Dedan Kimathi University of Technology Newsletter

Better Life Through Technology

March 2020 Newsletter

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Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the Kenya Film Commission

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kenya Film Commission (KFC) on 4th March 2020. This was enhanced after the previous discussions to start a digital media center to reduce the unemployment gaps among the youth through the use of technology by coming up with digital media products such as films. The partnership aims to provide a platform where young people and interested parties in creative art can use technology in film making and participate in the production of digital media products that can be marketed widely. It is an industry that can provide employment to a lot of young people and where you can achieve a lot with very little investment. It is prudent to develop the capacity of those going to use the facilities and therefore an important aspect to scale the Human resource and get more people involved in the project.



Chia Stakeholder Workshop

In Kenya demand for functional food with multiple health benefits has increased with increasing public health awareness worldwide. Chia (Salvia hispanica L.) is an exotic plant in Kenya where the effects of new growing environments and agronomical treatments on seed quality has is being exploited. It has a promising future for food security, improved nutrition and health. On 9th March 2020, we held a Chia Stakeholder Workshop in order to enlighten farmers on this major crop. Some of the key ideas the stakeholders were educated on were; In order to have sustainable businesses along the Chia Value Chain, Stake holders ought to:

1. Have more information exchange along the value chain
2. More products developed for both Humans and Animals to increase consumption
3. Reliable Certified Seeds availability
4. Common Quality Standards Developed

With more increased awareness of Chia Seed Consumption for both Human and Animals: market Segmentation is taking shape with more aggression on Animal Feed Supplements, different recipes have opened up consumption of Chia Seeds, with improved and reliable technologies, Chia Seed Oil may soon overtake Olive oil consumption, indirect nutritional benefits of Chia Seeds wil l soon be felt through consumption of milk and meat of animals fed on Chia based products.



March Spotlight Story

foundation to start her own software company here in the country; she is working on a property management software for a Kenyan company called Leo-Realtors and looking to deploy it as a multi-tenant software with an expectation to sell it to a lot more companies. As if this is not enough, Alice has a full – time employer; a company called Griffin Solutions based in Atlanta Georgia which she is working for remotely. lice has written a variety of software , some of which she has signed Non – Disclosure Agreements but others include: Teaching Software, Management Software and a Content Management Software. Among these, she says that what she considers her greatest achievement is the teaching software; a Digital Learning Object (DLO) software being used by Computer Science students here at the University to help them learn Relational Algebra and Relational Databases. This explains why she is inspired by the feeling of being a problem solver; "There is no better feeling than that of seeing the smiles I put on people's faces when I solve their problems" – she says. In the words of Mr. Michael Kagiri, her mentor and lecturer in the School of Computer Science and Information Technology, "the DLO software has simplified greatly relational algebra concepts to students and changed the students' perception towards relational algebra which is the foundation of SQL(Structured Query Language).I highly recommend anyone learning the relational algebra to use the tool." Alice also writes articles on a platform called medium every fortnight to help beginners learn in an easier way. Alice is set to graduate this April and we wish her all the best as she continues to take on the world of software development and empower, inspire many to follow their dreams and do the best they can at it. We also continue to appreciate and build the spirit of fraternity here at DeKUT that helps us grow each other in order to, together, be a force to reckon with in changing the world.



Corona Virus Pandemic

On 13th March 2020, Kenya confirmed the first case of COVID_19. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the disease a global pandemic with almost 125,000 infections being reported from 118 countries. The Ministry of Health (MoH) encouraged Kenyans to remain vigilant as the risk is still high.

MoH advised Kenyans to continue taking precautionary measures listed below:
- Maintain basic hand and respiratory hygiene, and safe food practices.
- Avoid close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections.
- Maintain social distancing.



Initiatives the University undertook to cub COVID-19

Since the emergence of the Corona virus pandemic in the country, we decided to look into several initiatives to provide local solutions to the local problems in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. Striving to provide research and capacity development in the country, the University started creating and producing items such as; hand sanitizers, hazmat suit, face masks and ventilators.

Our experts in the Chemistry department took to the labs and produced a powerful hand sanitizer. After the certification by the Kenya Bureau of Standards, the University joined other local manufacturers in producing locally made sanitizers hence curbing the challenge that resulted to the sudden rise in shelf prices of hand sanitizers supplied by other commercial industries.

As a way of boosting the availability and affordability of the face masks to every common citizen, the University under the Fashion and Design department in the Institute of Technical and Professional Studies (ITPS) developed reusable face masks.

This came at a time when the government requested that anyone using the Public transport to put on a mask. The university also under the Fashion and Design department in the Institute of Technical and Professional Studies (ITPS), developed a protective equipment (Hazmat suit).

This was developed in response to the rising concern about the medical personnel, who are at the frontline of fighting the Corona virus pandemic. The equipment was designed to protect the medics from contamination while handling patients and unlike most of other hazmat suits from other manufacturers; the suit is affordable and reusable.

The School of Engineering and Nursing also came up with a ventilator prototype as a mitigation method of the Corona virus pandemic. This is to avert a situation where our health care system will be overwhelmed by the demand for ventilators should we get high scale of infections as being witnessed in countries such as Italy and Spain.







Meeting with the Regional Commissioner

On 26th March 2020, the Vice Chancellor held a meeting with the Regional Commissioner to brief him on the University's efforts towards the fight against the corona virus pandemic as well as the University's implementation of the prevention guidelines for students and staff.



The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE)

The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) Kenya National Committee held a meeting on Friday, 13th March, 2020 at the University. The Kenya National Committee is made up of four (4) Universities namely: Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Muranga University and Egerton University.

Since inception, the National Committee has facilitated exchange of over two hundred (200) Kenyan students in different countries all over the world. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss on ways of enhancing the number of students qualifying for exchange to and from Kenya, strengthening of the National Committee and also to increase the number of Universities in Kenya that are participating in exchange through the IAESTE programme.

