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Kevin Muchiri and his trophy

Alumnus star rising in USA

Alum Kevin Muchiri was nominated as first runners-up in the Student Employee Awards for the 2009-2010 academic year at Old Dominion University in USA. Kevin pursued the Diploma in Business Information Technology (DBIT) at the University. Eric Katherya interviewed him online

Question: When did you join Old Dominion?

Answer: I joined Old Dominion University in January 2008 for the Spring Semester as a transfer student from Strathmore University, where I had just graduated with a Diploma in Business Information and Technology.

Q: What course are you doing at Old Dominion?

A: I am pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology, Network Engineering: BSBA IT.

Q: You were runners up student employee of the year. What was employment position?

A: I work as a student assistant at the office of International Admissions. In this position, I have various responsibilities including and not limited to fact research for the credential resource

library maintained by our office, reviewing the pre-arrival publication for accuracy, processing student applications and providing assistance to international students coming into our office among other things.

Q: What else have you achieved at Old Dominion

A: I thank God for being at Old Dominion University. I appreciate the chance I have been given to work with people who have continually encouraged me to go for the best and be the best that I can be. With that kind of support, this year, I have the opportunity to serve as my school's (Old Dominion University) representative to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV 2010-2011).

This presents an opportunity for the other schools' student representatives and I to meet and discuss matters affecting us as students and hopefully come up with ways to making Higher Education in the State of Virginia even better. It is a challenge that I am excited to be taking up and God-willing, I get to deliver the best for my school.

I also have the honor of serving as a Board of Visitors Alternate Student representative for



Strathmore University Foundation supports Strathmore University in Kenya as a US based 501 (c) 3 registered Non-Profit organization

the year 2010-2011. Together with two other colleagues of mine, the Board of Visitors Student Representative and the Student Government Association President, we work to ensure that we give the student body an adequate representation to all the levels we represent, starting with the administration, the Board of Visitors and the state level.

The other part of ODU I will live to remember is the Office of International Admissions. It is from here that I was able to be nominated as first runners-up in the Student Employee Awards, 2009-2010. The kind of camaraderie I have experienced is one of a kind. One of my colleagues actually made a Kenyan flag and on it, he wrote "ODU Embassy."

I continue to thank God because of President John Broderick, our current president for all the efforts he is putting in to ensure that ODU achieves even higher each and every passing day. I admire his commitment, dedication and humility at how he carries out his day-to-day duties. To me, he provides a role model and somebody that I continue to learn from daily.

Q: What institutions did you attend before joining Old Dominion?

A: Before joining Old Dominion University, I was in Strathmore University.

Q: What course did you do at Strathmore?

A: I pursued a Diploma in Business Information and Technology then went on to take CISCO-

CCNA and a course offered through Strathmore University in conjunction with Massachusetts Institute of Technology known as MIT-AITI.

Q: Why did you choose Strathmore?

A: During my final year of High School in Friends' School Kamusinga in 2005, Mr Paul Ochieng', the Dean of students from Strathmore visited our school and gave us a career talk.

And because I had such a huge interest in the technological trends, with Mr Ochieng's talk I saw Strathmore as a place where I could advance my knowledge in that particular field of study and an environment that blended discipline and productivity to bring out the best in the industry.

I then made the decision with the help of my parents who were willing to support me, my teachers who were always there to provide guidance and my school's principal, now Kenyan Ambassador to Canada, His Excellency Simon Nabukwesi, who has always encouraged me to go for the best and be the best.

Q: What are you plans after graduating from Old Dominion?

A: Upon graduating from ODU, I intend to pursue my MBA starting fall (August) 2011 and continue with my education before launching fully into work. My friends and I, hope to continue to influence our peers with regards to the value we add in the life we have. We realize that we have to be the change we want to see.

I thank God for being at Old Dominion University. I appreciate the chance I have been given to work with people who have continually encouraged me to go for the best and be the best that I can be

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Participants at the alumni re-union in Mombasa

SALO Holds Alumni Re-Union in Mombasa

It was a great afternoon at Kohinoor Suite Hotel when Strathmore/Kianda alumni gathered for a reunion on Saturday, 28th August at the coastal town of Mombasa. The Chief Guest was Dr Gome D. Lenga, the Chief Medical Officer at Kenya Ports Authority and a current student of the Advanced Health Management Program (AHMP) at the Business School (SBS). Dr Gome's speech emphasized on the need to have a purpose in life.

He talked about how individuals should have a mission, master and a mentor. "People should focus on these three Ms and decide what they want to do with their lives," he said.

"I am glad to be part of Strathmore which is a great institution and I can assure you that the next time when we come back here, I will be here in my capacity as a Strathmore alum," he added.

Others speakers included Prof Mohammed Muhiddin who is a professor of Political Science. Prof Muhiddin's speech focused on governance and citizenship and challenged Kenyans to ensure that they exercise the powers that the just promulgated constitution gives.

Dr Charles Sotz, the University Secretary was in attendance and briefed the alumni on the general

developments of the University since year 2001 when it started offering degrees. Prof David Sperling was also there together with the Alumni Administrator Mrs Pauline Kuria, and Mr Joseph Kilonzo, an assistant administrator in SALO (Strathmore Alumni Liaison Office).

The team in Mombasa led by Mr Cyprian Wambugu, (A-level, 1965) and Mrs Editter Mugo, a Kianda alum worked tirelessly to organize and put plans in place in conjunction with (SALO).

Mr Wambugu is the Managing Director of Wambugu & Associates an accountancy consulting firm while Mrs Mugo is a senior secretary at Kenya Ports Authority.

SALO has been holding regional reunions in the country. The Mombasa one was the second this year. The first regional reunion was held in Meru on 5th June.

The next regional reunion will be held on 30th October in Kisumu. "The objective of these reunions is to foster the relationship between the University and the alumni.

SALO is eager to incorporate alumni towards the 50th celebrations of the Strathmore family which will be held in 2011.



From left: Mathew Gathoka, Yasmin Mumin, Angie Cantelmi (Officer in-Charge of University Programs at Google), and Sanda Katembo

Google Names First Ambassadors to SU

Three Faculty of Information Technology students Yasmin Mumin Nur (BBIT 3), Mathew Gathoka (BBIT 4), and Katembo Sanda (BBIT 4) have been named Google Ambassadors (GAs) in the University for a year. The three were named GAs after a competitive process and were inducted into the program in the first week of September 2010.

The GA program is informed by the fact that Google wants to do more for students, academics and universities. The GAs will be Google's primary link with the University, and Google's new experts on university life and culture, as well as Google products and technology.

The GAs will be assisting Google with everything from small events to product launches, providing on-the-ground support and generally helping Google get the word out! They will also be helping Google to learn and strengthen its relationship with the University.

Applicants for the GA program were required to write an essay on one of these topics: "How these technologies can become an integral part of our lives in Africa". The technologies were: SMS (Mobile applications), or Local Content, Web localization, Cloud computing and Open source.

Applicants were also supposed to write a motivation letter on why they wanted to be GAs; what they can change as GAs and what

Google can do in their country.

The GA Program was created in 2006 to support outstanding students in Computer Science and a variety of other majors such as Business and Marketing, by rewarding them with study breaks! It is designed for hard-working, enthusiastic and motivated students to represent Google at their university.

The program is now in the US, Europe, India, Middle East and Africa. The three ambassadors in the University are the first in Kenya.

Becoming a Google Campus Ambassador can have many advantages for a student such as:

- strengthening a CV by adding the Google Campus Ambassador Program experience
- being up to date with exciting new Google products and features
- enhancing your professional development, leadership and communication skills
- helping you build relationships with Campus Ambassadors from other schools and disciplines
- getting a free Google branded merchandise at your events!

Three Faculty of Information Technology students Yasmin Mumin Nur (BBIT 3), Mathew Gathoka (BBIT 4), and Katembo Sanda (BBIT 4) named Google Ambassadors (GAs) in the University this year speak on video.

"I am glad to be part of Strathmore which is a great institution and I can assure you that the next time when we come back here, I will be here in my capacity as a Strathmore alum,"

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Ms Fina Desouza

Personal values affect performance at work

Research shows a link between personal values and organizational performance. Values have been used to characterize societies and individuals and to explain motivational basis of attitudes and behavior in organizations.

Miss Fina Desouza, a lecturer in the Faculty of Commerce presented a paper titled 'The role of personal values and performance of multinational service organizations' in Mauritius at a conference organized by the University of Mauritius from 24 to 27th August 2010.

The paper was co-authored with Dr Beatrice Dimba. The purpose of the paper was to establish the role of personal values in the performance of multinational service organizations in Kenya.

Research shows a link between personal values and organizational performance. Values have been used to characterize societies and individuals and to explain motivational basis of attitudes and behavior in organizations.

The paper found that personal values that best predict firm performance in Kenya are social power and equality. Most developing countries like Kenya are associated with high power distance while developed countries are associated with low power distance.

Among the conclusions reached was that more training in personal values and exposure to people who actually incorporate self-transcendent values

in their business dealings would enable managers in developing nations to incorporate those values in their cultural setting.

One crucial way of improving leadership in service organizations is by focusing on the eradication of corruption chiefly by educating leaders in values and helping them to internalize them.

Studies show that personal values in societies are similar. However, the priorities given to these values differ. Since power abuse leads to corruption in all spheres such as political, social and economic, concerted efforts by every citizen should be made to live virtues and to pass them to others.

The importance of personal values in employee performance is of increasing interest to management scholars and practitioners.

In the 'Wall Street Journal' of 16th December 2009, Gary Hamel wrote: Success in modern business "depends on a company's ability to unleash the initiative, imagination and passion of employees at all levels. And this can only happen if all those folks are connected heart and soul with their work, their company and its mission."



Chef Futaki from the Embassy of Japan (left) with STH students

School of Tourism and Hospitality Runs Demos on International Cuisines

Third year students in the School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) had two cultural and cuisine exposés in the month of August at Kibondeni College in Lavington.

The sessions were in line with their curriculum which has a unit on international cuisines. The first was the Japanese cultural and cuisine expose on 14th August. The second was the Mexican cuisine and cultural expose on 28th August. The Japanese session was facilitated by a chef from the embassy of Japan. He was assisted by wives of Japanese diplomats in Kenya.

A Mrs Suzuki showed the students how to prepare the delicious Japanese dessert Taiyaki which takes the shape of a fish. The students participated in the preparation of this dessert.

Ms Yamaguchi, the ambassador's chef then took over the class and the first thing she did was to show the students how Norimaki, a favorite dish of the Japanese is prepared.

It is considered a favorite to the Japanese because it contains rice which is a staple food in Japan. Practice centers were then set up for the students and all the Japanese ladies went around assisting the students to prepare this scrumptious treat.

The next meal to be prepared was Ingen no

gomaee a vegetable salad consisting of French beans, sesame seeds, soy sauce and sugar that the chef prepared in less than ten minutes. With the aid of an interpreter, Mr Hiroyui Futaki, the chef explained that though the salad took a short time to prepare, the end result was really popular in Japan.

The chef also demonstrated to the students how to prepare Sukiyaki a dish that contains sliced beef, Chinese cabbage and sugar. The highlight of this particular demonstration was when the chef was removing the alcohol from the sake (Japanese wine). She stunned the students with her skills in the kitchen.

The last dish of the day that the chef demonstrated was the famous Tempura. This is a complete meal in itself as it contains starch in the form of flour, protein in the form of prawns and eggs, and vegetables in the form of bell peppers.

A smooth batter was made and the ingredients were first dipped into the batter and then deep fried. The students were shown how to prepare the prawns for this particular meal.

In between the class there was a lot of laughter as the students enjoyed and thoroughly participated in the class. Their willingness to practice on the spot was a pleasant surprise to the Japanese

The chef also demonstrated to the students how to prepare Sukiyaki a dish that contains sliced beef, Chinese cabbage and sugar. The highlight of this particular demonstration was when the chef was removing the alcohol from the sake (Japanese wine).



Alumni enjoy a light moment at a reunion.

delegation. Although they had never done this kind of cooking before, by the end of the day the students had gained a lot and could do all the dishes demonstrated by themselves little supervision from the Japanese delegation.

At around 1.00pm, the table was laid out and the green tea from Japan was prepared and served in cups. The students and Japanese delegates first posed with the prepared foods before Mrs Okada, the wife of a Minister, demonstrated to the students how the food is served in the Japanese culture.

During lunch (a delightful affair) there was a screening of the movie Delicious Nippon which was about the foods of Japan. Mr Hitoshi Kikuchi, the head of Japan Information and Cultural Center joined the students and the ladies for lunch. It was a truly enjoyable learning experience and the STH wishes to extend its appreciation to the embassy of Japan for making this day possible. See more photos here: <http://www.ke.emb-japan.go.jp/japanesefood.html>

Mexican Day

Accompanied by the cultural attaché from the Mexican embassy Mr Jose Briseño, the chef at the embassy Ms Seselina introduced the students to Mexican food. Ms Seselina started with the Orange flan and showed the students how it was prepared. This was because the flan would take the longest time in the oven to cook. The students watched as she prepared the first bowl and then she set them to work to prepare the others just as she had shown them.

The students were then set to work to collect all the ingredients that would be used for the rest of the meal preparation. The Mexican embassy had decided to demonstrate the preparation of one complete meal as an introduction to Mexican cooking. At around 10.30am, the students had

finished collecting all the ingredients and chopping them as demonstrated by the chef. It was time to start preparing the meal.

The first meal to be demonstrated was the Chili corn carne which is a famous dish in Mexico. The dish is very rich as it contains both first class protein (meat) and second class protein (beans). The chef then demonstrated how to prepare Guacamole, a dip that is used when eating the Mexican Tortillas or Potato Crisps. The dip can also be used as a side to the main dish and when made without peppers, it is used to moderate the hotness of the food.

The Mexican rice was the next in line to be demonstrated. The rice is very rich in vegetables and can be eaten as a complete meal in itself. The vegetables had to be prepared in a special way which the chef gladly demonstrated to the students. Last but not least was the demonstration on how to prepare the Coriander soup.

The soup was very rich as the chef showed the students how to prepare it using cream and gave them alternatives in case there is no cream available. At around 1.00pm, the students together with the guests sat down to sample and enjoy the meal which they had prepared. During lunch, the students sought to find out all they could about Mexican culture.

Mr Briseño answered all their queries. Students found out that Mexicans love fruits as they have them in their country and that their lifestyle is not all that different from the Kenyan lifestyle. The Local, regional and International cuisines unit explores others cuisines including Philippines, Italian, Spanish, Ethiopian Ugandan and West Africa among others.



Mr Eric Saulo (left), the University's Advancement Manager presenting toys and clothes COP Administrator Ms Roselyne Warau (right)

What Happened During Community Week 2010?

The 2010 Community Week took place from Monday 26th to Saturday 31st July. It was an opportunity for students and staff to live the spirit of service in a special way. The week started on a bright note with the Advancement Office presenting clothes and toys from Spain.

The first outreach activity was a visit to immediate neighbors Kwetu Home of Peace, a street children rehabilitation centre. Students and staff donated clothing and food items to the home.

Participants visited Mbagathi District Hospital on the second day. The hospital is only a few kilometers from the University. Participants worked in wards that host people living with Aids. The inadequate facilities and poor conditions of the wards moved the participants deeply. Beds in the ward are shared by up to three people and the beddings are not enough and are mostly worn out.

"We are exploring the possibilities of improving the situation at the hospital in any way we can," said Marcos Migeri, the University Relations Director. "The Community Outreach Program (COP) will

approach well wishers to help improve the situation at Mbagathi Hospital," he added.

COP ferried a bus full of passionate environmentalists from the University to Kereita Forest in Limuru to plant trees on Wednesday, 28th July. Kereita forest is undergoing rehabilitation after a decade long tree felling exercise by saw millers and charcoal burners. Participants planted hundreds of indigenous trees in the bare-stumped land.

Meanwhile, hundreds of volunteers were donating blood at the Blood Link Foundation tents pitched at the University on the same day. The blood donation exercise extended to the next day. The turnout at event was great.

On Friday, 30th July, activities were moved to Watoto Wema Home in Kayole. COP members donated clothing and food items to the home and held a fun day for the children.

The week was crowned on Saturday, 31st July when members of staff and students visited Naivasha Maximum Security Prison.

Upcoming events:

- *Alumni reunion Kisumu – 30th October 2010*

- *Homecoming lunch for all alumni living in the Diaspora – December 2010*

Details of the above events to be communicated later

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Strathmore University
Ole Sangale Road, Madaraka
P.O. Box 59857, 00200
City Square, Nairobi
Tel 254-020-606155, Fax 254-020-607498
www.strathmore.edu
www.salo-kenya.org
salo@strathmore.edu or pkuria@strathmore.edu