



SMU

in Stride

in Stride

Quarterly News Letter Vol.19 Issue No.37 October, 2016

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Editorial

Greetings and a warm welcome to our October, 2016 Issue of SMU in Stride Newsletter. This Newsletter is a joint effort of SMU students and staff members whose activities have covered the pages as news worthy and eventful. As has been the case before, the Newsletter comprises of four sections.

The first section is devoted to news/events related with teaching and learning, among which, the three-day training workshop on University-Industry Linkages, Public Lecture on Conflict Resolution, and various trainings and panel discussions, could be cited. The major news in the Research and Development section include St. Mary's participation at the first Higher Education Forum for Africa, Asia and Latin America (HEFAALA) Conference, which was held in Durban, South Africa, and the 8th International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (KQAHEA), which was held in Windhoek, Namibia; SMU's international and national events, 14th International Conference, 10th Student Research Forum, 8th Multidisciplinary Seminar, the 5th CoDL Seminar, among others.

The key events appearing in the Partnership, Outreach and Community Service Section of the Newsletter are: the MoU signed between St. Mary's and Almaahad Almutagadem Specialized Computer Training Center (AASCTC) based in Sudan; the training hosted by St. Mary's University and conducted by Maastricht School of Management for trainees from the University of Hargeissa in Somaliland and St. Mary's University; donation at Mary Joy Development Association, Let Love Leads Campaign, and handover of Litter Bins.

In the Views Section of the Newsletter appears the success stories of the two Medal and Trophy winners at 2008 E.C. Undergraduate Students' Graduation Ceremony. The News Section related to administrative matters presents capacity building trainings and other provisions to the University staff. In the Obituary Section, we remember one of our colleagues, who passed away recently.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue and also appreciate your usual support.

International Relations and Communication Office

NEWS AND EVENTS

Teaching and Learning

Training on Life Skills Planning

St. Mary's University, in collaboration with DKT-Ethiopia, successfully conducted half-day training on "Life Planning Skills" on the morning of April 26, 2016. As various offices have included HIV/AIDS and Gender-related activities within their annual action plans, by coordinating with SMU's Human Resource Management (HRM) Office, 35 administrative staff from different offices from all three campuses were invited to participate in the training. The training was provided by Ato Shimeelis Gebru from DKT, who brought into focus various Attitudinal, SRH, Gender and Life Skills issues. Participants eagerly listened to the presentations and participated in the discussions. At the session, Tezeta Addis, Head of Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (GHAPCO), SMU, introduced the training and the trainer, urged participants to have free and frank discussions and facilitated some of the discussions.

development endeavors. GHAPCO, with the assured commitment from DKT, has planned and is looking forward to conduct similar training for various segments of the University's community in the near future.



Most of the participants reported that they enjoyed the training and the way in which the issues were presented. They also indicated that the life skills and life planning strategies presented were very practical for them to implement in their real life. SMU-GHAPCO would like to extend its gratitude to DKT, particularly Ato Shimelis, for exhibiting exceptional goodwill to support the office's training and human resource

Exhibition and Bazaar at SMU



The Business Faculty, together with the Faculty of Informatics, SMU, organized an exhibition and bazaar at the Undergraduate Campus located at Mexico Square from May 9 to 14, 2016. Among the exhibits were software developed by SMU's former students

who have become self-employed and demonstrated their entrepreneurial skills by engaging in developing software solutions to government and private entities. As part of the event, students of Tourism and Hospitality Management exhibited tourist attraction sites of Ethiopia and traditional coffee ceremony.



Marketing Management students, on the other hand, actively engaged in promoting and selling local products toward raising funds. The funds raised through the bazaar were to be delivered to charities that are in dire need of financial assistance. In the past, students of Marketing Department organized bazaar on many occasions and gave the proceeds to charities and the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.



Panel on Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

St. Mary's University's Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (GHAPCO-SMU),

in collaboration with Setaweeet Feminist Network, conducted a panel discussion on Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship on May 12, 2016. The panel was organized for the Department of Common Courses and 37 students and instructors participated in the panel. The panel was started off with a brief introduction by Tekalign Zewdie, Head, Department of Common Courses. Following the introduction, Tezeta Addis, Head, GHAPCO, SMU and a moderator for the day, gave a short overview of human rights and women's rights, then introduced and invited the panelist, Lensa Mekonen, member of Setaweeet and entrepreneur, to the floor.



Lensa's presentation was well received. She initially talked about what feminism is, what women empowerment is and various issues that promote and affect it. She did this by weaving her personal experiences with relevant facts, making for an interesting and engaging presentation.

The presentation ended with a question and answer session, where numerous questions raised by the participants were responded to by both the panelist and the moderator. The students and the staff suggested that similar forums should be organized in the future to expound on the lessons learned during the panel. GHAPCO-SMU would like to thank the Association of Women in Business (AWiB), Setaweeet Feminist Network and Instructor Abas Ahmed for their support in organizing the panel.

Training on Life Planning

As part of its training plans, St. Mary's Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office, in collaboration with DKT-Ethiopia, conducted its first series of trainings on "Life Planning for A Better SRH" on May 17, 2016. The training was given to class representatives of freshman (2008E.C.) students. The half-day training was opened by Tezeta Addis, Head of GHAPCO-SMU with a brief introduction on the day's topics and the need for open and free discus-

sions so that all present will benefit from the experience. This was followed by various topics presented by Shimelis Gebru of DKT. The training was very informative, lively and interactive.



At the end of the training, the students unanimously agreed that it is very important to continue the dialogue and to get additional trainings on other relevant issues. They agreed to set a tentative date for the next training which will be planned for the Kiremt semester. Participants have volunteered to share their experiences of the training with their classmates and invite them to attend the next session.

Training Workshop on U-I Linkage



A three-day Training Workshop on University-Industry Linkages for African Universities organized by the Association of African Universities (AAU), in collaboration with St. Mary's University (SMU), was held from May 24-26, 2016. The training workshop, which largely targeted participants in leadership positions in universities, drawn from seven

countries in Africa, including Ethiopia, covered topics like Technology Uptake, Policy Environment, University Engagement with Industry, Intellectual Property Rights and Entrepreneurship. More than 20 university leaders and participants from the industry took part in the training workshop.



Opening remarks at the training workshop were made by H.E. Prof. Afework Kassu, State Minister of Science and Technology, FDRE, and key note speeches were delivered by Wondwosen Tamrat (Assoc. Prof), President and Founder of SMU, and Paul Omaji (Prof.), Vice Chancellor Emeritus, representing Etienne Ehile (Prof.), Secretary General of the AAU.

Panel on ICT

As part of its objective of enhancing the quality of teaching and student experience, the Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office, had planned to hold a panel on information processing and/or critical thinking. Following discussions with the Faculty of ICT-SMU, the topic "ICT – Past, Present and Future Trends" was agreed upon. Following this, GHAPCO selected organizations and speakers to present on the occasion conducted on May 26, 2016. The attendants were 3rd year ICT students and presenters were from iceaddis- a hub and incubator and a private ICT entrepreneur from addisinsight. Florian Manderscheid represented iceaddis and talked about how start-ups could get involved and the various provisions they might expect and some of the past and present start-ups that iceaddis was involved with. The second presenter was Abel Asrat, who took his idea to iceaddis five years ago and now runs his own ICT business, addisinsight. He discussed about his school days, how he got involved in ICT, the need for collaboration and how to run one's own business, with a lot of humorous undertones. Depending on student feedback, GHAPCO showed

its willingness to organize a follow up session with other organizations. Upon completion of the panel discussion, GHAPCO-SMU extended its heartfelt gratitude to both Florian and Abel for their wonderful presentations and making themselves available despite their busy schedules.

Panel Discussion on E-Banking

The Department of Accounting conducted a panel discussion on E-banking practices in Ethiopia on May 26, 2016 targeting 2nd year Accounting students. The Panel discussion was organized to equip the students with practical knowledge of E-banking. In the panel discussion, the resource person, Ato Megbaru Meseker, who is a Customer Service Manager of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Gofa Branch, briefly discussed the E-banking practices in Ethiopia. The department organizes periodic panel discussion on diverse topics of student interest during the academic year.



Field visit to Cave at Debre Birhan

The Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management organized a day excursion on May 29, 2016 to a cave site around Debre Birhan for Second and Third year regular students. The field visit was intended to help students appreciate the natural and cultural tourism resources of the country, out of which they could be able to promote and create job opportunities in the near future.



Public Lecture on Conflict Resolution

St. Mary's University, in collaboration with the US Embassy, organized a public lecture on Conflict Resolution on May 31, 2016. Although presented in generic terms, the public lecture, which took place at the Main Campus, SMU, made references to numerous instances of conflict in the African continent. During the discussion, participants raised questions of interest, which focused on the causes of conflicts and mechanisms of their resolutions. The resource person was Terrence Lyons, PhD, Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution at the School of Conflict Analysis and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University, USA, and director of the doctoral program.



Asked about the role of higher education institutions in conflict resolution, the resource person emphasized the importance of education in solving conflicts and alluded to experiences in American schools, where student organizations were used to resolve conflicts among themselves. In the real world, however, he insinuated, the educated could be part of the causes of conflict in some instances. While the participants were academic staff members of SMU, Mr. Learned Dees, the Cultural Affairs Officer of the US Embassy, was also present on the occasion.

Graduation Ceremony Held



St. Mary's University graduated a total of 1295 students in the undergraduate and graduate programs on July 16, 2016. Committing itself to creating access to the disadvantaged and by virtue of having a conducive learning environment, the University is pleased to see its female graduates make for 66% of the 922 graduates in its diverse undergraduate programs. In the Masters programs, females' share was 33% of the total 373 graduates. The ceremony started with the congratulatory remarks made by Associate Professor Wondwosen Tamrat, Founder and President of the University.





The graduation ceremony took place at the National Theatre in Addis Ababa in the presence of the Guest of Honor, H.E. Professor Afework Kassu, State Minister of Science and Technology, FDRE, who made inspirational speech revealing his own life experiences that enabled him attain success in his career.



Research and Development

14th International Conference on PHE in Africa



The 14th International Conference on Private Higher Education in Africa took place at the African Union Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from July 12 to 13, 2016. The Conference was organized by St. Mary's University, African Union, Association of African Universities, International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IIC-BA-UNESCO), IGAD and the Ethiopian Ministry of Education.

The conference was opened by H.E. Shiferaw Shigute, Minister of Education, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, after welcoming statements were delivered by the organizing team, which includes Associate Professor Wondwosen Tamrat, Founder and President, St. Mary's University; Dr. Beatrice Njenga, Acting Director, Human Resources, Science and Technology Department of the African Union Com-

mission, Professor Etienne Ehile, Secretary General, AAU; Dr Yomiko Yokozeki, Director, International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA-UNESCO)



Keynote remarks were given by Prof. Olugemiro Jegede, the immediate past Secretary General of the AAU, and Prof. Damtew Teferra, Founding Director, International Network for Higher Education in Africa, University of KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. Following the remarks, high-table panelists took up the key issues pertinent to private higher education. Chaired by Prof. Mba of the AAU, the panelists included H.E. Dr. Kaba Urgessa, State Minister, FDRE; Dr. Beatrice Njenga, Acting Director, HRST, AUC; Prof. Etienne Ehile, Secretary General, AAU; Mr. Keith Curtis, Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs, US Mission to the AU; Dr. Yomiko Yokozeki, Director, IICBA-UNESCO; and Assoc. Prof. Wondwosen Tamrat, Founder and President, St. Mary's University.

The panelists expounded that private higher education institutions in Africa have a significant role to play in the Sustainable Development Goals. To that end, they stated that service providers in the sector would get the support of regulatory bodies and other stakeholders in the continent in line with the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016), the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM), and the national education strategies in the respective African countries. In the two-day event, 24 papers were presented and a declaration issued towards making stakeholders committed to meeting the SDGs bringing the private sector on board.

The 10th Student Research Forum



The 10th Annual National Student Research Forum was held on July 28 and 29, 2016. The two-day event organized and sponsored by St. Mary's University, witnessed paper presenters drawn from nine universities; two private and seven public. The forum was believed to have a positive impact on successive graduates toward producing academically sound and socially meaningful papers. The more than 30 papers presented covered such areas as Agriculture, Health, Social Science, Engineering and Computer Science. The paper presenters came from Addis Ababa University, Arba Minch University, Assosa University, Debre Birhan University, Debre Markos University, St. Mary's University, Unity University, Wello University, and Wollega University.

Participants at the event were impressed by what was presented and did not hide their feelings that some of the papers could make a Master's Thesis considering the tools they employed. Not prevented by the rainy morning at the opening ceremony on the 28th of July, students, invited guests, staff and journalists congregated on campus to listen to the paper presenters and actively participate in the discussions.





Welcoming speech was made by Associate Professor Wondwosen Tamrat, Founder and President of St. Mary's University, and opening remarks were delivered by Dr. Temechegn Ingida, representing Dr. Yomiko Yokozeki, Director, International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA-UNESCO).

The Research and Knowledge Management Office, SMU, is responsible for handling the huge task of carrying out the organization of institutional conferences by soliciting papers and speakers, managing matters at the event, and handling the editorial work of the proceedings.





RaKMO Took Part in a Workshop

RaKMO took part in a half-day workshop organized by the Ethiopian Academy of Science (EAS) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), at Ghion Hotel, on 12 August, 2016. The purpose of the Workshop was to review the report on the “Assessment of the Scientific and Technological Human Resource Demand and Supply in the Agricultural and Health Sectors in Ethiopia”. The study was commissioned by EAS and MoST and carried out by a team of senior professionals in the respective sector.

The team members presented the following preliminary reports: 1. Study Objectives, Scope, Study Framework, Approach and Methodology & Supply and Demand Side Findings, Implications of Findings for the Agricultural Sector, both by Prof. Tegegne G/Egziabher 2. Supply and Demand Side Findings, Implications of Findings for the Health Sector, by Prof. Damen Hailemariam; and 3. Supply and Demand Forecasts and Projects, by Dr. Atlaw Alemu.

These were followed by discussions whereby a number of pertinent comments, questions and suggestions were forwarded. About 50 experts, drawn from different government, non-governmental organizations and a few higher education institutions, attended the Workshop. SMU was the only one invited and represented from the private higher education sector. RaKMO will make follow up communication to receive the final report and also to establish a working relation with the Ethiopian Academy of Science.

Multi-disciplinary Seminar Held



The 8th Multi-disciplinary Seminar, organized by the Research and Knowledge Management Office, SMU, was held on August 18, 2016. The Seminar, which witnessed 17 scholarly papers from diverse disciplines and cross-cutting themes, had paper presenters drawn from universities, a private bank and a civil service entity. The papers covered issues related to Health, Education, Banking & Finance, Marketing and Gender.

Among the topics that generated heated debate were sexual harassment in higher education institutions; trends and impacts of begging; indigenizing the education system; and the attitudinal challenges of using local languages as medium of instruction in schools.

Although the harassment-focused paper was done in Ambo University, it had substantial amount of data that cover a number of universities surveyed by earlier researchers. In one public university, more than 70% of female students have reportedly been harassed. The alleged perpetrators were students, academic and administrative staff members. Staggering figures of unwanted pregnancy were also indicated in the research. Considering what was presented in the paper, the immensity of the problem defies common sense; for an academic institution could have been a bastion of hope for women. The questions raised by participants were diverse. Some of them include whether there was a gender office that would handle such matters; if harassment policy was in place; to what extent alleged perpetrators were held to account.

At the Seminar, paper presenters came from Addis Ababa University, Ambo University, Assosa University, Debre Markos University, Haramaya University, Mekelle University and Mettu University. Of course, St. Mary's too had several paper presenters. Opening remarks at the Seminar were given by Ato Tedla Haile, SMU's Executive V/President and closing statements were made by Dr. Misganaw Solomon, the Academic V/President.



Participation at the HEFAALA Conference in South Africa

The first Higher Education Forum for Africa, Asia and Latin America (HEFAALA) conference was held in Durban, South Africa, from August 20-24, 2016. The event also heralded the establishment of a Higher Education Forum for the Global South.

The conference was held under the general theme, "Continental Realities, International Imperatives." The issues deliberated mainly focused on key trends of higher education in the south and their implications. 60 delegates drawn from 18 nations in Africa, Latin America and Asia participated in the conference. St. Mary's was represented by its President, Wondwosen Tamrat (Assoc. Prof.), who was chosen as a panelist on two sessions.

The founder of HEFAALA is Professor Damtew Tefera who is currently heading the Higher Education Training and Development at the University of KwaZulu Natal and is a founding director of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa.

National Conference on Quality Enhancement Network

A conference, which focused on setting up and promoting a network for higher education quality enhancement was held on 2-3 September 2016 in Addis Ababa at Tegen Hotel. The conference was organized by the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), as part of its Sustainable Training and Education Program (STEP). The outcome of the conference is expected to be the establishment of the Ethiopian Higher Education Quality Enhancement Network (EHEQEN).

All public and private universities presidents and quality assurance directors were invited to the network launching conference. Participants were welcomed by Dr. Axel K., Country Director, GIZ Ethiopia and Dr. Christiane, G., Program Director, GIZ/STEP. The conference was opened by the State Minister for Higher Education, His Excellency Dr. Kaba Urgessa.

On Day one, key note addresses were given by Professor Zinabu and Professor Martin H., dealing on Challenges to the Quality of Education in Ethiopian Universities and Quality Enhancement: Anti-fragility, Signals, and Noise respectively. Subsequent to the keynotes, six papers focusing on quality were presented in breakout sessions. Assoc. Professor Wondwosen Tamirat presented a paper focusing on Promoting Insti-

tutional Quality Culture in Higher Education Institutions. His presentation took the form of workshop and was highly interactive.

On Day two, the focus was on the draft Network Constitution where participants had group discussions and toward providing feedback, set the way forward and formulate the conference decisions.

Finally, a panel discussion was conducted on Challenges of Developing Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Ethiopia: Questions and Some Possible Approaches. The panelists were Professor Henson, Professor Elmer, Dr. Vroeijntisn, Professor Zinabu and Dr. Mulu.

Participation at the 8th International Conference on Quality Assurance in Africa

The 8th International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (KQAHEA) was held in Windhoek, Namibia from September 20-23, 2016. St. Mary's was represented by its President Wondwosen Tamrat (Assoc. Prof.) who also was chosen as a panelist on a session dedicated to vice chancellors of African Universities. The Conference was jointly organized by the Association of African Universities, European Union, and National Council for Higher Education of Namibia and other partners. It is a regular annual event and focuses on various themes under the broad framework of quality assurance in higher education. This year's theme was "Multi-dimensions of Innovation in Higher Education in Africa: Towards Enhancing Quality and Accelerating Regional Harmonization". A total of 300 delegates attended the conference.

Partnership, Outreach And Community Services

Donation to Mary Joy Development Association

The Student Support Services Office of St. Mary's University, in collaboration with Heart for Others group members, visited Mary Joy Development Asso-

ciation in line with Easter Holidays Celebration. The students witnessed that the visit inspired them to involve in volunteering activities held within the Association premises, and to participate in further humanitarian endeavors.



SMU Participation at SPM II Drafting Session

The HEIs Partnership Sub-Forum Against HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia organised an Strategic Planning and Management (SPM) II drafting session, one and a half-day refresher training on HIV mainstreaming and drafting of the 2009 E.C HEIs HAPCO annual plan in Adama from May 30-June 3, 2016.

Fifteen public and private HEIs were invited for the SPM II drafting session of which SMU was the only one representing private institutions. This, group was responsible for drafting the sub-forum's strate-

gic plan for the next five years based on the national HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan, 2015-2020 in an Investment Case Approach and other relevant documents. Following this, a one and half-day refresher training on HIV mainstreaming was conducted by HAPCO. The participants included representatives from an additional 15 HEIs. The session ended with a half-day planning session of the 2009 E.C. HEI-HAPCO annual plan. SMU was represented by Tezeta Addis, Head of GHAPCO-SMU.

Friendly Football Match

SMU's Female Students Football Team had a friendly football match with Athletes in Action, a Female Students Football team from Canada, on June 3, 2016. Leading the SMU's Female Students Football team was Abebe Zenebe, President of the team, while the guest team was represented by its coach, Kate Kristoffel.



SMU's President Wondwosen Tamrat (Assoc. Professor) and Business and Administration's Vice President, Ato Desalegn Berie, attended the match. Following the match, a City Tour was arranged for the guest team. The news of the match was transmitted through most of the local FM Radio Stations.

MoE-PHEIs Joint Meeting

The Ministry of Education held a meeting with Private Higher Education Institutions' leaders on June 23, 2016 in its premises. The meeting, which took place for the second time this academic year, was organized as per the decision made by the two parties in previous deliberations, said Dr Zerihun, Director, Academic and Research Directorate, MoE.

Findings of supervision assessments conducted at 10 private higher education institutions were presented by Ato Tihitnaw Amare, Supervision and Support Expert at the Ministry. The report indicated both strengths and weaknesses observed. Among the weaknesses identified were poor recording of student data, not responding to the Ministry's request for student data, lack of plan on human resource development, failure to use criteria-referenced grading, very low engagement in and lack of plan for community services, and failure to consider research as one of the responsibilities of a HEI. Following this presentation, Dr Zerihun, who chaired the session invited participants to comment on the presentation and air their concerns. Accordingly, some participants reflected on their observations and concerns to

which the expert, the Director, HERQA's Director General and Deputy Director General and Accreditation Head of HERQA responded. All those who spoke appreciated the Ministry for carrying out the meeting.

Dr Zerihun urged participants to take note of three concerns of the Ministry: 1) Institutions not only fail to send student data to the Ministry upon request but they also do not produce genuine student data, 2) There are institutions which admit candidates who have scores below the cut-of-point set by the Ministry; and 3) some institutions admit candidates from the TVET program without certificate of competence. He then brought the session to an end with the following remarks.

1. All institutions should send reports to the Ministry on time.
2. No institution should admit candidates from TVET programs unless they produce certificate of competence.
3. No institution should admit candidates who do not meet the minimum cut-of-point set by the Ministry.

To the dismay of the Ministry, only about one fifth of the PHEIs were in attendance at this meeting. SMU was represented by the Director for Center for Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance (CEIQA) and the AVP.

Let Love Leads Campaign

The Student Support Services Office organized Let Love Leads 2008 Campaign to promote the culture of volunteerism among students of St. Mary's University. The campaign was held on July 1, 2016 at Gergesenon Home of the Elderly and Mentally Disabled People's Center. Gergesenon provides services for 320 mentally and physically challenged individuals whose age group ranges from 6 to 99.

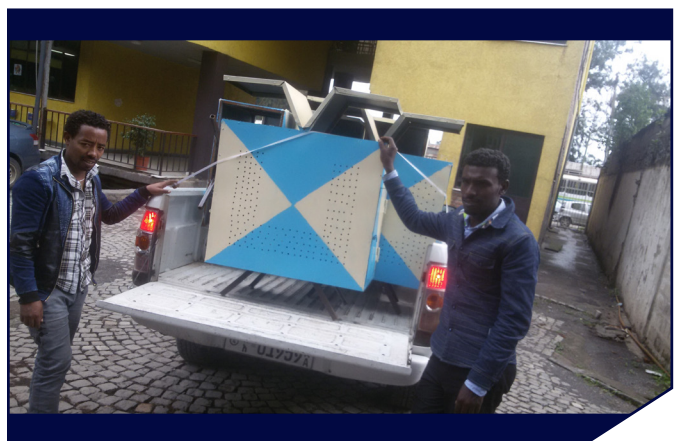


According to the information gathered from a social worker and from our own observation, the center does not have any permanent source of income and has multiple problems to provide shelter, medical facilities, food items and human resource as needed. The donations were collected from the SSSO, the Charity Club, graduate students, and the Department of Basic Courses and were duly donated to all age groups found at the center.

Handover of Litter Bins Conducted



St. Mary's University (SMU) has been delivering community services to its surrounding communities. In the same manner this year, in response to the request by Lideta Sub city, Woreda 10 Administration Office, St. Mary's University produced 5 litter bins that cost 14,000.00 birr. The International Relations and Communications Office of SMU handed over the litter bins to the Wereda 10 Office through its representative, Ato Achalu Mitafa, Head, Cleaning Administration, on July 14, 2016. During the hand over, Ato Achalu thanked SMU for the litter bins and appreciated the supports and services SMU has been delivering to the Sub city and the Wereda(district) to date.



Training on Entrepreneurship

St. Mary's University hosted a training conducted by Maastricht School of Management from August 5 to 8, 2016. The training titled Pragmatic Entrepreneurship and Business Start Up had trainees, largely in teaching positions, drawn from the University of Hargeissa in Somaliland and St. Mary's University. The training, funded by NUFFIC, the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, was a follow up to the one given to the same group of trainees in March, 2016 on Enterprising Teaching Methods.



Eleven of the trainees were from the University of Hargeissa and four from the host institution. St. Mary's University has been working with local and international institutions toward fulfilling its mission since the early years of its formative growth.



A Workshop on US Universities

A workshop sponsored by the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the Embassy of the United States of America, in collaboration with Addis Ababa University, was held here in Addis Ababa on August 16 and 17, 2016. The workshop, whose participants were largely drawn from the top management of close to thirty public and three private universities had series of experience sharing sessions with their counterparts who came from US universities. While the first-day sessions dwelt on sharing experiences from US universities, the second day was devoted to discussions confined to Ethiopian universities.

Among the points highlighted by speakers from the US on DAY ONE, the following were noteworthy:

- Partnerships can become instruments of change; Perspectives on initiating, supporting and sustaining linkages;
- US university with reference to: lessons learned in optimizing university partnership: successes and failures;
- Some thoughts on involving gender roles in the U.S. and Ethiopia;
- Tools and models to better manage successful university partnerships with reference to: moving from mentorship to partnership;
- Different approaches to initiating, facilitating and maintaining transformational partnership around strategic interests to both sides;
- Challenges to linkages between U.S. and African universities and how to overcome them with reference to: effective and timely communication to maintain partnership; partnership with African universities require patience and perseverance.

On the 17th of August, delegates from the U.S. traveled in two groups to Mekelle University in the North and Hawassa, Dilla and Arbaminch Universities in the South; whereas home university leaders continued their discussions picking up issues on linkages. Accordingly, Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar universities presented their experiences in initiating, establishing and maintaining international linkages and the challenges they encountered. The presentations and the discussions that followed addressed the following points:

- Partnerships with universities abroad create inter-cultural understanding;...

- Partnerships can become instruments of change;
- Linkages could be driven by academic units, problems, individuals or driven by university-wide strategy;
- Funding could come from abroad, local donors and internal resources;
- Challenges affecting partnership could be lack of funding, securing Visa and staff turnover.

During the discussions so many questions were raised, among which were whether local universities established working partnerships with each other; the mechanisms universities employ to reward staff involved in successful partnership projects and whether universities have documentation practices in an orderly manner. After this session, a USAID representative briefed participants on the support USAID has given in improving the quality of education at primary level. Thereafter, the PAS Head of the Embassy presented the highlights of the available funding within the Embassy that universities could make use of.



In addition to enhancing the use of the Supercomputer especially for candidates who would use big data in their PhD projects, AASCTC will also offer an on-line two-month tutorial lesson on Computational research that would assist candidates to get introduced with important skills. The MoU was signed by Prof. Hussein Sherief representing AASCTC and Assoc. Prof. Wondwosen Tamirat representing SMU.

SMU Signed MoU with AASCTC



St. Mary's University (SMU) signed MoU with Almaahad Almutagadem Specialized Computer Training Center (AASCTC) based in Sudan on 29th August, 2016. The purpose of the MoU was to facilitate the use of the Sudanese Supercomputer especially for staff who would register for their PhDs at Sudanese university.

SMU's Participation at ICT Workshop

St. Mary's participated in a half day workshop organized by ICT Center of Excellence on September 5, 2016 at Desalegn Hotel. The purpose of the workshop was to gather feedbacks and suggestions on the status and challenges of the recently implemented ICT curriculum that was developed nationally, based on modernization and harmonization principles. Key stakeholders from the industry and higher learning institutions participated in the workshop. Participants raised issues pertaining to the poor quality of graduates in terms of lack of practical/technical skill, poor writing and communication skill, lack of all rounded knowledge, lack of commitment and motivation, etc. Participants also identified a number of limitations in the curriculum and suggested possible solutions.

VIEWS

The Reward for Hard Work

Compiled by IRC Office, SMU



Efrem Tilahun is one of the two graduates of 2008 E.C. who was awarded a Trophy and a Medal. He graduated from the Department of Management, regular program, with Cumulative GPA of 4.0.

Following his graduation, The International Relations and Communication Office of SMU spent time with Efrem to discuss his stay at St. Mary's and the factors that contributed to his success, aiming to draw lesson for those who are pursuing their study at SMU and beyond.

Efrem decided to pursue his study at St. Mary's University not by mere chance or not being influenced by what he heard from friends or other people, about the University. He had to explore different websites to know more about St. Mary's reputation. And he learned where SMU stands compared to other public and private higher universities in the nation which coincided with the positive opinion he had been hearing from friends and the general public informally.

Efrem has one very good quality: setting goal/goals for whatever he does, including his study. This is what he has been doing since he started schooling beginning from primary school until now. He sets the grade he

wants to score in each subject, the average point he must achieve in each grade, the score he wants to record in national examinations, etc. No way for Efrem to think about starting any grade without first setting his goal. He works day and night to achieve the set goal and makes no negotiation when it comes to the set goal. The set goal/s always comes/come first and he pays whatever it takes, for it. He applied the same when he joined St. Mary's to study Management in the regular program three years back. He set a goal to graduate with minimum cumulative G.P.A of 3.8 and graduated with cumulative GPA of 4.0, exceeding the goal he had set.

His other quality is the value he attaches to time management. He budgets his time between his studies and other routines. He was working as a tutor for the past three years parallel to his studies but it did not affect his study as he maintained balance between the two. He uses the library and the internet services available at the University very effectively and attends class regularly with much attention. After class, he spent his time in the library and did not go home to avoid distractions watching films and dramas.

Besides, Efrem had good communication with fellow students and was very active in students' affairs, served as class representative. He was a very active communicator which in turn had contributed a lot to his success in his studies. He was active participant in group assignments where he took a leading role in most cases. As he served as group leader in most cases, reading a lot and organizing/compiling group assignments, fell on his shoulder. This, according to his testimony, has helped him a lot to acquire skills of producing good quality term papers in a well organized manner, which eventually helped him in doing his research work for fulfillment of his degree. He was also very busy with supporting his fellow students in different subjects which he was good at. He had to make preparation by reading and revising his notes ahead of time for study in group with his colleagues, which in turn contributed to score best results.

Efrem also explained that his results attributed to the support he got from his parents and friends. He

recounted the challenge he personally encountered while he was a 3rd year student and how his classmates and the staff of the Students Support Unit supported him. He also was grateful to the support of St. Mary's instructors and staff. During our discussion, he time and again appreciated the well organized system of the St. Mary's: the Student Handbook which provides all relevant information pertaining to student affairs; composition, quality, class attendance, punctuality and support of teachers; strict follow up and implementation of annual schedule (e.g. 2008E.C. graduation was celebrated on the date sited on the annual schedule). According to his words, particularly, most of the instructors were ready to support students at any time possible, listen to and tackle challenges students encounter, and he wasted no time to exploit such opportunities.

Efrem was honest when he told us that these days most of students pursue their education only for the degree awarded, but not to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills relevant to their future life. Subsequently, most of them do not realize the importance of grades in getting job opportunities after graduation. To the contrary, he had realized this ahead of time and worked to the best of his potential and earned the best result, cumulative GPA of 4.0, exceeding the goal he had set right from the beginning(3.8), the reward of hard work!



Minyahil Abera was awarded a Trophy and a Medal at St. Mary's University's 2008 E.C. Graduation Ceremony which took place at the Ethiopian National Theatre, Addis Ababa. There were two

candidates who scored cumulative GPA of 4.0 and awarded at the ceremony and he is one of them. He graduated from Department of Accounting, in Extension program.

Aiming to draw lesson for those who are pursuing their study at SMU and beyond, the International Relations and Communication Office of SMU spent time with Minyahil to discuss his stay at St. Mary's and the factors that contributed to his success.

Minyahil has already earned his first and second degrees in Mathematics and is teaching in one of public universities in Addis Ababa. But when he decided to study Accounting to change his field of study, he had to consult friends and colleagues who had already graduated from different public and private universities, to make his choice of a university. The opinions he got was similar: if you go for knowledge, if you go for good quality education, go for St. Mary's University, nowhere else! And, he accepted the opinions and joined St. Mary's.

We asked Minyahil if St. Mary's fulfilled his expectations and his response was blunt, supported with tangible evidences: well planned annual schedule, qualified and well-experienced teachers who are good at time management and supportive; the facilities (library space, size and variety of books, etc.) which were sufficient(but today not comparable with fast-growing number of students), flexible schedule which allowed him to attend classes without compromising his regular job, etc. all helped him to enjoy his stay at St. Mary's.

Many people were at his disposal while Minyahil was studying at St. Mary's, other than his personal/own effort: his best friend who encouraged him to start his study and covered all his tuition fees, his wife who took the whole management at home to help him focus on his study. He also attributes his great achievement to his instructors who were good at providing their students with updated handouts, who allowed him to adjust his schedule with theirs(understanding his position as a student and a full time employee), and very much committed to their duties.

Minyahil also shared us his good qualities; he is a very good listener. He listens attentively while teachers give lecture. He does not take notes while listen-



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