hospital has a capacity of 240 beds. It admits more than 6,000 patients annually and serves over 14,000 out-patients. COP members were excited to have a chance to travel to Western province. The group of 15 was composed of nine students, three lecturers, a painter, the driver and a caterer. They managed to paint 19 rooms in four days - from 17th to 21st November.

Though we had an idea of what would be involved in painting it proved to be more than the obvious strokes of a brush from one side of the wall to the other. The painter who came with us taught us all there is to painting walls.

Preparing a room for painting was the most educative part. There were different tasks to be performed before a room was ready for painting from mixing the paints to filling in cracks with polyfilla.

We repaired the ceiling, protected furniture from being ruined with paint by wrapping it with newspapers and lined the floors to avoid leaving paint marks. At the end of it all, we came to realize that painting a room requires skill and patience.

Continued on page 4

Top: Mixing the paint
Bottom: The COP team at Mukumu





Continued from page 3

For the task of painting the hospital, we divided ourselves into groups and worked on different rooms doing different tasks. This gave us a great opportunity to have team building sessions and socialize with each other. We worked like this for two and a half days toiling from 8:00am to 8:30pm.

All along Charles, the painter, worked with us teaching and correcting us patiently to ensure a perfect job was done. To sustain the work spirit at least every one got involved in the different tasks to avoid monotony and enrich the experience. Jokes and song flew from wall to wall to lighten the mood.

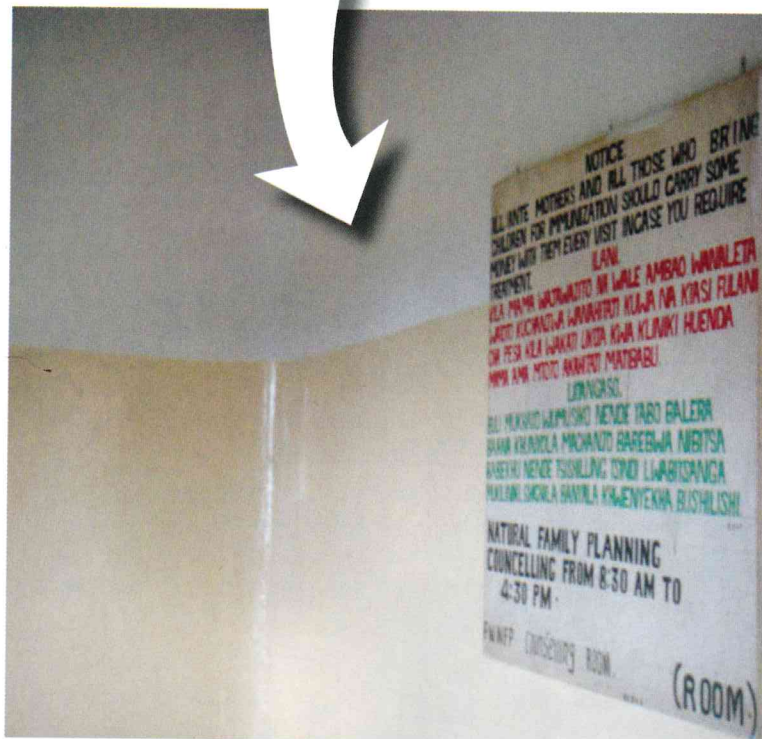
Being a hospital, the walls had posters stuck on them for information purposes. The posters were stuck with cello tape and superglue. Removing such posters was a tedious task but thanks to team spirit we managed to remove all. We later showed the hospital staff how to use notice board space optimally and how to use masking tape to stick posters on the wall. We repainted the notice boards to make them more attractive.

To apply a fresh coat of oil based paint on an already painted wall, we had to sand paper the walls first to make the paint stick on to the walls properly. Once this was done, a wall was ready for painting. Painting with a brush is also a technique to be learnt, as there is a particular way of making brush strokes so as to have an even spread of paint on the wall. We used both water based and oil based paints. White water-based paint was applied on the ceiling and top part of the walls immediately after the ceiling.

Life Skills

It was not all a painting affair and members of staff shared important life skills with students. They helped us understand why we traveled all the way to Western to paint rather than just give a donation or say a short prayer for the less fortunate. We also realized the importance of having a wholesome life where one's life is balanced between work/study, family, social life and spirituality. They also talked about the importance of work and working well.

Every member of the team played their part well. Our caterer Antonina prepared great meals for us. This had a great impact. Not only did it give us energy to keep us going but also reassured us that our meals were well prepared. We had great get togethers at the end of each day where we shared our different experiences and planned the next day's activities.



Top: Before
Bottom: After



Children's Orphanage

Friday, 20th was our last working day. We began our day by visiting a nearby Children's orphanage. It is a moving story of how a generous lady called Grace has turned her home into an orphanage and taken in 32 children. These children have either been abandoned by their parents in the hospital, or have been ostracized because they are living with HIV/AIDS. Others kids are not accepted in their families because they are considered illegitimate.

Grace has a humble home but she takes care of the children the best way she can and well wishers like the Red Cross as well as the Municipal Council assist her where they can. Talk of magnanimity!

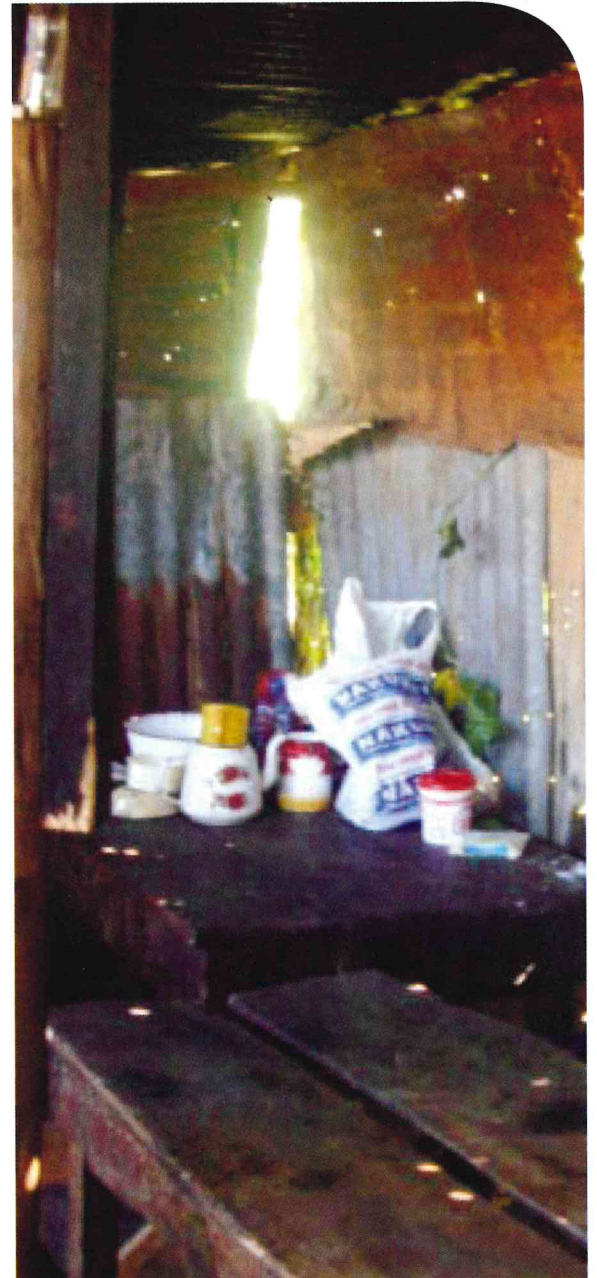
Grace also supports another ninety children who are day bugs. These come from poor homes and the streets. She has a make shift classroom where the kids are taught basic reading and writing and at the end of the day she gives each one of them a mug of

porridge. She challenged us to give to those who do not have, as we all have something to give even though it is not tangible.

How can we be in the vicinity of the biggest lake in Africa and not visit it? After visiting the children's home, we traveled down to Lake Victoria' and had a luxurious meal of fresh fish and ugali. The lake was covered with hyacinth but we were still able to wade through and enjoyed a boat ride. Afterwards we went into Kisumu, did some shopping and site seeing.

The whole work camp was awesome and there is no sufficient way to express our experiences, but to say: We can do it all over again! Fr Boniface Makokha the hospital chaplain said that we truly transformed the hospital and the lives of the community in Mukumu. He also expressed his desire to work with the University in other projects in future.

By Roselyn Warau



Left: The team enjoying a boat ride in Lake Victoria

Right: The kitchen of the orphanage



Spreading Christmas cheer

REACHING OUT TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Strathmore University's Community Outreach Program (COP) organized tuition classes for high school students from Madaraka, Akila, Siwaka and Funguo from 1st to 15th December. The classes were conducted by volunteer students and staff members of the University.

The classes included sessions on Introduction to Computers, Mathematics, Kiswahili, Biology, Chemistry and Physics for Form 2, 3 and 4 students. The exercise ended with a talk on careers.

SBC'S CHRISTMAS TREAT FOR MAMA NGINA CHILDREN'S HOME

In the spirit of Christmas, the Strathmore Business Club (SBC) decided to spread love to the less fortunate and visited Mama Ngina Children's Home, South C in the afternoon of 11th December.

SBC entertained the children at the home with a play on the birth of Jesus and sang Christmas carols with the kids. SBC then threw a small party for the children and played some games. Members who arrived early had the opportunity to feed the babies in the nursery and also to change them.

The club gave foodstuff worth over Kshs25,000. SBC raised the money to buy the food from among students and staff. SBC also gave clothes and shoes that had been donated by students at the University.

The home was founded in 1969, and given the name of Kenya's then First Lady. It caters for children in especially difficult circumstances from Nairobi and its environs.

The Home is under Child Welfare Society of Kenya, a charitable non-governmental organization with 21 branches spread all over the country. The society was established in 1955 and implements programs aimed at protection and promotion of children's rights in Kenya.

These include: the abandoned, orphans, destitute, victims of cruelty, neglect and those abused physically, psychologically and sexually; and those unwanted by their biological parents among others. The home currently has a total of 67 children.

The children were very grateful for

the visit and entertained the club members through song and dance. The Home's administration also expressed its gratitude and urged the club to make more visits.

This event would not have been a success without the generous contributions from both students and staff of the University and other well wishers. SBC would like to thank all those who gave their resources and time to put a smile on the faces of the little angels.

SBC would also like to recognize the participation of Students Microfinance Association (SMFA). The club is also grateful to the office of the Dean of Students for facilitating the activity.

By Rachel Muthoni

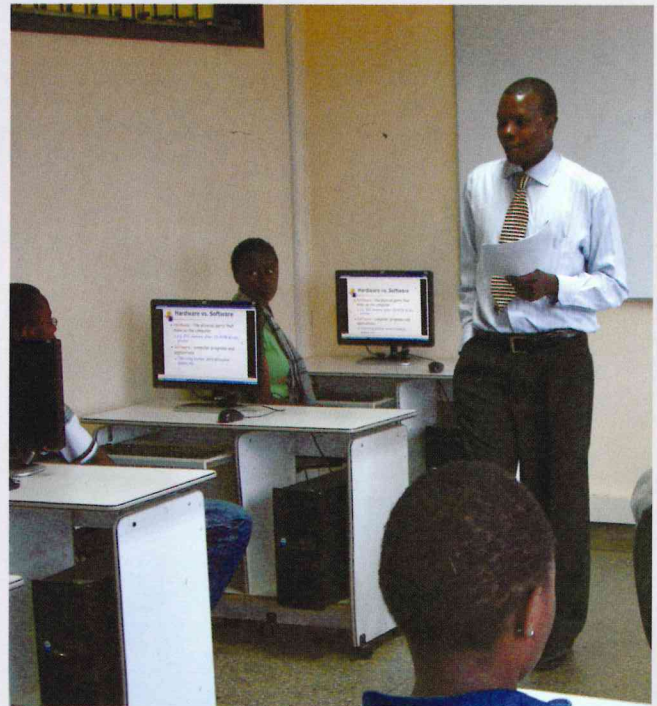
Participants were happy with the initiative. Milkah Nyaguthii said: "It was fun and I would want to come back every holiday. I've learnt a lot and understood what I hadn't understood. I enjoyed myself and I am very grateful."

Another participant Broderick Kariuki said: "It was definitely the best time I have had in my holidays and I can firmly say I gained a lot.... I have had fun meeting new people and most of all I have gained education wise.... Thanks a lot Strathmore."

"It was such an awesome experience to be in Strathmore University grounds for two weeks. People were kind and friendly. The teachers who taught us were fun to interact with. I enjoyed myself and look forward to joining Strathmore next year," said Rista Maria, a Form 4 student at Lugulu Girls High school who attended the classes.

"This was the first time the University was organizing classes for high school students in the neighbourhood. It was a great experience and we hope to have more such initiatives in future," said Mr Marcos Migeri, the Director of the University Relations Department.

By Pauline Kuria



Byron Chesoli facilitating an introduction to computer class

STRATHMORE CHORALE PERFORMS AT UN PEACE KEEPERS CHRISTMAS EVENT

The University Choir, Strathmore Chorale was invited to perform at the annual UN Peace keepers Christmas ceremony held on 9th December at the Department of Defence National Headquarters in Nairobi. The event is

organized by the UN and the Department of Defence.

Christmas cards from children from all over Kenya were handed over to the Chief of the General Staff (CGS). The CGS will dispatch them to the Kenyan soldiers who are part of the peace keeping forces of the UN and Africa Union missions all over the world.

The CGS and UN representatives were full of praises for Kenyan forces involved in peace missions and thanked Kenyans for their moral support. The Chorale presented copies of their latest album and Christmas card to the CGS.

The Choir changed its name in November to 'Strathmore Chorale'. It also has a new logo.

Strathmore Chorale with some Kenya armed forces involved in peacekeeping missions



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“The greatest thing about this program for me is the fact that I will get help to publicise my business and access to markets.



STUDENTS ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

Strathmore Enterprise Development Centre on Friday, 11th December launched the Student's Enterprise Programme (SEP), a project to support students' business initiatives in the University. Perry Njeri is the founding President of SEP.

The aim of SEP is to open up avenues for young entrepreneurs to enhance their opportunities in the dynamic business world. The guest of honour at the launch was Ms Tabitha Karanja, the CEO of Keroche Breweries Ltd. Alum Daphine Okonji, the CEO of Jaydan Gardens gave a presentation on her experience as a young entrepreneur.

SEP will facilitate subscribing entrepreneurs to access capital; publicity platforms and markets for an annual fee of Kshs2500. Subscribers will also be trained in various aspects of business management and mentored in business through their life in Strathmore and

for two years after graduation. After the two years, the mentees will join the SEP alumni.

“The greatest thing about this program for me is the fact that I will get help to publicise my business and access to markets,” said Susan Eve who runs an outfit that organises Children events. “It takes as much as Kshs 300 to put up one poster alone in upmarket places like Yaya and Westgate and now I will only need to pay Kshs 2500 a year and all that is catered for,” said the excited fourth year BBIT student.

It was revealing that a good number of the function attendees who nearly filled the auditorium were up and coming businessmen and women. “It is only fair that after you go through Strathmore, you have something to show for it. The business environment gives you a wide spectrum of ideas to choose from in terms of what business to do,”

observed Moses Mwangi. “With a little capital and guidance, you can do a lot,” he added.

Established entrepreneurs who spoke at the event encouraged the budding ones to grow their initiatives and they might eventually find themselves running big corporations.

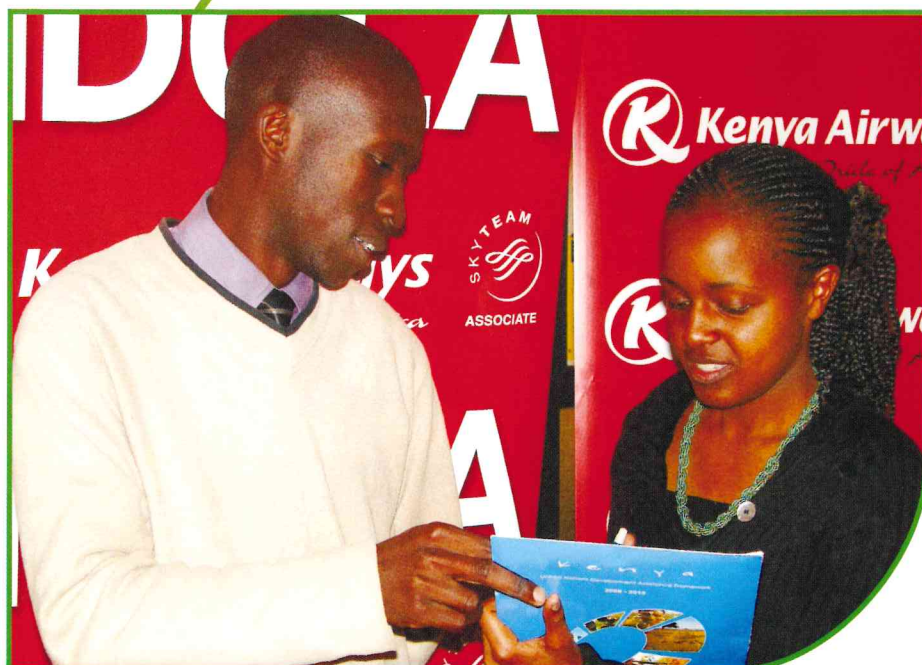
The launch ended with a trivia session where the overall winner walked away with a HP net book.

By Nick Walubengo



Top: Strathmore Enterprise Program (SEP) Ambassadors Ian Gituku, and Marion Karanja after the launch of SEP after the launch
Bottom: Daphne Okonji, the proprietor of Elle Interior Designers (right) picks a raffle ticket at the launch of Student Enterprise Program (SEP). Holding the box is Perry Njeri, the President of SEP

SIFE AND COP CLUBS 'GO GREEN'



The University's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) and COP (Community Outreach Program) clubs held the first annual Green Week at the University from 23rd to 28th November. The goal of the week was to raise awareness about environmental issues and attendant solutions.

The week included activities like tree planting, green challenges and a clean-up exercise. The tree planting exercise was the first phase of a tree-planting project SIFE and COP are undertaking in partnership with the Safaricom Foundation and Total Eco-Challenge.

James and Fredah at the Green Challenge

The students planted 400 trees at Consolata Seminary in Karen. They were joined for the exercise by Ministry of Agriculture officers who gave them tips on tree planting. The second phase of the project will be undertaken in March 2010. The goal of the project is to plant more than 1000 trees!

The clean up exercise involved cleaning Madaraka Estate's Ole Sangale Road.

The Green Challenges were the highlight of the week. In Green Challenge 1 students were asked to write essays, poems, draw or paint on the theme 'making a green difference'. In Green Chal-

lenge 2, students were challenged to wear it all green and participate in a 'Scavenger hunt', a game where individuals seek to gather a number of specific items specified on a list.

It was a truly exhilarating experience complete with cryptic clues and wrong turns. Winners of the Scavenger Hunt got T-shirts and Movie Tickets for two courtesy of Fox Theatres and Kenya Airways.

Green minded students applauded the University's efforts to go green by adopting use of energy saving bulbs, and developing Phase III in adherence to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification - a 'Green Building' Rating System of USA. LEED is now a global certification for green-building technologies that help cut-down on water and energy wastage thus reducing resource depletion and helping sustain the environment....

Green students encourage the entire University community as well to adopt practices and gestures that help preserve the environment like for example disposing plastic waste (water bottles, cups, straws) in the 'Plastic only bin' located in the cafeteria. The plastic waste will then be recycled and used to make plastic poles which will in turn lead to less cutting down of trees.

Heartfelt gratitude goes to the sponsors of Green Week: Safaricom Ltd, Kenya Airways and Fox Theatres.

Thought for the day: Only when the last tree is cut down, the last river poisoned, and the last fish caught, will we realize that we can't eat money! Let's go green Lets go!

By Ida Rasanga

Event Sponsors

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BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN AFRICA

Be the change you want to see in Africa! Those were the words repeated by all the speakers at the Diplomatic Summit held at the Uni-

versity on Tuesday, 8th December. The summit was organised by the Student Council to discuss conflict resolution in Africa.



From left: Mr Paul Ochieng, the Dean of Students; Mr Salim Amin, the Chairman of A24 TV channel; and Ms Eshila Maravanyika, the Deputy Director of United Nations Information Centre in Nairobi

versity on Tuesday, 8th December. The summit was organised by the Student Council to discuss conflict resolution in Africa.

Speaking on the role of the media in conflict resolution, Mr Salim Amin, the Chairman A24. media

challenged the participants to be more active in contributing to the debate on conflict resolution in Africa.

Ms Eshila Maravanyika, the Deputy Director of United Nations Information Centre in Nairobi talked about the role of UN in conflict resolution. She said that

unless the continent stopped fighting, it won't develop socio-economically.

In his address titled Fundamentalism vs Humanism—the challenge of mediation, Mr Mitch Benedict, the Political Counselor at the US embassy in Nairobi said that most conflicts are fueled by fundamentalism and thus for lasting peace it was imperative that at mediation, warring parties agree to concede some ground for the sake of peace.

Other speakers at the event were Mr David Bwakali who spoke on Crises of Conflict Resolution in Africa, and Mrs Carole Mithika who facilitated a work session on way forward for the youth in conflict resolution. Re-phrasing Mahatma Gandhi, she said that for the continent to progress, Africans have to be the change they want. The session concluded the summit.

In his closing remarks, the Dean of Students Mr Paul Ochieng lauded the students' body for organising the summit and challenged the participants to be change agents. The Student Council organized the event in conjunction with AIESEC – Strathmore, Dramsoc, Business Club (SBC), Marketing Society (SMS), MUN-Strathmore, the Spanish club, Community Outreach Programme, First Aid Club, SHREC and the Debate club.

THE SECRET TO TRUE TRANSFORMATION: **dying for others**

Strathmore Business School (SBS) held its first alumni re-union on Wednesday, 25th November with a plea to its alumni to help it put up its definitive building. The building will increase the School's classroom capacity from the current 120 to 800.

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excellent companies have a core ideology - mission and vision that go beyond making money.



Dr Franca Ovadje

The building which is expected to be completed in 2011 when Strathmore will mark its 50th anniversary is part of the University's Phase III of development. It will be the first Business School built in adherence to LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) Green Building Rating System, a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

The re-union was for all past students of SBS since its launch on 30th March 2005. In her welcoming address, Mrs Patricia Murugami, the Director of SBS's Executive Programs said that the school owed its sustenance to its alumni who share with their friends, family, and colleagues about their positive experiences at SBS.

Strathmore Golf Tournament

Alum Zeph Mbugua (Advanced Management Program, 2007) said that friends of Strathmore were organizing a golf tournament whose target was to raise Kshs50 million. He sought the help of SBS alumni who are marketers to help in the

organization of the tournament.

The key address of the re-union themed 'Living and leaving a legacy of transformation' was delivered by Dr Franca Ovadje, a visiting professor at SBS and a founding member of the faculty of Lagos Business School in Nigeria. Dr Ovadje said there was more to work than money, and urged businesses to have more than one bottom line.

She said life is about service and gave examples of icons of transformative leadership from the 19th and 20th century such as Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi who had done great things and changed the world because they had embraced the spirit of service.

Drawing from Jim Collins 1994 business classic 'Built to last', Dr Ovadje said that excellent companies have a core ideology - mission and vision that go beyond making money. She said other business bottom lines include employees, customers, suppliers, the community, and the owners.

"Beggars in Sierra Leone ask passersby: die a little for me. That phrase captures the essence of service because in serving we give ourselves. The beggars' plea sums up Gandhi's maxim that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others and Mother Teresa's observation: In this life, we cannot do great things, we can only do small things with great love," Dr Ovadje said.

To drive her point home that there is more to business management than shareholder value, Dr Ovadje quoted William George, former CEO of Medtronics and now a Management Practice professor at Harvard Business School. "The real flaw in the sole mission of maximizing shareholder value is the inability to motivate a large group of employees to exceptional performance."

FIT RESEARCH GROUP WINS \$15,000 GRANT

The ICT for Development research group in the Faculty of Information Technology has been awarded U\$15000 (Kshs1.125m) by the Internet Society Community Programme (ISOC). The grant is ad-

ditional support for an ongoing two-year research project started with funding from HP's Innovations in Education Grant 2009. The project titled 'Use of ICT in Enhancing Teaching and Curriculum delivery in marginalised Secondary Schools in Kenya' is running in five secondary schools - four of them are girls' only schools located in rural Kenya. See: www.strathmore.edu/hp



The project aims at developing digital content, improving IT infrastructure, enabling Internet access (including the local communities), mentoring secondary school students and supporting teachers in the delivery of the Computer Studies course offered as part of the official KCSE curriculum.

The grant has been awarded in recognition of the project's contribution in enabling open content access to underserved communities. This is consistent with ISOC's strategic priorities.

The Internet Society (ISOC) (www.isoc.org) is a nonprofit organisation founded in 1992

to provide leadership in Internet related standards, education, and policy.

The project is headed by Dr Joseph Sevilla and comprises a team made up by other FIT lecturers: Mr Patrick Shabaya, Mr Nicodemus Maingi, Mr Fanon Ananda, Mr Nelson Ochieng, Mr Emmanuel Kweyu as well as 20 undergraduate second year BBIT students. The team members' profiles are available here: <http://www.strathmore.edu/hp/the-research-team>

HP funded the project to the tune of U\$ 100,000 (in cash and equipment). HP awards the funds

annually in the EMEA region (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) to academic institutions that submit exemplary proposals on how to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning in schools.

Dr Sevilla, a Senior Lecturer and Researcher in FIT, is currently leading two active research groups focusing on use of ICT for Development. Some of the areas under this theme include: mobile applications development, eLearning, open source use and bio-informatics.

Isinya Girls High School in Kajjado district is one of the five schools where the project is running

SGC'S EXPERTS MEETING ON HEALTH



Dr Eric Aligula of KIPPRA (left) addressing the meeting. On his right is Mr David Mathuva, Dr Antoinette Kankindi the Director of SGC (Second Right), and Dr Tom Odhiambo (Right)

on to help improve the supply chain of health commodities. They agreed that a survey and review of the legal and policy framework governing the health sector is needed to better the health sector.

Experts at the meeting included Dr John Munyu, acting Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Medical Supplies Agency (KEMSA), Dr. D.S.K Ngugi, chairman of the Pharmaceutical Society of Kenya (PSK), Charles Kimani of MEDS, Alice Micheni of USAID, Cavin Opiyo of GTZ, Dr Othieno Nyanjom of KIPPRA and Richard Pendame from DFID.

Dr Eric Aligula of the Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research Analysis (KIPPRA) moderated the session. Dr Antoinette Kankindi, the Director of SGC; Prof David Sperling; and Dr Tom Odhiambo also attended the meeting.

By Ann Ndungu

An experts meeting was convened at the University on Thursday, December 10th to discuss recommendations made during a 2008 Health Workshop which tackled ways to mitigate risks in the supply chain for health commodities in the Kenya.

Opening the meeting, Vice-Chancellor Prof John Odhiambo said that the Strathmore Governance Centre (SGC) is not interested in drawing up indices of corrupt institutions in the country but in carrying out research that will be used by policy makers in the country during the decision making process.

The experts drew up major critical research themes on which SGC researchers will work

SGC Director meets Roderick Hills



Dr Antoinette Kankindi the Director of SGC in a meeting with Mr Roderick Hills, the Chairman and Co-Founder of the Hills Program on Governance at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in USA.

Dr Antoinette Kankindi, the Director of Strathmore Governance Centre (SGC) attended a planning meeting in the US to chart SGC's future with Mr Roderick Hills, the Chairman and Co-Founder of the Hills Program on Governance at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

Prof David Sperling, special advisor to the University's Vice Chancellor; and Mr Tom Pyle and Ms Adelina Kinuthia, both from US-based Strathmore University Foundation attended the meeting. They later had dinner with a number of experts from CSIS.

Guests at the dinner were informed about SGC's research plans and its expected contribution in the fields of institutional governance. SGC is in partnership with Hills Program on Governance

which seeks to promote good governance and to give support to governance initiatives across the private, public, and civic sectors.

One of SGC's major goals is how to address institutional sources of corruption in order to enhance transparency and accountability within and among institutions.

The Hills Program is working with seven governance centres in academic institutions in China, South Korea, the Philippines, Argentina Mexico, and Kenya. The centres affiliated to the Program advance good governance by conducting rigorous research and analysis and disseminating the results, facilitating sectoral and regional dialogue, and developing educational tools to improve governance.

“Money doesn’t come easily; it takes hard work, determination and a lot of patience to earn it,” says Rosemary Kibui, a Strathmore alumna entrepreneur who shared her story with Pauline Kuria

A survey done by the Institute of Economic Affairs in 2003 indicated that only 4.7% of urban youth in Kenya wanted to be farmers, and only 9.5% of the youth between 21 and 25 years wanted to start their own businesses. Either the trend has changed or Rosemary, a 2008 BBIT graduate is in a very select group of 21-25 year old Kenyans. 24 year

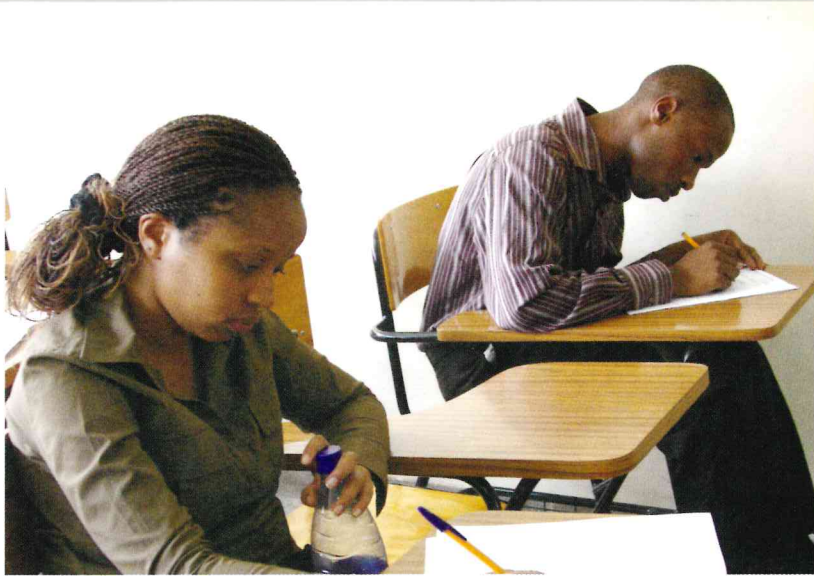
old Rosemary is growing mushrooms at the foot of Ngong Hills in the outskirts of Nairobi.

Has she always been passionate about farming? Hers is an emphatic NO! “I grew up in Nyeri and my mother would drag all my siblings to the shamba to tend to potatoes and coffee,” she recalls. But she hated farm work so much that she became allergic to it. “I used to grow lumps all over my skin. I was taken to see a doctor and he said it was an allergy. I think it was psychological. But it got me exempted from farm work and my siblings were jealous,” she said with a soft laugh.

Business is not for the faint-hearted



*Inset: Rosemary (left) explaining to Pauline how mushrooms grow
Main: In the clouds: Rosemary (holding camera) at her graduation ceremony
Next page: Rosemary doing a test in 2007*



So how did she end up farming? "I wanted to pursue Pharmacy after high school. But I missed the cut-off mark for the course by three points. I didn't have a plan B and when my Dad asked me what else I wanted to do, I told him I didn't know. He pulled out two brochures from Strathmore University one for Bachelor of Commerce (BCOM) and one for BBIT (Bachelor of Business Information Technology) the only degrees offered at Strathmore then and asked me to choose between the two. I went through the courses as outlined in the brochure and settled for BBIT. But by end of second year, I knew IT was not for me," said the alumna of Thika's Mary Hill Girls High School.

But she slogged on and graduated in 2008 with a First Class. The idea of growing mushrooms came from a friend who had a brother who was in the business. "My partner and I were always complaining about our jobs. We were very disillusioned and wanted to move on. So this friend told us her brother was growing mushrooms and doing well. We went to see him and he explained to us the intricacies of the business and we were sold," she explained.

How is the business getting on?

"It is tough. Mushroom growing is a knowledge intensive business. The learning curve has been long and steep. Unlike a job where you are actually paid as you learn the ropes, there is no such luxury in business. First, we had to contend with an unscrupulous character who offered to train us but misled us. This was a huge setback as we had to start learning all over again," Rosemary related.

"Then we are a start up and no bank is willing to bet its money on us. Not even KWFT (Kenya Women Finance Trust). KWFT lends to women groups but not to a group of two. So we don't qualify," she said.

"But we were heartened that Chora Bizna, the countrywide business planning competition organized by the Ministry of Youth ranked us second runners up countrywide. The fact that some judges seating somewhere determined our idea was worth something was uplifting. We were also awarded some cash which we ploughed into the business," Rosemary enthused.

What keeps her going?

"The freedom of being my own boss! It is very demanding but also very

rewarding when you are your own boss because you know what you invest is what you get. The sheer challenge of starting something from scratch and seeing it grow is also exhilarating. Even if this does not work, I will try something else. Failure is not an option," she says revealing for

a moment the steel beneath the velvet glove.

The photographer with me chides her that maybe she got the farming bug from her mum. She mulls over this for a moment and agrees that she is taking after a mum in very cunning ways. "My mum is a hustler. We tease her that the only business she hasn't been in is funeral homes!" Rosemary says with a deep laugh.

The Future

"The business plans to start training sessions for farmers this year. There is a lot of unethical behavior in the business and we want to do something about it. We will start training people in 2010 about mushroom growing. We have prepared two rooms for this," she revealed.

Rosemary has become very proficient in the business. She explained that it takes about three months from the planting to harvesting. Since she grows her mushrooms organically, she uses minimum chemicals. Instead, the rooms where they grow are sanitized. "They have to be very clean. We keep flying insects out by using nets for example," she said.

How was life at Strathmore?

"Well, I made good friends. I also learnt the virtue of humility and patience. This was especially when dealing with the guards. I learnt not to get angry very fast and for me that was a good thing which I think has helped me in my day to day life," she said.

A word of advice to Strathmore graduates who aspire to be entrepreneurs. "Money doesn't come easily. It's through hard work, determination and of course focus. Patience is an important aspect in entrepreneurship because your hard work takes long to payoff." She said.

Rosemary is a member of Strathmore Alumni Entrepreneurs Club (SAEC). SAEC will be launched on 27th February 2010. She says she was impressed by the number of SU graduates who showed up at the entrepreneurs' reunion held in July 2009. She also says she would be happy to give talks on entrepreneurship to Strathmore students if invited to do so.

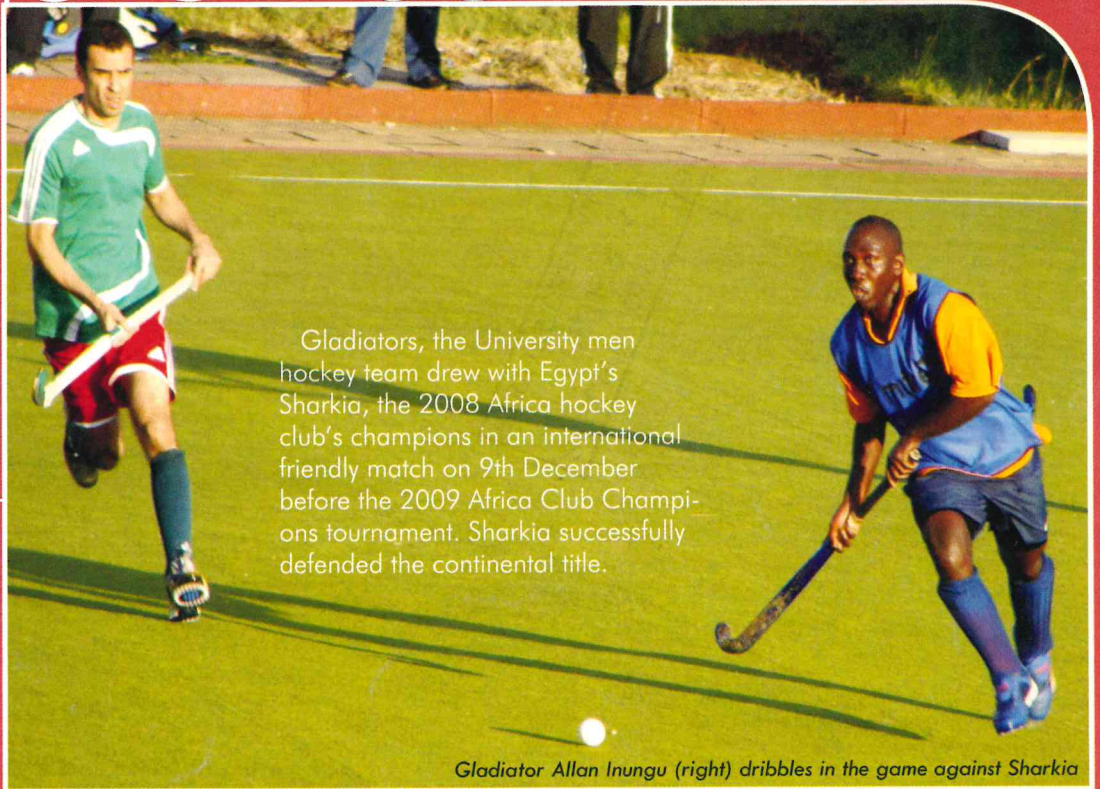
Last word

Rosemary is very grateful to her parents for believing in her and supporting her business. "My parents paid for my degree. The easy thing for them to do would be to ask me to look for a job. But they have been very supportive and have helped me establish the business. I am also pursuing a master's degree in Finance at USIU and my parents are paying the fees for me," she said.

Rosemary can be reached via email: rozekibui@googlemail.com

Sports

Gladiators draw against Africa hockey champions



Gladiators, the University men hockey team drew with Egypt's Sharkia, the 2008 Africa hockey club's champions in an international friendly match on 9th December before the 2009 Africa Club Championships tournament. Sharkia successfully defended the continental title.

Gladiator Allan Inungu (right) dribbles in the game against Sharkia

Strath FC the Jamhuri Cup champions

Strath FC beat Moyas FC 2-1 to lift the coveted Jamhuri Day Cup. The match played after the Jamhuri Day celebrations at Nyayo Stadium on 12th December saw both teams fielding their best 11.

Moyas drew first blood when they scored from a set piece in the 15th minute to lead the game. Strath FC stepped up their game and in 20th minute, Kevin Omondi scored after some a good play by Michael Owiti in the left wing.

Both teams had fair chances of scoring but none converted until the 45th minute

when Strath FC's striker John Omoit was fouled outside the box and the referee awarded a free kick. Strath FC's best free kick taker James Kombo didn't waste the chance. He curved the ball above the wall to score and put his team ahead at the break.

The score remained at 2-1 until the end. This year's trophy was brand new after AFC Leopards won the old one and thus took it away for keeps. "Football Kenya (FK) determines who plays in this tournament and normally they are the best teams in the national leagues i.e. the Nationwide and Premier league or teams that have been promoted to a higher tier league like what happened in the case of Moyas FC. SU was selected on the basis of the performance in the FK cup," said Mr Isaac Mwangi, the University's Sports Officer.

Jamhuri Cup winners in the last five years

- 2009- Strath FC
- 2008- AFC Leopards
- 2007- AFC Leopards
- 2006- AFC Leopards
- 2005- Gor Mahia

Captain John Omoit
receives the Jamhuri
Cup from a Ministry of
Sports official

