



THE OASIS NEWSLETTER

A Publication from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor



The University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Akuno makes her acceptance speech after her installation during the 11th Graduation Ceremony

Inside

- » *In Conversation with Prof. Emily Achieng' Akuno, PhD, OGW*
- » *JOOUST Board of Postgraduate Studies holds a rewarding two-day Postgraduate Seminar*
- » *JOOUST VLIR-IUC Project Supports a New Curriculum!*
- » *JOOUST Ladies Hockey Team Triumphs*
- » *JOOUST Disability Advocacy Club Continues to Make Impact*

IN CONVERSATION WITH PROF. EMILY ACHIENG' AKUNO, PHD, OGW



Prof. Emily Achieng' Akuno at her office

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Achieng' Akuno, PhD, OGW., has recently outlined her envisioned road map for Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. Speaking to members of the fourth estate in her office on the 18th of March, just a few days to JOOUST's eleventh graduation ceremony, the VC affirmed that the university is endowed with immense wealth comprising a pool of well networked professors, physical infrastructure, and an array of spaces that if well harnessed will propel JOOUST to amazing heights of excellence in teaching, research and community service. Prof. Akuno yearns for a JOOUST where teaching, learning and research activities directly

impact the quality of life of the immediate community especially with respect to food security and community health and wellbeing.

Listening to her speak, it is not difficult to get the impression that the granddaughter of Keziah Atika nyar Okoth is Luo, particularly from Kochunga Village of North Gem, at least when she begins to enumerate the feathers that throng her academic headgear right from Standard one at Saye DEB in Oyugis, Maliera Primary School, St. Teresa's Girls Boarding (Yala), through Alliance Girls, Kenyatta University(Bed.), North Western State University of Louisiana (MA) to Kingston University in the United Kingdom (PhD in Music

Education). Although she maintains that "it was the culture of our family that people went to school," for her academic successes, she largely credits the women in her life. In fact, the daughter to a police officer quips, "my father took us to school but mother ensured that we stayed in school." Almost telepathically, the Technical University of Kenya full professor of music quickly adds, "pride is having a sense of your value as a human being."

The effortlessness with which the new VC catalogues the "wealth of JOOUST" betrays her seven and a half months' stint as the CEO of the institution. She already knows the establishment like the back of her hand. Prof. Akuno notes that by CUE accreditation, JOOUST has two campuses viz Main and Kisumu and six other spaces around the country which are Achego, a six acres parcel of land in Koru, Nambale and Siaya Learning Centres, Miyandhe research hub, and Nairobi Liaison Office. While Miyandhe will preoccupy itself with researches around the Blue Economy to purposefully secure the community's health and

wellbeing, Achego will host the teaching block for the School of Agriculture, School of Engineering, and a modern library. Meanwhile, Siaya Learning Centre will continue to serve the School of Agriculture and Food Sciences. Prof. Akuno avers that Nambale Learning Centre in Busia County was temporarily killed by Covid 19 though frantic efforts are afoot to revive it so as to quench the thirst for IT learning among the youth within its environs. Her projection is that it will regain vibrancy come the next financial year. Besides, according to her, the Nairobi

Liaison office continues to be useful to the university as it plays host to the many meetings in Nairobi which would have necessitated renting of office space.

She packages her aspiration to achieve a level of responsive independence for the various spaces thus, “I feel like a mother of many sons and needs to ask them to go out and establish their homes.” Indeed, the various infrastructural spaces of the university are expected to come up

with their own contextually relevant five year proposals that are in tandem with JOOUST’s strategic plan. She envisages a situation where the VC will not have to micromanage but only offer support and remote oversight to the centres. She will do it just as she was trained by her mentor, the late Prof. George Eshiwani, “you give an assignment

nyatiti loving professor bemoans the sudden death of the institute which was occasioned by both Covid 19 and restructuring at the university. However, she holds that it is high time it was resuscitated as the ideal space for the university to reach out to the community in terms of both cultural expression and materials. She reiterated that while



Prof. Emily Akuno upon her installation as the University's second vice chancellor

music, performing and fine arts will be taught at the parent school, the institute will be handy in appreciating the value of the community’s culture and equally foster a direct engagement with the community’s artists in issues around

and you provide the resources..... give them the space but be available in case they want to come back. Keep monitoring but give them some space.” However, she adds that it is important to “find somebody’s talent and match them with a responsibility.”

The current VC credits her predecessors with a lot of wisdom and foresight in enshrining the Institute of Cultural Heritage and Material Science in JOOUST’s statutes. The

training on copyright laws, entrepreneurship, marketing and the like to secure their financial proceeds from the arts. Furthermore, it is her conviction that the university can ride on the impending successes of the institute to bag a UNESCO chair in cultural innovation, science and technology.

Prof. Akuno is not a greenhorn in administration. She was one of the ten ladies who were appointed, at one go, into positions of leadership in Kenyatta

University in 1998 by the then Vice Chancellor, the late Prof. George Eshiwani. Among the appointees was Dr. Penina Aloo Obudho, the current Vice Chancellor, Maasai Mara University. Fresh from Kingston University with a PhD in Music Education, she received her first stint at administration on January 8th, 1998 as the founding Chair of Department of Music and Dance, Kenyatta University. She was thereafter elevated to Head of School of Music before acting as a Dean of Students. Prof. Akuno then proceeded to KwaZulu-Natal University in Berea, Durban, South Africa where she was the head of the School of Music for three years. Upon her return to Kenya, Prof. worked in Maseno University for about one year before securing yet another appointment at The Technical University of Kenya as the founding head of the Centre for Creative and Cultural Industries and later as Executive Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology. Before docking at JOOUST, she served as the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic

Affairs at the Co-Operative University of Kenya, Nairobi.

As a music educator, Prof. Akuno has a long list of mentees in the course of her career especially her academic daughters including Prof. Rose Anyango and Dr. Jackline Bulinda of Maseno university, Dr. Gesare Owino of KU, Dr. Evelyn Muchira, Dr. Elizabeth Andang'o, Dr. Joyce Abwavo of Kabarak University and she has an apology in advance, "I hope the rest won't feel offended for not having been mentioned."



Vice Chancellor Prof. Emily Achieng' Akuno takes oath of office

It is the view of Prof. Akuno that for excellence to be achieved, it would be appropriate to fix JOOUST's character first. It is of necessity to "strengthen our internal structures and systems – make sure we are very efficient and professional in the way we do our things because that

will become our character." She stresses that with a character that is beyond reproach, it will be easy to attract partners and/or donors to JOOUST. As for heading an institution that prides itself of being a fountain of science and technology yet she is an artist per excellence, she calmly quotes yet another of her mentors, Prof William Odhiambo Aduol, formerly of The Technical University of Kenya, who told her that "every art has its science and technology."

With respect to JOOUST's s e c o n d administrative dispensation, her parting shot is, "when you have had a V.C for ten years, there are things that they have put in place. With a new person coming in, there is a new leaf that is being turned and we are looking for partners, donors, research organizations. Anybody who would wish to walk with us, let them come."

JOOUST BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES HOLDS A REWARDING TWO-DAY POSTGRADUATE SEMINAR

JOOUST Board of Postgraduate Studies held a two day Postgraduate Seminar from 18th March to 19th March 2024 at the Main Campus in Bondo.

This is in continuity with our tradition that requires PhD and Masters students awaiting the conferment of respective degrees to present their work in a public forum. The seminar was attended by postgraduate and undergraduate students, university staff, industry stakeholders, and some members of the public.

At this forum, selected PhD and Master candidates from various Schools in the University presented key their work highlighting



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Achieng Akuno officially opens the Postgraduate seminar

the scientific methods and key research findings. The presentations covered a wide range of topics that reflect the diversity of research pursuits within the University. From innovative educational methodologies and explorative inquiries in the arts to cutting-edge agricultural studies

and much more, the seminar pointed out the university's commitment to multidisciplinary excellence.

Speaking during the seminar, the acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Student Affairs and Research (ASAR) Prof. Denis Ochuodho noted that JOOUST needs to demonstrate its prowess as an academic institution. He added that the seminar provided a valuable forum for the dissemination of research findings. Acknowledging the support of the University management, Prof. Ochuodho said the postgraduate seminar offered a unique opportunity for postgraduate students to engage with panelists and the audience. This interactive



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Akuno shares a light moment with students before the seminar



The Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies, Prof. Lorna Grace Okotto addresses the participants

approach aims to simulate real-world scenarios where researchers respond to inquiries first hand thus honing their professional skills as they make an entry into the academy or industry.

“To the students, this is a journey that started at different times and it will culminate in their graduation on 22nd March, so congratulations”, noted the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Planning and Finance (PAF) Prof. Aggrey Thuo. He reiterated, “When you think about such a seminar, you think about listening to other people presenting their ideas, and when you listen to other people presenting their ideas, especially academic ideas, it’s a perpetual feast to our minds.”

The University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Achieng’ Akuno, who officially opened the seminar, congratulated the graduating postgraduate students, citing the fact that they have been around for a while which is a demonstration of the challenges they have endured and the resilience in their journey. She further added that the seminar provides

the audience with answers to the “what next” question in researches conducted by our postgraduate students. The VC further emphasized on the need for students to be proactive in addressing many of the societal challenges using the innovations and technologies resulting from their research work.

Prof. Akuno also stimulated students to use the platform to share their research findings and benefit from constructive criticism from the audience as they prepare for scholarly engagements at international conferences. In her closing remarks, she reminded the participants that all should make concerted efforts aimed at enhancing the visibility of our institution.

Subsequently, the Board of Postgraduate Director,



Participants keenly listen to various presentations during the seminar

Prof. Lorna Grace Okotto assured the participants that the graduates our university produces are competitive as attested to by the fact that some of them have secured post doctorate opportunities in universities abroad. She further thanked the Faculty representatives at the Directorate for their support in processing students' proposals and theses. Prof. Okotto underscored the commitment of the Directorate in working towards putting JOOUST on the global map as an institution of higher learning pivoted on research and innovation.

Overall, the successful two day seminar clearly highlighted the university's commitment to providing practical experience aimed



Ms. Margaret Orenge Kababu , a postgraduate student making her presentation during the seminar

at producing graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also capable of applying their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

The JOOUST Board of Postgraduate Studies, in active collaboration with academic schools, continues spearheading the evolution

of graduate programs in order to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of postgraduate education. The directorate is committed to transcending traditional boundaries, creating a platform that not only fosters interdisciplinary dialogue but also champions innovation and adaptability.



Seminar participants pose for a group photo with the university management

JOOUST VLIR-IUC PROJECT SUPPORTS A NEW CURRICULUM!

The School of Biological, Physical, Mathematics and Actuarial Sciences (SBPMAS) through JOOUST VLIR-IUC Project has developed a curriculum for Undergraduate, Master and PhD on Climate Change and Sustainable Development under Subproject 5. The Subproject aims at strengthening climate change resilience among communities and ecosystems in the Lake Victoria Basin.

As part of regulatory requirements by the Commission for Universities Education (CUE), the curriculum was subjected to a two-day stakeholder engagement workshop from 13th to 14th March, 2024 at Wigot Gardens in Kisumu City. The workshop was



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Akuno gives her remarks

officially opened by the University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Emily Achieng' Akuno and attended by faculty members from SBPMAS together with curriculum review experts from Maseno University, Kenya Forestry Research Institute and representatives from County Government of Siaya.

“This partnership is one of those enabling us go pretty far, pretty fast,” observed the VC, Prof. Akuno. “As we embark on building this curriculum, JOOUST will be visible and audible in such a manner that we are brilliantly shining and the sound coming from us is a pleasant sound, by being efficient and professional,” she added.

Further, the curriculum will be subjected to additional internal reviews by JOOUST Deans' Committee and the University Senate before submission to Commission for University Education (CUE) for the final approval.

It is expected that graduates of this program will be able to evaluate environmental changes and provide solutions for managing the



Mr. Gabriel Oduong, Director, Climate Change in Siaya County gives his remarks

environmental, ecosystems as well as biodiversity thereby restoring the ecosystem in relation to climate change. Further, the program will enable the learners to analyze emerging methodologies and applications in climate change and biodiversity management as well as conservation and ecosystem restoration.

The development of the curriculum, its internal and external review processes as well as accreditation costs, is supported by JOOUST VLIR-IUC project, which was initiated through a proposal submitted to VLIR-UOS on 15th October, 2019 for funding consideration. Upon review, JOOUST was among the five Universities approved to host Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) 2022 programme. This is a 12-year institutional cooperation project between JOOUST and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) of Belgium. The Programme promotes sustainable (inter-institutional) global partnerships and cooperation aimed at empowering JOOUST in its mission, specifically to better fulfill its role as a development actor in the society.



Dr. John Nyongesa (left) of SBPMAS makes his presentation during the workshop

The programme further aims to build capacity for high quality research and training in natural resources management, food security, health, ICT and climate change. Besides, it promotes sustainable use of LVB resources, improves the health and well-being of LVB populations, creates synergies in transformative

knowledge, technologies and innovations in collaboration with stakeholders and builds the capacity of government agencies in service delivery and sector-wide regulations.

These objectives are envisioned to be implemented through five projects including: Management of the Lake Victoria Basin



Participants giving their remarks during the workshop

Natural Resources (Project 1), Building Capacity for Transformative Agri-Food Systems for Resilience in the Lake Victoria Basin of Kenya (Project 2), Building Capacity for Research, Management and Control of Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases (Project 3), Strengthening ICT infrastructure to Enhance Research, Teaching and Learning (Project 4), and Strengthening Climate Change Resilience among Communities and Ecosystems in the Lake Victoria Basin (Project 5).



The Project Manager, Mr. Oscar Osika giving his remarks during the stakeholder engagement workshop



The participants pose for a group photo at Wigot Gardens in Kisumu City

JOOUST LADIES HOCKEY TEAM TRIUMPHS

By Beckon Wafula, Student SIIS

JOOST Hockey Ladies have continued to raise JOOST's flag high. In a remarkable display of skill and determination, the team emerged victorious in Ochieng' Okumu and Maseno University Open tournaments, securing the coveted first position in February 2024. Their triumph was a testament to their prowess on the field, marking a significant milestone for the Ladies.

Following their success, the team engaged in a spirited battle from polling to final games in the 13th Kenya Universities National Women Sports Federation from 8th to 10th March at Egerton University's Main Campus in Njoro. The event, coinciding with International Women's Day, was officially opened by Prof. Nancy Mungai, Director of Research and Extension, Egerton University and aims to inspire young women to embrace sports in general and hockey in particular.

Despite the fierce competition from the other teams, JOOST Hockey Ladies team clinched the second position and was subsequently crowned as the 1st runners up, thereby underscoring their consistent

Wafula, a dedicated student and captain of the JOOST's men hockey team. His leadership and unwavering support have played a pivotal role in steering the team's play, always ensuring they are at their best.



The Kenya Universities Sports Federation Treasurer presents a trophy to the JOOST Ladies Hockey Team Captain Ms. Purity Aseyo at Egerton University

excellence.

The secret behind their success lies in the core values of teamwork and resilience. Guided by their motto of 'Tuko Nayo,' the team has consistently demonstrated exceptional gameplan and strategy, attributes that have become their winning formula.

At the core of their success is the all-time technical and touchline coach, Mr. Beckon

Leading the charge on the field is the dynamic duo of team captain Purity Aseyo and field captain Lilian. These two hockey stalwarts are the driving force behind the team's victories, displaying exceptional

leadership and skill when it matters most. Comprising 18 players, from tactical goalkeepers to lethal forwards, the JOOST ladies hockey players are a force to be reckoned with. Their versatility and commitment ensure they are always up to the task and ready to compete at the highest level.

Behind the scenes, the team usually receives invaluable support from the Sports office which is always on

stand-by to provide the necessary sports support. Furthermore, the school administration consistently lends its unwavering support, organizing the means of transport to various competitions. The collaborative effort of coaches, players, and the support system have and will undoubtedly propel the JOOUST ladies hockey team to the pinnacle of their dreams as hockey players.



Mr. Ongaro Richard Otieno, the SAJOOUST Director Co-Curricular, pose with the team captain, Ms. Purity Aseyo



JOOUST hockey ladies team pose for a group photo

JOOUST DISABILITY ADVOCACY CLUB CONTINUES TO MAKE IMPACT



JOOUST Disability Advocacy Club members pose for a group photo with the children

The JOOUST Disability Advocacy Club once again touched hearts with their recent visit to St. Oda Aluor School for the Visually Impaired on March 23rd, 2024, for an outreach program. Located in Gem Sub County, Siaya County, the school provides essential educational services for children and young adults aged three to twenty who are visually impaired, blind, or deaf/hard of hearing.

Led by their patron, Dr. Gregory Juma, the club members arrived with donations that were gratefully received by the school's Head Teacher and

School President. The visit was filled with various activities aimed at engaging the learners, including cleaning the dormitories and compound, trimming flower beds, sharing meals and refreshments, playing games, entertainment, and offering mentorship talks.

Reflecting on the importance of giving, the club echoed Winston Churchill's words: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." The University Administration was acknowledged for their support of the club's efforts to give back to the community.

The core mission of the JOOUST Disability Advocacy Club is to foster a better understanding and positive attitude towards individuals with disabilities in society. They have consistently visited special schools, offering encouragement to differently-abled learners, alongside donations and mentorship programs. The club also organizes fun and sports days for special schools to develop and promote the talents of learners with disabilities.

The objectives of the club are multi-faceted. They aim to: Enable society to accept individuals with

disabilities and develop a positive attitude towards People With Disabilities (PWDs), provide opportunities for differently-abled children to develop their talents through sports and fun days, work towards eliminating long-standing stereotypes based on the nature of disability within the community, engage in door-to-door visitations to promote awareness and understanding of disabilities and equip club members with the knowledge and experience to handle and understand individuals with hearing impairment through training.



St. Oda Aluor School management receive donation from the club



St. Oda Aluor School pupils making a presentation

The Oasis

A Newsletter of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga
University of Science and Technology

A publication from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor



Jaramogi Oginga Odinga
University of Science and Technology
Oasis of Knowledge

CENTRE FOR E-LEARNING (CIEL)

Unleashing Knowledge, Anytime, Anywhere

MSc

- Business Administration
- Master of Education in:
 - » Educational Administration
 - » Curriculum Studies
 - » Guidance and Counseling
 - » Educational Technology
 - » Pedagogy
 - » Special Needs Education
 - » Early Childhood Development

BSc

- Community Health and Development
- Business Administration
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- International Relation and Diplomacy
- Development and Policy Studies
- Food Science
- Education Arts with IT

Diploma

- Business Administration
- Community Health and Development
- County Governance

Certificate

- Business Administration
- Community Health and Development

MAY INTAKE ONGOING

**ISO 9001:2015
CERTIFIED**

@ elearning@jooust.ac.ke

☎ 057-2501804

☎ 254-788275677

🌐 <https://ejooust.ac.ke>

Editorial Board:

*Ms. Keziah Ogada, Dr. George Odhiambo, Mr. Godfrey Binaisha, Mr. Oscar Osika,
Ms. Sharon Meroka*