



THE OASIS NEWSLETTER

A Publication from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor

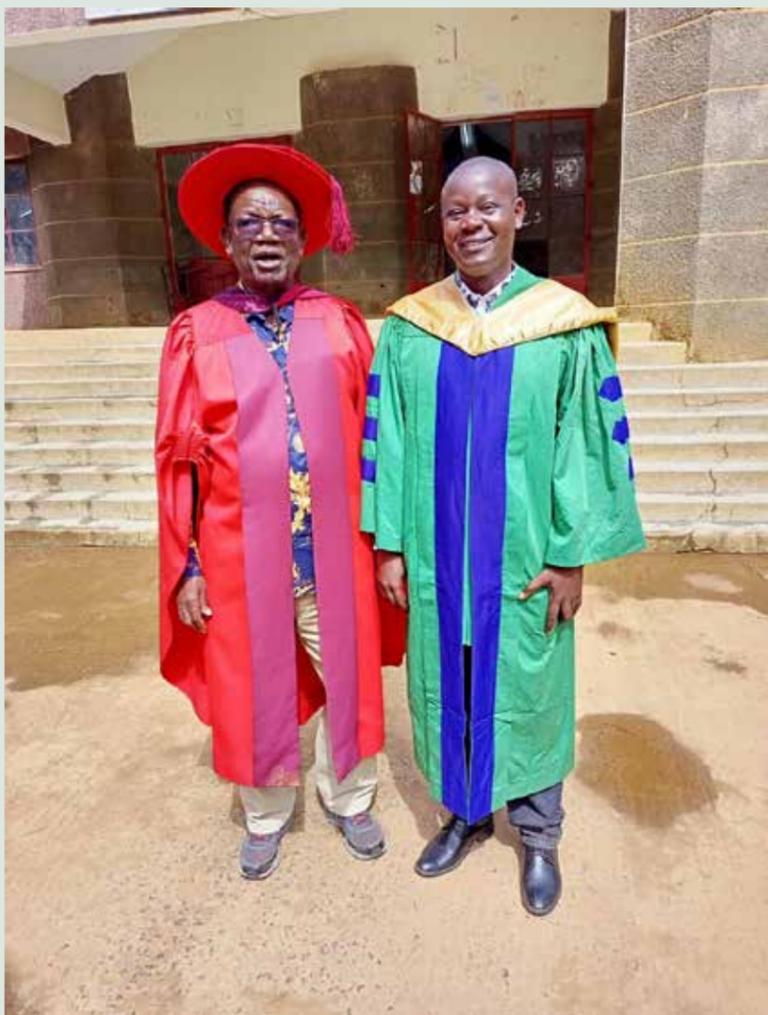


Dr. Ogolla graduates with PhD. in Pure Mathematics on 3rd March 2023.

Inside

- » *Retracing the bumpy academic journey of Dr. Blasius Ogola*
- » *Hunger for education against all odds!*
- » *Recollections of a JOOUST alumni.*

RETRACING THE BUMPY ACADEMIC JOURNEY OF DR. BLASIUS OGOLA



Dr. Ogolla poses for a photo with his mentor and supervisor Prof. Omolo Ongati

I started my university education at JOOUST in the year 2013 when I was admitted to pursue a bachelors degree in Education Science (Mathematics and Biology with IT). During my first year of undergraduate studies I was very active in the SAJOUST politics. My life as an undergraduate student was riddled with financial hiccups and therefore I had to do some menial jobs to keep afloat. My daily routine commenced with waking up at 3am to allow me cover the long distance between Bondo town and Osieko beach and be back in time for my classes. I

cycled to Osieko beach and supplied Safaricom credit cards along Osieko beach, Nyenye beach, Anyanga, Usenge, Uhanya, Misoro, Nyamonye, Kambajo, and koyucho market and made it back to my house by 7:30am. After which I prepared to attend lectures from 8am. In the evening after the lectures, I had to dash back, on my motorcycle, to the

shops where I had earlier supplied the cards, collect the cash part of which I had to surrender to the Safaricom office in Bondo as I collected the stock for the following day. Sometimes, over the weekends, I used to work as a bodaboda operator or a car wash attendant to augment my unsteady financial sources.

Working and studying at the same time was arduous but I had to juggle both for my survival. Interestingly, though I worked during my avenue hours, I always posted good grades in my undergraduate units. While in my second year of study, I started harbouring the dream of becoming a lecturer

of Pure Mathematics. I was motivated by my lecturers Prof. Benard Okelo, Prof. Omolo Ongati and Dr. Bonyo. After sitting for my second year second semester's exams, I approached Prof. Okelo and Prof. Ongati and shared with them my dream. They took it positively and advised me accordingly. Thereafter, they became my mentors. After my fourth year second semester's exams, I went and confirm to them that my dream was still alive and only waiting for the graduation. On 17/05/2017, I graduated with a second class upper division degree. A week after the graduation, I visited the school of Mathematics to check with them if I could apply for a master of science in Pure Mathematics. Coincidentally, they were



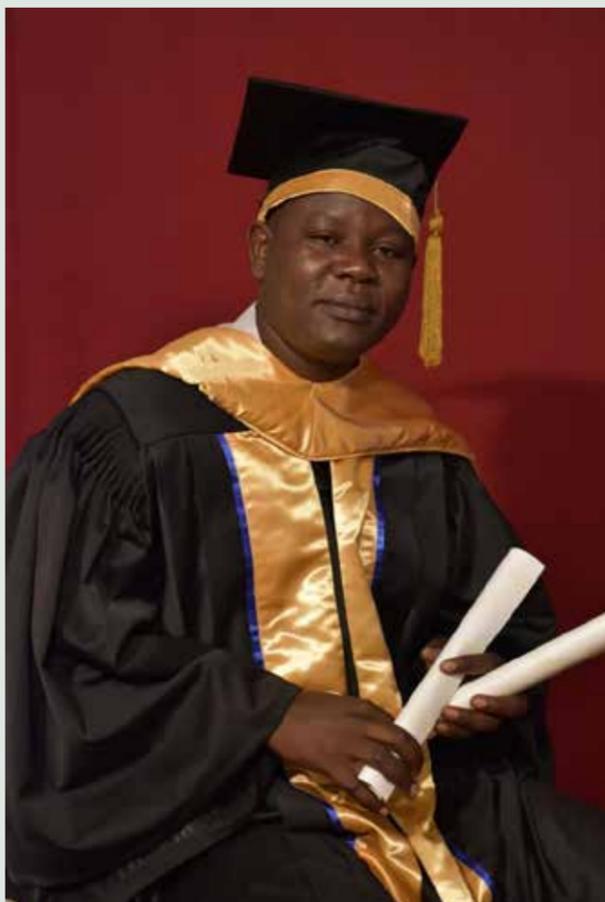
Blasius at his work station in Sychelles

waiting for one student in order to meet the required quorum and they gave me a go ahead straight away.

Meanwhile, I persistently applied for teaching jobs overseas to be able to find sources of funding my post graduate studies. After several applications to different countries I was offered a chance in Seychelles as an IGCSE high school mathematics teacher. My quest to be a lecturer did not stop even after obtaining this vacancy. I traveled home every school holiday to be physically available in the university in order to finish the class work and write all the exams as required by the university.

My course work was soon followed by my proposal writing in topology (Normality and Compactness of Dense Topological Subspaces). After a successful oral defense of the proposal, I was allowed to work on my thesis. Under proper supervision of Prof. Okelo and Prof. Ongati, I worked tirelessly on my thesis, successfully defended before graduating on 1/11/2019 with a Master of Science in Pure Mathematics.

In January 2020, I



Blasius graduates with Master of Science in Pure Mathematics

applied for admission to pursue my PhD in pure mathematics. Before my master graduation I had started working on the PhD topic (Continuity and Separability in Bitopological Spaces) and as soon as I was admitted I defended my concept paper. Due to COVID-19 pandemic most universities, JOOUST included, accepted online presentations for the post graduate students. This was a blessing in disguise for me since I could conduct all my proposal, monthly progress, mock and final defenses online, I was faced with a lot of challenges but my supervisors were always ready to offer me proper guidance. I graduated with a doctorate degree in Pure Mathematics on 3/03/2023.

Working and studying especially while based in a foreign country is very cumbersome. I had to attend to all my duties as a teacher every working day and use most of my night times and weekends (Saturdays and Sundays after church) to carry out my research work. Currently, I am still nursing my dream of becoming a lecturer of Pure Mathematics since the Almighty God Has enabled me to acquire the required qualification for the same.

The knowledge I have gannered from JOOUST has prepared me to thrive in the field of mathematics both locally and globally right from elementary to university. I am very grateful to JOOUST fraternity more particularly to my undergraduate and post graduate lecturers and course mates for their noble support throughout my academic journey. God bless them abundantly!



Blasius at his working station in Sychelles

HUNGER FOR EDUCATION AGAINST ALL ODDS!

By: Oyoo Lawrence Otiende



Group photo with Maduwa Primary Pupils

Have you ever asked yourself the amount of effort you put in to get knowledge? What milestones do you face or have you faced in your pursuit of quality education. I present to you a story of Maduwa Primary School where students must wade through deep waters to access education. Indeed, knowledge is power, and education is the key to success, but the quality of education can be hindered by some external factors such as infrastructure and location of institutions of learning. At Maduwa Primary School, the pupils, irrespective of age, have to

travel for over 10km via boats to access education. Subsequently, their lives are endangered as they surf through the wild animals infested waters and the raucous sea waves that mercilessly hit their boats during peak hours.



A pupil in the boat to school

The moment we landed at Maduwa Primary School, I was taken aback by the smiles that filed their faces. The pupils were very happy to see us and we were surprised that they were very comfortable in their niche. The pupils seemed to have acclimatized to the environment and they enjoyed staying and learning together as they enjoyed each other's company. However, behind their puerile smiles lie the untold stories of pain and agony. The pupils have to cook their own lunch, carried from home, in a ramshackle of a house they call a kitchen. However, majority of the pupils in

this school are unable to carry food daily to school and often go without lunch. A few of the 'lucky' students were spotted sharing their meals with those who did not carry any food from home.

It was observed that in Maduwa primary school there are many cases of absenteeism due to hunger and health related issues. Besides, since the school is located on an island, it is mosquito infested thereby subjecting the pupils to high cases of malaria. Some of the pupils are boarders yet they hardly have any bedding for use. They resort to dry papyrus reeds as their makeshift bedding. Rooms that serve as classes during the day are the same rooms that serve as dormitories during the night. The classrooms do not have windows and their state is devastating.

The hunger for education and the hope for a better future are perhaps the only two forces that drive the pupils in this school to wake up early and face each setback riddled day. A number of pupils in this area are not able to come to school due to lack of strength. Perhaps with the provision of adequate food, a number of students would come to school to get the same knowledge as the rest of the students. The school too lacks power supply since the rising water level destroyed the batteries that were installed together with the solar systems. Currently, the boarders at school are unable to read when darkness sets in. Moreover, their toilets are in pathetic conditions posing the risk of contracting gastrointestinal diseases due to poor disposal of waste in the water. The same applies to the teachers.

You may ask yourself how I did manage to reach this school. The answer is very simple, through VLIR-IUC project sponsored research. Through the partnership of VLIR-IUC and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST), there is a research that is to take place in Maduwa Island to

determine the gases that are produced by the papyrus reeds and their effect on climate change. My humble plea is that even as VLIR-IUC through JOOUST is setting up this tower at Maduwa, they can chip in to improve the lives of pupils at Maduwa Primary School. The pupils are ready and willing to learn, they just lack the prerequisite infrastructure to do so. When we educate pupils today, we save the nation tomorrow. I call upon well wishers too who can support these pupils in one way or another to come on board. Their major needs are food, power, and infrastructure.

Mr Lawrence is a Lab Technician School of Biological, Physical, Mathematical and Acturial Sciences

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology



Mr. Lawrence with a pupil at Maduwa Primary School



The Lab Technician with a heart of gold

RECOLLECTIONS OF A JOOUST ALUMNI

By Denver Kulecho



The University Administration block at a glance

Along Kisian-Usenge highway off Kisumu-Busia road in Bondo lies a prestigious institution known as Jaramogi Oginga University of Science and Technology. The university is reputed countrywide for research, its state of art facilities and a vibrant student life. JOOUST admits students from diverse backgrounds with unique talents and aspirations. Every new academic year a batch of fresh students joins the university buzzing with excitement. They proly have heard stories of JOOUST and are eager to be part of this exceptional

community.

As years go by, these students come to discover that JOOUST is indeed a place of wonders. The university is a work of art in terms of architecture with modest structures and beautiful gardens. At JOOUST, academic life is unlike any other. The professors are not just teachers but mentors, guiding and inspiring students to reach new heights of knowledge. The intellectual interest in the classrooms is palpable as the students challenge each other's ideas in vibrant discourses.

JOOUST provides students with countless opportunities to pursue their passions outside the four walls of their classrooms be it music, athletics, ball games, indoor games, drama or environmental conservation. Besides, there are numerous student clubs and organizations to cater for a wide range of interests. The fusion of academic and extracurricular activities gives rise to a thriving campus culture.

The university boasts of unmatched dedication to both research and innovation. Modern

facilities are accessible for thorough scientific endeavours. The campus hums with intellectual breakthroughs and ground breaking ideas that have the potential of fundamentally altering the course of human history.

However, its not just about studies and research at JOOUST. The university has promoted the well being of students making it to be one of the most peaceful universities in Kenya. Students have reliable access to a group of committed

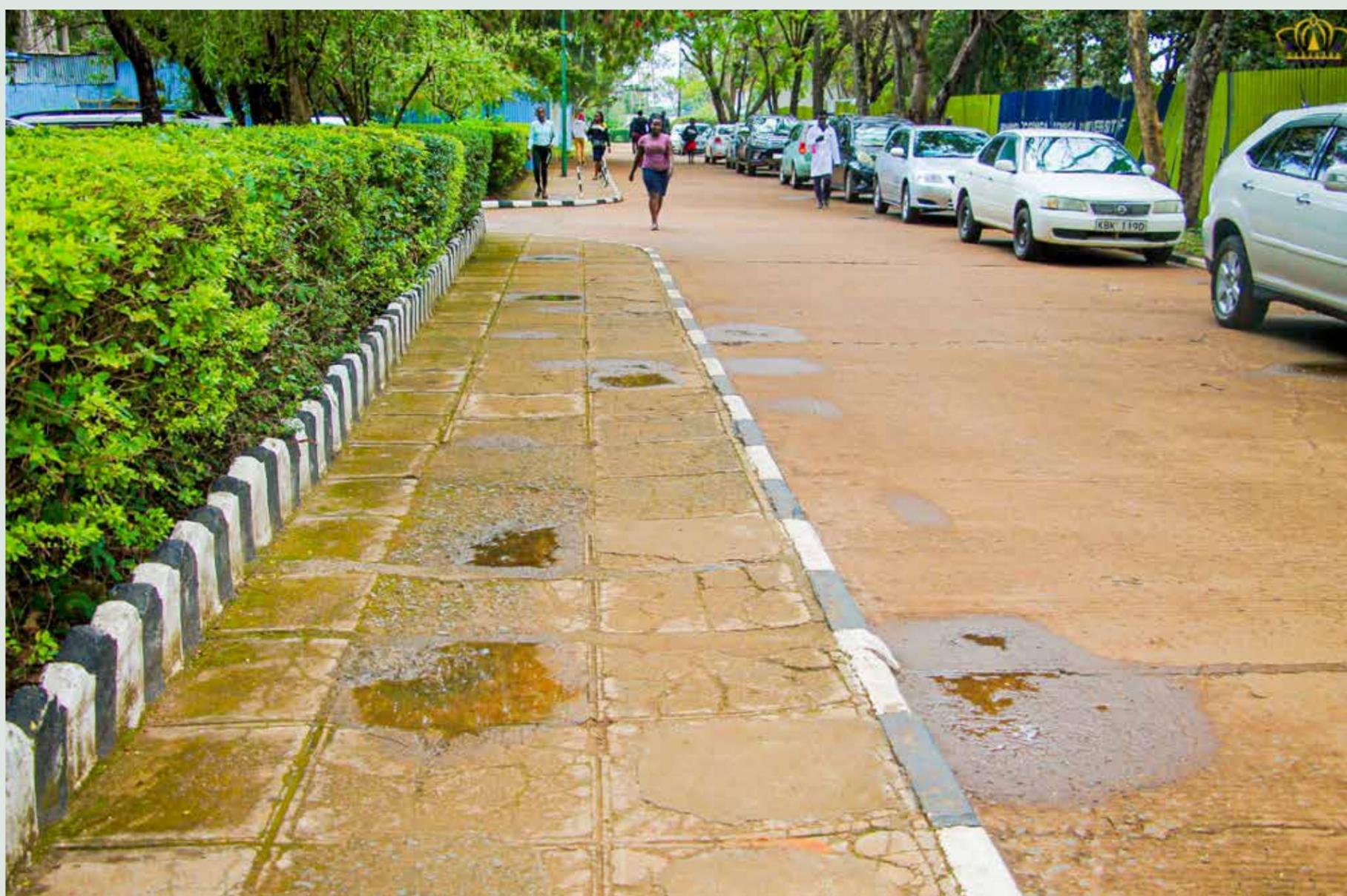
counselors and psychosocial support professional staff who are ready to help them deal with the myriad challenges of campus life.

The students experience a bittersweet mixture of pride and joy as graduation day approaches. When they leave JOOUST, they are ambitious and well-prepared individuals who are ready to boldly take up new challenges

Years later, as alumni of JOOUST, Achimba and Ramsey reminisce their

lives at the university. The university has given them not just knowledge but also confidence to face the world with determination and purpose.

JOOUST continues to thrive, attracting generations of students who aspire to be part of this great legacy. As the sun rises everyday, JOOUST remains a beacon of knowledge, an incubator of dreams and a place where bright minds converge to shape a better future of themselves and the world at large.



The most frequented pathway leading to the University Assembly Hall adjacent to the parking lot.

The Oasis

**A Newsletter of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga
University of Science and Technology**

A publication from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor



JOOUST Blue Economy Research Hub Miyandhe Campus

Editorial Board:

***Ms. Keziah Ogada, Dr. George Odhiambo, Mr. Godfrey Binaisha, Mr. Oscar Osika,
Ms. Lizzy Misiga, Ms. Yvonne Akinyi, Ms. Sharon Meroka, Ms. Rejoice Gudu***