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ALUMS MAKING A MARK

INTERVIEW, P10-11

100yrs of Bishop Tucker Building



Ex-Vice Chancellors on UCU's past, future

Ebenezer



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
A Center of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

and **The Standard** with UgandaPartners

1 Samuel 7:12: Thus far the Lord has helped us

FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2022

2,000 GRADUATE

- One student to receive degree award posthumously
- First total in-person ceremony since outbreak of Covid-19



Some graduands who picked up caps and gowns ahead of the celebration pose at UCU. The July 2022 graduates receive diplomas, bachelor's and master's degrees in different disciplines. Story on Page 2.

How blended learning helped UCU students



Sh520m in dental equipment arrives

P17



Doug Fountain

Over 2,000 graduate today

By Jimmy Siyasa

Public lecture focuses on local health systems

By Jimmy Siyasa

Many developing countries have poorly funded and underdeveloped health care systems. Good health care tends to be a privilege for few, with ongoing concern about how local health systems can be improved for more people.

It is on the basis of this that Doug Fountain, a former UCU Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance and External Relations, was scheduled to give a public lecture on July 27, on the topic "Christian University: The Strongest Asset for Building Resilient Local Health Systems."

Doug, now living in Maryland, USA, is the Executive Director of Christian Connections for International Health, a global network of over 100 organisations that works to advance health and wholeness from a Christian perspective.

Doug was part of the planning for UCU's School of Medicine that launched in 2018.

Joel Okullo, the Chairperson of the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council, was the invited discussant for the Wednesday lecture while Gen. Katumba Wamala, the Minister of Works and Transport, was invited to be the Guest of Honour.



"UCU's motto, vision, and core values form the standards to distinguish our graduates with excellent academic performance and credible character. One key message to students is that both in public and in private, they should hold to sound moral character, as defined by Biblical principles of upholding honesty, transparency, truthfulness, faithfulness, and exercising humility. At the end of the day, all honour and glory go to God, for all that we have and what we are, is given to us in trust, for God's glory." - David Mugezi, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration

Over 2,000 Uganda Christian University (UCU) students are expected to be part of today's graduation ceremony at the main campus in Mukono. Of these, 55 students have graduated with First Class.

The University Chancellor, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephen Kazimba Mugalu, will preside over the graduation. Kazimba is the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda.

Top University administrators led by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Aaron Mushengyezi, will also be present at the ceremony. UCU's graduation ceremonies start with the commissioning services of the graduating students a day before, in the Nkoyoyo Hall. The 23rd graduation will be the institution's first total in-person ceremony since the outbreak of Covid-19 more than two years ago.

The previous two graduation ceremonies — on December 18, 2020, and October 22, 2021 — were virtual, in line with the Uganda Government's policy of observing the Covid-19 Standard Operating Procedures.

At the time, the Government had banned public gatherings, to reduce avenues through which the Covid-19 pandemic can spread.

The graduating students for the 23rd ceremony are from seven of UCU's 11 faculties and schools — the School of Social Sciences, School of Business, School of Law, School of Education, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, School of Journalism, Media and Communication, and the Faculty of Engineering, Design and Technology.

The graduating students are also coming from some of UCU's constituent colleges, such as Bishop Barham; Kampala Campus and study centres.

The Schools of Medicine and Dentistry; Faculty of Public Health, Nursing and Midwifery; and Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology have no graduating students for this ceremony.

The School of Medicine and School of Dentistry, started in 2018, are expected to have the first graduates of their five-year programmes by late 2023.

One student, Owen Alleluya, is expected to receive his Bachelor of Agricultural Science and Entrepreneurship award posthumously.

In line with UCU's stepped-up online services, the July 29, 2022, graduation ceremony is to



Invited Chief Guest

Former Chairperson of the University Council, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Sheldon Mwesigwa, is expected to be the Chief Guest. Mwesigwa, the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Ankole, is also a former Dean of UCU's Faculty of Education. The faculty has since transitioned into a school.

Mwesigwa, appointed bishop on July 18, 2010, is a former deputy head teacher of Kibubura Girls' School in Ibanda district, western Uganda. He was also once the chaplain at Ntare School, where he also served as deputy head teacher.

Mwesigwa is an alumnus of the Bishop Tucker Theological College, where he studied from 1987 to 1990. He also served as Senior Lecturer at UCU, Head of the Department of Education and Arts, from 2005 to 2010. He was also a UCU Council member and Chair UCU Council from 2012 to 2020.

UCU in years...

1922: The year the Bishop Tucker Building, which is 100 years old this year, was inaugurated. This was after three years of construction. The building hosts, among others, the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

1997: The year UCU started, having transitioned from the Bishop Tucker Theological College. UCU was established by the Province of the Church of Uganda at the Bishop Tucker Theological College. The college was named after Bishop Alfred Tucker, a Christian missionary from England.

2022: UCU is 25 years old this year. The institution has transformed many lives through its theme: A Complete Education for a Complete Person. The institution today boasts five campuses and nearly 13,000 students.

be streamed live on the university's YouTube page, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMrnyGybZpZsqacElp_gfO/feature, as well as its other social media platforms.

This year marks 25 years of existence of UCU. It also marks 100 years of existence of the iconic Bishop Tucker Building, the face of the university.

The building hosts, among others, the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

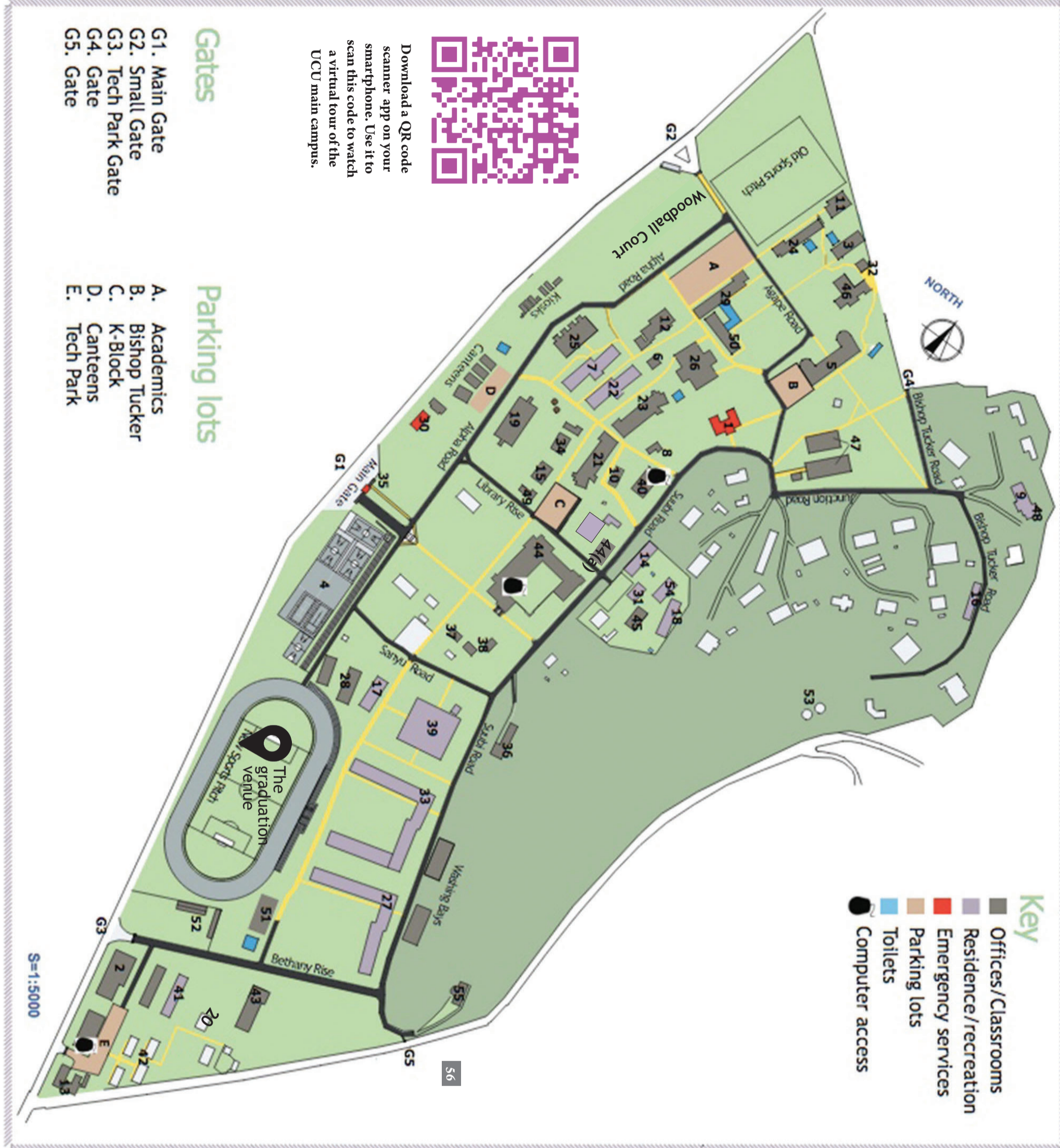
UCU started in 1997, having transitioned from the Bishop Tucker Theological College. The college was named after Bishop Alfred Tucker, a Christian missionary from England.

Today, with five campuses and nearly 13,000 students, UCU has become a trusted education brand and a household name in higher education in the East Africa region. UCU is one of the fastest growing, modern higher education institutions in Uganda.

At the graduation ceremony last year, Chief Guest Mrs. Janet Museveni, the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, having heard the story of the success UCU had made in virtual learning, said she was impressed by the university's "robust online education programme" and encouraged UCU to "share best practices with other institutions."

Some academics of UCU have since participated in community outreach programmes, teaching parents how to help their children benefit from the opportunities that online learning offers.

Also, leaders from Greenhill Academy met with UCU e-learning staff in December last year, to keep abreast of virtual learning best practices.



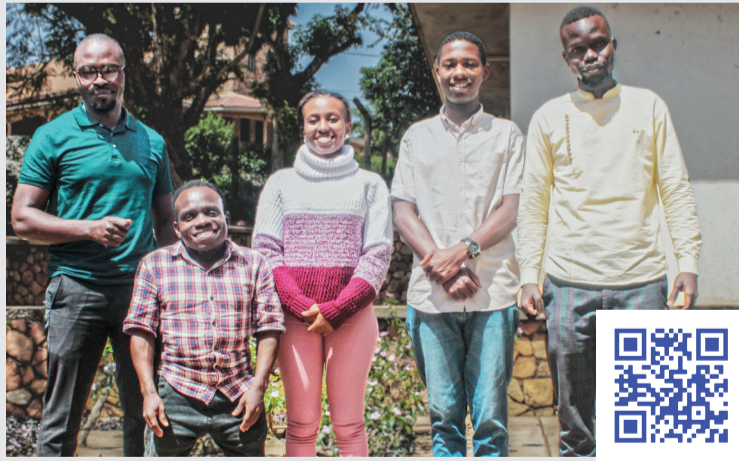
ABOUT US

The *Ebenzer* has been produced as a collaborative venture among the [Uganda Christian University's](#) Department of Communication and Public Relations, *The Standard* of the UCU School of Journalism, Media and Communication, and the [Uganda Partners](#).

The *Ebenzer* is not just a print product, but a convergence of print, audio, visual and online products, using the cutting-edge technology that the Quick Response (QR) two-dimensional bar code offers. Enjoy the experience using the *Ebenzer* newspaper.



Uganda Partners Executive Director Mark Bartels, centre, cuts a cake to celebrate the first year of an on-line, hands-on collaboration between the USA-based nonprofit and the Uganda Christian University (UCU) School of Journalism, Media and Communication. The NGO's e-lab was launched in January 2021 to offer an opportunity for students to get resume-building, real-world experience in print and audio-visual production while providing communication services to Partners, which has been supporting UCU programmes, students, activities and services for more than two decades. The Partners website is www.ugandapartners.org. Information also can be found through the organization's Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages. Scan the QR code on the photo to visit the Uganda Partners website, where you will read more stories about UCU.



Interns of *The Standard* with their supervisor, Rogers Akanyijuka (left). *The Standard* is a Uganda Christian University newspaper established in May 2007 under the Mass Communication Department and operated today under the School of Journalism, Media and Communication. Currently, it operates through a multimedia platform that works as a training lab for students while providing news, features, opinion and other stories for the university community and others. Many leaders in the media and other career fields have received their professional launch from *The Standard*. The content, including visuals and podcasts, can be accessed at <https://standard.ucu.ac.ug>. Scan the QR code on the photo to visit *The Standard* website, where you will read, watch and listen to more stories about UCU.

Economic solution to something fishy in Uganda

Building expertise

Mutyaba is building expertise in aquaculture, which refers to raising fish in either earthen ponds or cage units submerged in natural water bodies. Curiosity, he has found, can be a stronger driver to success than prior knowledge or expectations. "I recalled first seeing cage fishing promoted in 2010," Mutyaba said. "What I didn't know then fascinated me as much as what I now know." Once learned, catching fish in a mesh enclosure is a more reliable method than net casting. Tilapia, which is Mutyaba's favourite to eat followed by catfish, is the most common in Uganda. (Nile perch, according to Livingstone, is equally tasty, but the smell lingers on your body for hours.)



By **Patty Huston-Holm**

(This article was edited from the July 2021 published version)

John Livingstone Mutyaba is not a fisherman. He's never baited a hook on a line, cast a net or set up a cage. But he knows a lot about fishing. So much so that the head of Department of Natural Resource Economics and Agribusiness in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at Uganda Christian University (UCU) is increasingly being acknowledged for his research on Lake Victoria waters. Mutyaba's explanation for his lack of practical experience is simple. He doesn't have the time. He has all the knowledge required for cage fish farming but a schedule packed with family, with teaching and with his own learning and research towards a doctoral degree. Capture fishing (with a net) is the most practiced activity in the fishery dependent communities in Uganda. Current statistics show



John Livingstone Mutyaba on Lake Victoria, doing his research



Scan this QR code and [watch Mutyaba explaining how important his research is](#)

that almost 99% of the people living in the fishing communities derive their livelihoods through capture fishing and also use heavy alcoholic beverages and small non-motorized handmade boats. Mutyaba's growing expertise is likewise easy to explain. He has subject matter knowledge in agriculture, the economy, education, research and planning. Mutyaba, who is the only agricultural economist at UCU, is a testament to understanding how various academic disciplines intersect. He uses information from multiple specialties in his Egerton University (Kenya) doctoral research focused on cage fish farming technologies. The research, entitled "Effect of Information Links and Flow through Social Networks on Smallholder Farmers' Awareness and Adoption of Cage Fish Technologies in Uganda," involves new institutional economics, resource economics, social science and aquaculture. Regarding economics, Uganda could make more money in its fishing industry if the country took a lesson from the playbook of China, which is the world's biggest fish producer. Uganda is geographically only 2.5% the size of China so the

volume would never be as great, but water from such lakes as Victoria, Albert, Edward and George covers 18% of the country's surface. With better planning and implementing cage fish farming technologies, Ugandans would improve their economic standing and reputation for quality fish. "Are you sure you want to eat fish that comes from China?" Mutyaba queried with a chuckle. He referenced China's seafood that has been under repeated scrutiny for chemical additions that violate safety regulations. He added that with cleaner water and neutral pH levels of Lake Victoria waters, "Our fish tastes better, is better for you and is very unique in the world."

Regarding societal relationships, Mutyaba has found that most women and younger people in Uganda quickly embrace new ways of doing things, namely raising fish in cage technologies instead of capture fishing, while older men are reluctant to give up their traditional capture fishing lifestyle. "Wives have a better understanding of what is needed to support their families," Mutyaba said. "The men come in during the selling process but often take the money for themselves... or destroy or steal from somebody's cage." Fortunately, he added, the Ugandan enforcement of laws for theft and destruction is more frequent to deter these incidences. As with all good researchers, the more he knows, the more Mutyaba wants to know. Among his many mentors and influencers is Thomas Gurley, a former UCU Fulbright Scholar and a research and development director at Aerop Development. With Gurley, now living in South Carolina, the project was on land, focusing on tomatoes. Other projects have involved cassava and livestock, namely cows. Since completing Bishop Senior School (Mukono) and through studies at Bukalasa National Agricultural College, Martyrs University and now Egerton,

Mutyaba has found learning fascinating. He says that learning and research should be more than about grades and degree attainment. "I hope what I have informs policymakers, maybe even to provide incentives for the more economical cage fishing," he said. "I hope that my engagement changes the traditional fishing mindset of some locals... that they can see the added market value not just locally but for loading onto trucks to Kenya, the Congo, South Sudan and even exported to the UK." Within Mutyaba's hectic schedule and ambitions, God is ever present, he said, quoting his favorite scripture from Joshua 1, verse 5: No one will be able to stand up against you, all the days of your life... I will never leave you nor forsake you.

(This story is supplemented with two short videos created by students at Uganda Christian University. The lead developer was Jimmy Siyasa, a post-graduate student in the UCU School of Journalism, Media and Communication. The videos on cage fish farming and voices of farmers about fishing challenges around Lake Victoria are on the Uganda Partners YouTube page.)



By **Agatha N. Biira**

(This article was edited from the March 2022 published version)

To Rosette Kishero's family, coffee is gold. It has put bread on the table. As early as the time when she was in secondary school, Kishero knew the value of the crop for her family's survival and as gifts to others. Whenever she wanted to gift someone, it was either a coffee seedling or coffee beans. Within the past year, Kishero established a business enterprise that she hopes will enable the whole world to get a feel of the aroma of her family's coffee. Kishero's initial idea was to operate a nursery bed, but her mother, Olive, convinced her that it was more lucrative to roast coffee. Thus, Olivaz Coffee, a brand named after Kishero's mother, was born. "I was inspired by the encouragement from people about our coffee, and yet we had never promoted it as our specific brand," said Kishero, a third-year student

Kishero brings more Ugandans to coffee table



Olivaz coffee after packaging. Inset is Kishero, a third-year law student at UCU and coffee entrepreneur

Low consumption

Regarding local sales and despite being the second leading producer of coffee in Africa and the leading exporter in the continent, Ugandans themselves consume less than 10% of the country's coffee. Despite that statistic, Kishero is hopeful that the aroma and the brand that she is building around coffee will play a role in inviting more people to the beverage table.

of Bachelor of Laws at Uganda Christian University (UCU). Prior to joining UCU, Kishero attended Nkokonjeru Primary School and Seeta High School, both in central Uganda. She said naming the coffee-roasting business after her mother was a reward to

her for the sweat her mom broke working in the coffee plantation. "We have grown up, studied and lived because of coffee," said Kishero, of eastern Uganda. "It has been my family's main source of income. I wanted to keep the legacy."

She says she was introduced to the process of branding coffee by her friends who were already in the business at Wild Coffee Bar. "They are the ones who showed me the way; how to try out roasting, where to find roasters and grinders," said Kishero. "To date, they still counsel and guide me."

Kishero started the business with capital of sh500,000 (about \$140) that she earned from another business she operated in 2020. She says part of that money was used for buying packaging materials for the coffee. She owns a roasting and grinding machine, but since she lacks expertise in that process, she does the roasting and grinding at another place, where professional roasters take the beans through the "medium roast." "If I were to roast and grind something, I would do it for home use only," Kishero explains. "When it comes to my customers, I want to give them top notch coffee. I go to professionals to roast and grind." The support Kishero got from her family has enabled her business to grow steadily. She says the law degree course that she is pursuing has helped her learn how to start and run a business. "At the time I was beginning my business, we were starting a course unit called Business Association, where we were taught how to operate businesses and companies," Kishero explains, adding: "So, whenever I got stuck somewhere, I consulted my lecturers and applied the knowledge they gave me to my business." Time permitting, Kishero hopes to start a Coffee Club before leaving UCU as well as to improve on a marketing plan.

First birding course students spread their wings



UCU Vice Chancellor Assoc. Prof. Aaron Mushengezei (second from left) helps cut cake at the birding course graduation. Also pictured are Mrs. Mary Kajumba of the Private Sector Foundation; Assoc. Dean of the School of Business Mrs. Elsie Nsiyona; and Dr. Martin Lwanga, former Dean of the School of Business



By **Eriah Lule**

(This article was edited from the August 2021 published version)

Forty students who enrolled for the inaugural birding course class at the Uganda Christian University have flown the nest. The students, who have been studying since February 2021, graduated at a low-key ceremony held at Uganda Christian University's (UCU) Nkooyo Hall in May 2021. They were awarded certificates recognising them as birdwatchers. The three-month course, taught as an evening programme, was conducted at the UCU's Kampala campus. The course was made possible through a partnership between UCU and the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, where the university won a sh238 million (about \$65,000) grant to train students, especially those pursuing the degree of

Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the School of Business. The students were taught the economic potential of the birding industry, important bird areas in Uganda, professional bird guiding as a career, marketing bird watching locally and globally, establishing and running a birding tour company, as well as conservation and protection of bird habitats. Uganda has more than 1,000 bird species, according to the African Wildlife Foundation, making the country one of the richest destinations for birding in Africa. More than half of the continent's bird species are in Uganda. "We have a big gap in the tourism industry, but with such training, the industry will grow faster," said Agnes Joy Kamugisha, one of the graduates. "During the training, I had the opportunity to learn how to associate with my customers, how to develop good business ethics, bookkeeping and many other things that I believe when I put into practice, my business will live to see its 30th birthday," Kamugisha added. Mary Kajumba, an official from the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, who spoke



Fact
Uganda Christian University was launched in 1997, with only 270 students.

“Students were taught the economic potential of the birding industry, important bird areas in Uganda and professional bird guiding as a career.”

need much capital," she said. "I am convinced we are training job creators and not seekers... We hope that this project is rolled out to other universities all over the country after being approved by the National Council for Higher Education." Prof. Aaron Mushengezei, the UCU Vice Chancellor, said the course fulfills his objective of imparting skills-based learning. "I didn't understand the aim of the project at first, until I was given a lecture on how practical it was, fulfilling my long-term desire of creating skills-based courses that can bridge the gap between industry and the classroom," Mushengezei said. UCU is the only institution of higher learning offering a course in birding. Johnnie Kamugisha, a professional birder and the CEO of Johnny Safaris, is optimistic about the impact of the birding project. "This project will produce professionals for our industry. I assure you that with such a course, we shall uplift the tourism industry in this country," Kamugisha, one of the course's instructors, said.

Ex-Guild President Amponda lightens burdens of the needy



By **Eriah Lule**

(This article was edited from the August 2021 published version)

Amponda Kenneth Agaba believes that to rise, one must lift others. True to this credence, he has participated in many charity causes, while rising to positions of leadership. One of those leadership positions while finishing his Bachelor of Laws degree in 2021 was that of Guild President of Uganda Christian University (UCU). Among his charitable causes at that time was the founding of a not-for-profit organization, the Amponda Foundation, a vehicle to boost others.



Amponda packing Covid relief food items that were donated to the needy in 2021

As a fourth-year student at UCU, and through the Amponda Foundation, Agaba was pivotal in the lives of students living in distress during the two lockdowns that Uganda had due to the Covid-19

pandemic. Uganda had a three-month lockdown from March to June in 2020 and for 42 days, from June to July in the same year. "We came to the rescue of students, mostly those who were in hostels," he said, adding that they provided food to students in hostels at Kyambogo University, as well as at

UCU. In addition to the food items, Agaba said they gave out money to help students with other survival needs. The university students have not been the only beneficiaries of Amponda Foundation. Good Samaritan Primary School, an institution in Mukono for Persons

Examples of previous help offered

In 2016, when Agaba joined A'level at Gombe Secondary School in central Uganda, he successfully contested for the position of Scripture Union leader at the school.

As a leader, he thought of a signature activity that would leave an indelible mark. At the time, there were brilliant, needy students who could not afford the fees at the school.

Agaba and his colleagues rolled up their sleeves and began a fundraising campaign among students and other members of the school community to help these disadvantaged students. On many occasions, they contributed money to the school's financial aid purse. From this purse, the school got money to meet the tuition fees of the students in need.

At one point, they collected up to sh700,000 (about \$200) from students, for this cause. And that was not all. Agaba also often rallied his fellow students to donate items, such as soap, which they would take to patients at the nearby Gombe Hospital.

the school. The foundation also donated \$225 toward the building of a PWD-accessible shopping centre in Mukono. While dishing out donations during the Covid-19 lockdown, Agaba's charity struggled. He says the closure of education institutions was a barrier to securing more

funds. That's when a UCU alumnus, Herbert Mukuru, who also runs a similar charity - Upendo Mikono - came to the rescue. Agaba first met Mukuru at the latter's restaurant. The next time he met Mukuru, he was in their class, soliciting donations, which they could take together to PWDs.

UCU teaches schools e-learning best practices

By **Ian Asabo**

(This article was edited from the January 2022 published version)

The [Uganda Christian University \(UCU\) e-learning](#) candle is spreading its light to other institutions in the country. Among the recent beneficiaries is Greenhill Academy, a group of Christian-founded primary and secondary schools in Kampala. Leaders from the Academy met with UCU e-learning staff for a virtual learning seminar in December 2021.

During the UCU visit, Greenhill Academy officials gained a better understanding of how UCU accommodated learners virtually during the Covid-19 lockdown when in-person learning was halted in the country.

Greenhill Academy Rector Joy Veronica Maraka led the Academy's staff who attended the seminar. The head of the UCU Online Distance Learning Department, the Rev. Dr. Jessica Hughes, provided insight into how classes are taught on the platforms, highlighting how the switch to online classes has improved her work. She said students prefer having small assessments, which makes it easier to track their progress during the semester.

"Online classes have provided flexibility in the way lectures are conducted because lecturers can evaluate students through small quizzes and assignments, which enables critical thinking," she told the delegation from Greenhill Academy.

The Rev. Dr. Hughes proposed the evaluation of students on a "more regular basis through videos, quizzes and questions that allow for more critical thinking to eliminate the aspect of cramming."

During UCU's 22nd graduation ceremony on October 22, 2021, Uganda's First Lady and education minister, Mrs. Janet Museveni, said she was impressed by UCU's "robust online education programme" and encouraged the University to share best practices with other institutions.

UCU's Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs, the Rev. Dr. John Kitayimbwa, who also attended the seminar, said the University was ready to partner with Greenhill Academy.

"This is a great opportunity to find ways of changing the way teaching is conducted," Kitayimbwa said, encouraging Greenhill Academy to take the lead and show other schools that online learning is the way to go, and that with it, "the possibilities of learning are endless."

Kitayimbwa said the University has invested a lot in the networking, IT department and library database, which work in unison to provide a seamless experience for students.

The University has invested about sh1.4b (\$395,000) on e-learning, management information systems and networking, Kitayimbwa said.

Recently, UCU Partners donated \$50,000 (about sh170m) to the University to help it expand the e-learning platform. Mark Bartels, UCU Partners executive director, said the organization contributed the funds following a call by the university's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Aaron Mushengyezi, for external funders to support the e-learning infrastructure.

Greenhill Academy Rector Joy Veronica Maraka thanked UCU for hosting them, stating that they will "pick ideas from the session and follow in the footsteps of UCU in evolving education in Uganda."

At a virtual dialogue held in August 2021 to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on education institutions in Uganda, Mushengyezi advised institutions to consider a rigorous shift towards online distance learning and service delivery, so that future lockdowns do not affect operations and learning.



A Greenhill Academy teacher asks a question during the seminar held last year

22nd

During UCU's 22nd graduation ceremony on October 22, 2021, Uganda's education minister, Mrs. Janet Museveni, said she was impressed by UCU's "robust online education programme" and encouraged the University to share best practices with other institutions.

As part of the Uganda Christian University (UCU) and Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology anniversaries of 25 and 100 years, respectively, this year, there will be a public lecture on October 26, 2022. The invited guest of honour is Uganda President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

Planned to take place in Nkoyoyo Hall on the UCU Mukono campus, two former UCU Vice Chancellors will be featured during the lecture, addressing the topic, "The beginnings of Private Higher Education in Uganda."

The Rev. Prof. Stephen Noll, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies, Trinity School for Ministry, Pennsylvania, USA, will be the lecturer; and the Rev. Canon Dr. John Musisi Senyonyi, mathematician, academic and evangelist in Mukono, Uganda, will lead the discussion. The two VCs were interviewed by John Semakula, head of undergraduate programs with the UCU School of Journalism, Media and Communication; and Patty Huston-Holm, Communications Director, Uganda Partners.



Former Busoga Bishop Michael Kyomya, former Archbishops Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo (RIP) and Luke Orombi with Senyonyi and Noll



The Senyonyis and the Nolls

Ex-Vice Chancellors speak about past, future of UCU

How did you see your role as VC at UCU, and what years did you serve at the helm?
Noll:

I was the first, the "pioneer" Vice Chancellor, although I did not take office until September 2000 (Bishop Eliphaz Maari, the former Principal of Bishop Tucker College, had served as Acting VC from 1997-2000).

Becoming VC was a reach, as they say. My prior roles in the States had been as "deputy." In addition, I had to learn specific customs in Uganda, for instance, going first in the banquet line, even ahead of my wife (contrary to the "ladies first" American tradition)!

I have sometimes said that I tried to emulate two practices from African leadership as I observed it. The first was the "council of elders." I worked closely and listened carefully to my colleagues on the academic and administrative staff. In many cases, I was learning "how do you do things here?" At the same time, I came to see that, as the "big drum," my word settled matters and would be carried out by the staff willingly and promptly.

I suppose my greatest contribution was as vision-bearer for Uganda Christian University as an authentically Christian institution, fleshing out what the "Christian" in its title stands for. I think UCU's founders in the Church of Uganda held that vision implicitly, but I brought experience and wisdom from the long tradition of private Christian education in the United States and from my involvement in confessional institutions and movements that had confronted the increasing secularism of Western Christianity and culture.

The exciting challenge for me was to discern how the vision of Christian higher education might work itself out in an African setting. Here I had much to learn and much to trust God for.

Senyonyi:

I served as VC of UCU from September 2010 to the end of August 2020, a total of 10 years. But I worked at UCU in different portfolios from January 2001.

I was the CEO of the University and hence, head of all the different aspects of the University's life.

Above all, I considered the importance of keeping faithful to the Christian Identity of UCU. This meant keeping the functioning of the University at its best in all its services, especially to students, as a testimony to Christ. This included the preservation and animation of Christian faith, keeping academic life on its cutting edge, retaining a committed, competent

and growing staff at all levels, ensuring modern infrastructure, financial integrity, and developing and maintaining engaged partnerships.

I was also intent that UCU should set standards both in Uganda and the Africa region.

Why is it important for UCU to celebrate 25 years of existence and for Bishop Tucker to commemorate 100 years?

Noll:

Anniversaries are celebratory milestones, and milestones are important to recall the road one has taken in the past and the way forward in the future. I frequently reminded students that a university or college is a "dear mother," an alma mater, who would ever be part of their heritage.

None of the original Bishop Tucker College students are alive today, but they are on its honor roll. Most of the alumni of UCU are still alive and taking places of importance in Uganda and beyond, but they, too, will be remembered in its history.

Senyonyi:

Anniversaries are times of reflection on the journey so far, and an opportunity for recasting and re-planning, considering the changed or changing market landscapes. Thus, celebration of the past 25 years of existence helps to maximize use of the past to build a greater future. The same applies to Bishop Tucker's 100 years.

In 2013, the same Divinity School remembered its conception in 1913; I would expect this year's commemoration to awaken BTSdT to the new national and global challenges and opportunities facing the church and the work of mission so that her graduates are well equipped for effective dissemination of the Gospel of Christ.

One key challenge of UCU's former and current Vice-Chancellors is mobilizing funds to run the University. How did you address the challenge?

Noll:

It is indeed a heavy burden for the Vice Chancellor to seek funding to maintain the University's mission. As an American, I was able to raise funding for student scholarships and for capital projects from outside donors, especially through our Uganda Partners societies in USA, UK and Australia.

However, the main source of recurrent funds came from students and their parents. We struggled with keeping fees moderate while at the same time making clear that an excellent university is a cost-intensive enterprise and that investment in a student's education is worth

UCU's top achievements in the past 25 years

What would you say are the top three achievements at UCU in the past 25 years?

Noll:

I suppose I would see the top three achievements during my tenure to be: 1) preparing UCU to receive the first Charter in Uganda; 2) planning and executing the expanded campus and its facilities; and 3) keeping its focus on the Gospel by calling and equipping clergy and lay leaders for the church, the nation and the world.

Senyonyi:

First, UCU has shown that a private university in Uganda can compete favorably and even beat a well-financed public university to be the university of choice for many bright students. Among the private universities, none has achieved UCU's status.

Many of their Vice Chancellors came to consult with me for best practices



The Stephen and Peggy Noll Lecture Block

the sacrifice made by a student and his or her supporters.

Senyonyi:

In reality, almost every problem I faced could be reduced to meagre finances for running the University. Consequently, the burden of financing was increasingly cast on students. The bottom line was exercising stringent controls and adherence to cash flows, as we tried to implement the budget.

During my first years, the Ugandan economy was not too badly off and we afforded the basics

and regarded my voice in the public square as their voice. Some of the public university Vice Chancellors also benchmarked with UCU.

UCU has shown that a Christian university can produce graduates that the market prefers to others because of the added values and Christian ethos. Ironically, this also worked in the favor of staff members who sought job opportunities elsewhere. In fact, given the volatile environment in universities, UCU has shown that the Christian worldview gives stability to university education and students can enjoy the best atmosphere for study.

UCU pioneered defining a 'Christian university' for Uganda. This is important because prior to the founding of UCU, no university was intentional about Christian faith matters, even those that were church-founded.

Now, all universities in Uganda founded by Christian churches or by Christians, have attempted to use UCU's model, even to the detail of worship services.

Something interesting happened one time when students asked me to increase fees to put asphalt on the dusty roads. They had called for work on the roads.

After sensitization of the Guild Leaders about the costs involved, computed as a cost for each student, the leaders suggested we do it. It is the only time students asked the University to increase fees!

How would you describe the role and value of the Church of Uganda regarding UCU? Some voices say the Church should hand over UCU to government (to become government aided) to alleviate the challenge of increasing operational costs. What is your view?

Noll:

The founding of Uganda Christian University, along with Bishop Tucker College, is part of the sacred history of Church of Uganda. The Church through its House of Bishops upholds the Christian identity of UCU, and the Archbishop, as Chancellor, has the right of regular or special visitation.

The Government is responsible to provide for the education of its citizens, which is why it reached out to private and religious bodies to take on the burden as the university population exploded.

Just as Government partners with business and NGOs for the common good, so there are ways it can and should work with private universities. But for the Church of Uganda to hand over UCU to government control would be contrary to its Charter and its distinctive identity and would be a tragic mistake.

Senyonyi:

The Church of Uganda's proprietorship of the University is vital for preservation and energizing of the original purpose and vision for founding the University. Whereas Church of Uganda involvement in the University is legally delineated, and maybe, restricted, the Church has been given latitude and forums through which this can be done.

In particular, the Church should strengthen its advocacy for UCU to Government, to the Church organs and to the general public. The Church needs to lend its extensive credibility to UCU, to use its large and diverse membership and its public clout to advocate for legal frameworks that enable an environment supportive to the thriving of private education in Uganda.

The Archbishop and all Church of Uganda

leaders owe it to themselves to keep keen interest in what is going on at UCU.

Handing over UCU from the Church to the government would be a mega-mistake for several reasons. People suggest this easy way due to financial hardships, but the University can find ways to survive through temporary hardships.

First, I know of no Government aided university in Uganda, and there is no such arrangement in the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA); the Law exclusively provides for either a public or a private university. Government can only own the university.

Secondly, Governments are incurably inefficient and insufferably bureaucratic. This would inevitably hinder innovative management ways for running the University.

Thirdly, all assets of the University would now be vested with Government, not the Church of Uganda, including its precious historic structure and maybe, the archives of the Church of Uganda.

Finally, and most importantly, a take-over would nullify the original vision of the Church, as is already happening with another university that Government is taking over. UCU would have to become a secular university under such an arrangement – it would become like the poorly run public universities we have in Uganda currently.

Where do you want to see UCU in the next 25 years?

Noll:

I would hope that UCU will maintain (and deserve) its reputation as a centre of excellence and for providing a "complete education for a complete person." As it matures, I would expect that UCU will continue to develop new programmes, research partnerships, and international networks. At the same time, I would hope that it can continue to provide a firm foundation for the undergraduate population in their personal, professional and spiritual lives.

Senyonyi:

UCU should be on the cutting edge in research within its fields of study.

UCU should be producing graduates that are taking up leadership roles in all spheres in their countries – in politics, business, law, medicine, agriculture, engineering, and others.

UCU should be a continent-wide first-class university mentioned among the top twenty or so in Africa, and routinely attracting students from across the continent.

Fact

Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo (RIP) was the first Chancellor of Uganda Christian University. The UCU Chancellor is always the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda. To honour Nkoyoyo's services to the university, UCU named its multipurpose hall after Church of Uganda's sixth archbishop. Nkoyoyo died in January 2018.

Tracing back the origins of one of UCU's oldest buildings as it makes a century

It's 100 years

Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology



By Esther Byoona

(This article was edited from the March 2021 published version)

Gray hair. Walking stick. Wrinkles. These are perfect descriptions of a centenarian.

If that centenarian is a building, its architecture is likely to be in sharp contrast with other younger buildings around it. The appearance of Uganda Christian University's (UCU) Bishop Tucker building, which joins the club of centenarians in 2022, seizes attention.

Its medieval architecture starkly differs from that of most buildings on the Mukono campus. The neatly arranged baked clay brick walls tell of a time when such a building was associated with royalty and colonial administrators.

A closer look over the center arch of the building's entrance confirms this. The year "1922" is inscribed. Uganda was under colonial administration from 1894 to 1962.

The Bishop Tucker building, marking 100 years, was named after the late Bishop Alfred Robert Tucker, an Anglican Bishop of Uganda from 1890 to 1911. Prior to that, he was the Anglican Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa.

The walkway to the building is paved with baked clay tiles. A plaque at the easterly side of the building's entrance tells the origin of both the faculty and the facility that houses it. It reads: "To the Glory of God... the memory of Alfred Robert Tucker, D.D., LL. D., Bishop of Uganda 1890-1911..."



1 The start
The construction of the Bishop Tucker Building started in 1919, and was completed in 1922. Bishop Alfred Robert Tucker, after whom the building was named, was the Anglican Bishop of Uganda from 1890 to 1911.

2 The walls
The building's medieval architecture is a sharp contrast from others around it. Its baked clay brick walls are evidence of the type of construction materials that were being used for high-end structures at the time of its birth.

3 In the building
On one end of the building is the Thornycroft Chapel and the Principals Hall, which is the university's boardroom, on the other. The Vice Chancellor's office is also situated in the building and sits in between the chapel and the boardroom.

4 The resources
The resources for the building were from well-wishers and royals from Buganda, Tooro, Bunyoro, and Busoga. Buganda's king at the time, Daudi Chwa, also provided building resources for the Anglican Church's Namirembe Cathedral.

5 The clock
The two-sided clock on the iconic building goes 'ding dong' every 30 minutes, to remind the community that 'time is moving'. An electronic clock was installed in 2007 to mark 10 years of Uganda Christian University.

Download a QR code scanner app on your smartphone and use it to scan this code, to take a virtual tour of the Bishop Tucker Building



The year was 1919

"The construction of the Bishop Tucker Theology College started in November 1919, only two years after the completion of Namirembe Cathedral," Eng. David Kivumbi, UCU's director of facilities and capital projects, says. "While buildings of the time were constructed using mud and cow dung or sun-dried brick and straw, baked brick and cement were used for these (Bishop Tucker and Namirembe)."

Mahogany-wood arches serve as a ceiling of the building. They are held up by Y-shaped wooden columns that seem to be grayed by time.

"From a bird's eye view, the Bishop Tucker building forms the shape of an E," Prof. Christopher Byaruhanga, Theology and Divinity dean, says.

"On one end, you have the Thornycroft Chapel," he says, with a guiding hand. "On

the other, you have the Principals' Hall."

Between these are the equally storied offices and the Faculty of Theology.

The Principals' Hall is the university's boardroom. In it are framed photos of the Bishop Tucker Theological College's principals from inception in 1922 until when it became Uganda Christian University in 1997. The building also houses the office of the UCU Vice

Chancellor.

The musty air of worn wood welcomes visitors who walk through the Thornycroft Chapel door. Everything about the chapel signifies its age, except for the new Yamaha speakers cleverly installed on either side of the altar.

The aisle is hemmed by mahogany pews, made several shades darker because of age. All furniture here, from the pulpit to

the pews, is sculpted, as opposed to being hewn.

At the front right-hand side of the chapel, two unique instruments sit silently – an upright piano and a large drum. The piano's lid reads "Ralph Alison and Sons-London."

Its keys are out of tune and ivories yellowed by several decades of striking. The hide on the drum has been smoothed to baldness by countless years of drumming it.

Together, these instruments tell of the intercontinental partnership that brought Thornycroft and the entire Bishop Tucker building into existence.

Royalty from four kingdoms – Buganda, Tooro, Bunyoro and Busoga – provided original resources.

Buganda's king at the time, Daudi Chwa, was also credited for providing building resources for the Anglican Church's Namirembe Cathedral.

Clock installed on building

By Ivan Tsebani

(This article was edited from the October 2021 published version)

Every 30 minutes, a clock on an iconic building at Uganda Christian University (UCU) goes "ding dong."

The sound of the bell on the clock on the Bishop Tucker Building is a reminder to the institution's community that "time is moving."

However, for nine years, no one at UCU heard the sound. An electronic clock, installed in 2007 to mark 10 years of UCU, malfunctioned five years later.

Upon learning that the clock was no longer working, Prof. Stephen Noll, the Vice-Chancellor of UCU, offered to buy a new one for the building.

That offer was fulfilled over the summer

of 2021 when Noll sent the clock through UCU Partners, a US-based nonprofit that mobilizes financial support for the university.

According to Noll, who joined the university in 2000 as its first Vice Chancellor, the Bishop Tucker Building is part of the heritage of the Anglican Church of Uganda and of Bishop Tucker Theological College, which was founded in 1913.

Noll said the sound from the clock should remind the UCU community about the importance of keeping time.

"The clock reminds us that 'my times are in your hands' (Psalm 31:15)," Noll said.

Welcoming the gift, UCU's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Aaron Mushengezi, said "the massive sound bell inside the clock tower looks spectacular at night when the clock face is illuminated."



An engineer uses a grader to fix the clock on the tower on Bishop Tucker Building

School of Education



Despite finesse in many fields, gypsum walls seem to be Nasasira's calling

By Emmanuel Kizaale

(This article was edited from the August 2021 published version)

Kareem Nasasira's ability to work beautifully with granite, paint, wood, marble and board is striking. He does not just throw his energy willy-nilly.

The level of concentration he puts in the art he is developing is seen in the quality of work he puts out.

Perhaps, that explains his choice to concentrate on interior art. Despite his finesse in many fields, gypsum walls and ceilings seem to be his calling. And he creates them with so much ease, giving out exquisite results.

"I have loved art since I was a child," he said.

"Even when I am on a break, I just love to sit down and draw sketches of things, just anything."

The idea of venturing into interior design has been in Nasasira's mind since secondary school at Namirembe Hillside High School in Kampala. His gratification comes from the smiles on people's faces.

Little wonder that in 2017, he chose to pursue the Bachelor of Industrial and Fine Art at Uganda Christian University (UCU).

He felt it was the only way to give his God-given talent a professional training.

"When I was still at UCU, we used to go to other universities to attend exhibitions, and I discovered that the kind of art that was being taught in many universities was limited in scope," Nasasira says.

"UCU gives you a variety and it is up to you to choose where your passion lies."

According to Nasasira, UCU offered choices in ceramics, sculpture, pottery, fabric and several others to give students an "avenue to explore and understand" strengths.

Now that he had chosen interior design, how would he launch himself into the self-employment world without any startup capital? Nasasira was battling with finding answers to that question. It kept him awake at night.

One particular sleepless night in his second year of studies, he determined to save some of his money he had to live on as a student.

Since he had limited time, as well as money to save, Nasasira made a drastic decision to spend only 20% of the pocket money he was given. The rest went into the bank.

When he completed his course, Nasasira had his work cut out.

He had to buy the essential equipment he needed for the kind of artwork he felt he was industrially ready for. That is how Nas Interiors company, the brainchild of Nasasira, was born.

The company employs four other youth who work as electrician, painter, carpenter and fixer.

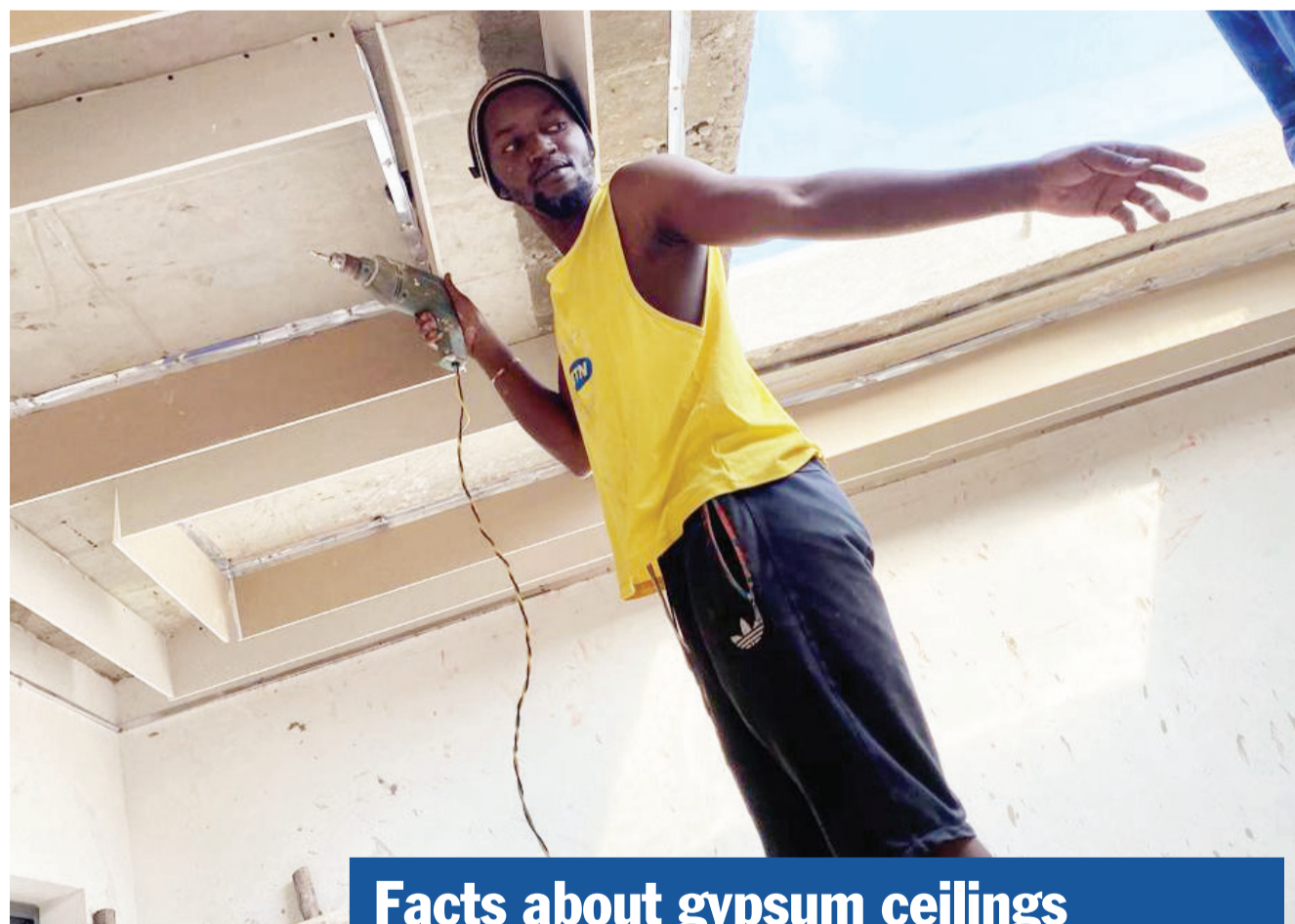
He, however, dreams of employing more, when his business portfolio grows.

Nasasira was never afraid to jump in at the deep end as he launched his business. It was around the time when the whole

A room designed by Kareem Nasasira's interior design company, Nas Interiors



Using interior art to put a smile on faces



Nasasira at one of the sites

Facts about gypsum ceilings

Many gypsum ceilings are imported when ready to install. To fix the boards, the technician screws them on to a metal. In most cases the metal frame is attached to the ceiling. Many of the gypsum boards are smooth surface, making the installation process less cumbersome for the technicians. One of the advantages of gypsum board ceilings is its ability to insulate the room from outside noise, a suitable option for people who love comfort and peace. The other advantage that experts take pride in is gypsum's ability to resist heat, hence protection from fire. One of the materials used for making the boards is mixed with calcium sulphate, with the intention of providing a product that does not embrace high temperature.

Academics study health benefits of local vegetables



By Vanessa Kyalimpa

(This article was edited from the June 2022 published version)

Uganda Christian University (UCU) academics went into the trenches to establish how the elderly can consume food as medicine to take advantage of the full potential of the health benefits of African indigenous vegetables.

While touted as one of the "magic bullets" to addressing malnutrition and some medical challenges, African indigenous vegetables have been increasingly absent from the table, leading to "hidden hunger" and poorer health.

So, how can such a challenge be addressed? Researchers at UCU embarked on a year-long study among the elderly in Mukono district in central Uganda, hoping to come up with answers.

The research project, Exploring the Potential of African Indigenous Vegetables for Human Health in Uganda, is intended to be used to unpack the health benefits of African indigenous vegetables.

Assoc. Prof. Elizabeth Balyejusa Kizito, the principal investigator of the research, said the main objective of the study is to conduct a human nutritional survey on the effects of consuming fresh African indigenous vegetables in the diets of elderly people in Mukono. Among these vegetables in Uganda are Amaranthus dubius (Dodo); Solanum aethiopicum (Nakati), Solanum nigrum (Ensuga); Manihotesculenta (cassava leaves); Solanum indicum subsp (Katankuma), and eggplant.

"Through the research, we shall be able to find out the biochemical profile of the African indigenous vegetables," said Prof. Kizito, the Director of Research, Partnership and Innovations at UCU. "We shall also be able to know how much vegetables someone needs to eat for a healthy living." The study, launched in February 2022, is being conducted by UCU's Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and the institution's School of Medicine, in collaboration with Mukono Municipality.

The researchers plan to find a sample of people willing to take part in the study; provide them with African indigenous vegetables for the duration of the study, and take their blood samples before and after consumption of the vegetables, which they will compare and note differences.

Dr. Gerald Tumusiime, the Dean of the UCU School of Medicine who also is the co-principal investigator of the research, said the study is additionally intended to be used as a platform to teach people how to handle and prepare the African indigenous vegetables.

"The older persons who take part in this study are expected to have improved gut, kidney, liver, and cardiovascular health by the end of the study," Dr. Tumusiime said.

African indigenous vegetables have for a long time been believed to have medicinal benefits, including lowering blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke, reducing chances of contracting some types of cancer and lowering the risk of eye and digestive problems. Dr. Anthony Konde, the medical officer of Mukono Municipality, said that they are willing to work with the researchers to make the study a success.

Community worship grows at School of Medicine

UCU School of Medicine
 By **Patty Huston-Holm with Muduku Derrick Brian and Jimmy Siyasa**
(This article was edited from the May 2022 published version)

First, there were five. Then 10. And on a spring Tuesday and under a white tent shelter below darkening skies, there were 50. On the Ides of March 2022, half of the 100 blue plastic chairs in the pavilion were filled by Uganda Christian University's (UCU) School of Medicine (SoM) doctor hopefuls.

"I pray, Jesus, that you will cleanse our hearts," a young woman began before bowed heads, concluding, "Father, we pray that you bring your spirit in this place."

According to the Rev. Ocen Walter Onen, the 28-year-old UCU-Mukono chaplaincy priest assigned to the medical school, participation in community worship at the Mengo hospital location has been growing, albeit slowly, in the past five months. Spirituality for UCU's future doctors became a priority following a discussion among the university's theology and divinity leaders in the fall of 2021.

Previous to Rev. Walter's assignment, the Rev. Alex Kamoga was straddling responsibilities at the UCU Kampala campus with the



UCU School of Medicine students pray during community worship on their campus at Kampala's Mengo Hospital.

Why the community worship?

"We realized we had a population of students not receiving the Christian services that those in other programs did," Rev. Walter said. "Medical courses are full of stress and these students have the same frustrations and temptations that others do." "Science and theology are complementary in wisdom, but God is the ultimate creator of that knowledge and wisdom," Rev. Walter said. "Without our Lord and Savior, the work within the medical discipline would not exist... when you go to a hospital, you ask Jesus to treat you through a doctor."



likewise, aware of the science vs. religion debate that continues today, globally.

At the UCU main campus in Mukono, as well as at Kampala, students have easier access to clergy guidance. Additionally, the Mukono UCU students engage in sports,

student leadership groups and other activities to relieve stress and youth pressures related to drugs, alcohol and sexual activity that can lead to pregnancy out of wedlock.

"I tell them that I am single, too, and have the same pressures that I overcome through my faith and

understanding of scriptures," Rev. Onen said. "Romans 12 addresses that we need to be a living sacrifice." In Apostle Paul's Romans 12:1, sacrifice references service or offering to God.

"God has a plan for all of us," Rev. Onen said. "If you partner with God,

you are headed for prosperity." In this day's message and as mid-day Islam chants echoed in the background, Rev. Onen referenced Luke 11:1-4 and the Lord's prayer, reminding students that "our Father is in heaven" but that "He also is everywhere."

Such is among the messages that Rev. Walter delivers to the 3-5 students, mostly female, who come to him privately, with problems and questions at the SoM campus. His messages are about faith, strength to have it, forgiveness and understanding. One lesson he repeats is the importance of Christian character in a world where "beauty can fade."

On this particular day, he closed his message with a story about a man who borrowed a spear from his brother with the intent of using the weapon to stop an elephant from destructive behavior. When the elephant took off with the spear, the lending brother was angry and not forgiving. "There is power in forgiveness," Rev. Onen said. "There is power in the Word."

Rival Guild President campaign manager now deputy student leader

By Muduku Derrick Brian
(This article was edited from the February 2022 published version)

How often is the campaign manager for a defeated candidate offered a top position with the winner? Rarely.

But that's what happened to Kivuna Jonathan Ahurira when the aspirant he directed lost the race for Uganda Christian University (UCU) Guild President.

"I was home after a long day's work when I got a surprise call from the victor, Rachel Sserwadda, informing me of her intention to appoint me Vice President," he said. "I felt surprised but joyful."

Ahurira, a UCU student working toward a Bachelor of Business Administration, gave Sserwadda, a Law student, the green light, but it was not over yet. He had to go through another hurdle of being vetted by the UCU Guild Parliament – where a vast majority seconded the appointment.

As expected, many in Ahurira's camp in

'Great virtue'

"Ahurira has a great virtue of servanthood, which is one of the main pillars of UCU," Sserwadda said. "He was among the first people to call and congratulate me upon becoming Guild President, in spite of the fact that we were in rival camps. That was admirable."



Ahurira (left) and Sserwadda at their swearing-in

the campaign to elect Ayebare Phillip Bravo saw this move to support a rival as betrayal. In fact, some said Ahurira disengaged with the campaign team when he sensed a loss looming.

But Ahurira disagrees, noting, "I endured and stayed in spite of some disagreements in the strategies to use during campaigns." Ahurira noted that during the campaigns, he worked tirelessly because he also saw

Ayebare's contest as an opportunity the candidate presented for him (Ahurira) to serve as a student leader.

"My strong footprint, values, and willingness to serve the students at UCU spoke for itself, even to the rival camp," he explains.

But what gave Sserwadda the confidence to have trust in someone who was in a rival camp?

"Ahurira created a healthy competition during the campaigns," she said, noting that her deputy's "respectable character" pushed her to choose him.

Sserwadda's victory in the elections held on November 24, 2021, entered her into the annals of UCU as the institution's third female Guild President in its 25 years of existence. Blessed Murungi was the first female Guild President in 2014.

Two years later, in 2016, the institution got another female Guild President in Prisca Amongin.

Ayebare, who lost to Sserwadda, said the university is in "safe hands" with Ahurira as

the Vice Guild President.

"His inclusive nature will be of great need," Ayebare said.

"He does not make a decision without consulting people."

Ahurira expects to build on the leadership experience he has garnered as a class leader at UCU for two years as he takes the mantle of guild government leadership.

He says UCU has taught him "the virtues of humility and being a good listener."

A Guild Vice President stands in for the Guild President where need be and also oversees all student social clubs and associations within the University.

When not in politics, Ahurira is a Christian music minister whose face is not hard to catch during worship services at UCU's Nkoyoyo Hall. He is a vocalist in the Mustard Seed choir in the University.

"I like prayer and I put God first in every task that I undertake," he said.

"The [Christian] environment at UCU makes it even easier for me to pray as I go about my work."

UCU gets over sh520m in dental equipment

UCU School of Dentistry
(This article was edited from the February 2021 published version)

After several months of waiting, modern training equipment arrived in mid-February 2021 for use by the newly designated Uganda Christian University School of Dentistry. This story, by **John Semakula**, narrows on the contributions specific to the USA-based Midmark and MedShare entities.

Uganda Christian University (UCU) has received a consignment of dental equipment worth \$141,488 (over sh520m) donated by Midmark, a USA-based manufacturer of medical and dental tools.

The equipment was delivered free of charge to the UCU School of Dentistry in Mengo, Kampala, courtesy of an offer by MedShare, a shipping company also based in the United States.

The equipment includes: five Ultracomfort dental chairs; LED Dental Light; Separator Tank Assembly, a Powervac P7 Base; Powerair Oil-less Compressor and a Midmark M3 Steam Sterilizer, 230V.

The Dean of the UCU School of Dentistry, Dr. James Magara, described the donation as generous, critical and foundational in setting up a dental training lab UCU started an independent School of Dentistry in the middle of 2020 and is equipping its training laboratories with the most modern equipment possible.

"We have a lot of heartfelt gratitude



School of Medicine Dean Dr. Gerald Tumusiime tries out an equipment on a UCU student

that the donors were able to see this need and also saw it fit to respond to it," Dr. Magara said.

"They have a very big heart to help UCU or parts of the world that are not well resourced as where they are. When you train a doctor, you have actually invested in a lot of lives because that doctor if well trained will go on to work for a few more decades."

Joana Bideri, a third-year student of dentistry, also praised the donation. "The dental chairs in particular will help us get used to using them before graduating," she said.

Mark Bartels, the Executive Director of the UCU Partners,

said Doug Fountain, the former UCU Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Development and External Relations, connected his organization (UCU Partners) to MidMark.

Doug is the Executive Director for Christian Connections in International Health, an organization that promotes

Fact

UCU was the first private university to obtain a charter from the government. On May 20, 2004, the charter was delivered by President Yoweri Museveni on the opening of the technology park portion at the University's Mukono campus.

health and Christian perspectives. The organization shares information and provides a forum for dialogue, networking, advocacy and fellowship to a spectrum of Christian organizations and individuals working in international health.

Doug expressed excitement that Midmark donated dental equipment to

MidMark says...

Mitch Eiting, the global philanthropic and corporate giving manager for MidMark also said the organization was very excited to work with Uganda Christian University Partners to donate dental equipment to the UCU School of Dentistry. "We believe this equipment will help support the dental school by allowing students to continue focusing on the technical skills needed to treat patients successfully. Also, we are pleased that the additional equipment will allow the school to increase student registration, leading to more dental professionals much in demand in Uganda," Eiting said



UCU for training of a new cadre of dentists. "This is one of the most overlooked areas of health professional training as good dentistry affects health, self-image and nutrition for men, women and children," he said.

"I came to know them (Midmark) through another association several years ago and had the chance to share about UCU several times with one of their executives. This donation is a great example of partnership done well – timely assessment of need and information sharing, coordination with local partners, understanding of what the donors will need. Now let's see this make a difference in the lives

of the people of Uganda." According to Mark, in 2019 when former UCU Vice-Chancellor, Dr. John Senyonyi, was on a working visit to the United States, he made a connection with MedShare, which later offered to ship the equipment to Uganda. The organization (MedShare) helps in shipping donated medical and dental supplies to hospitals and medical schools around the world.

"After receiving the items from Midmark, MedShare added more medical supplies and equipment and sent the container to Uganda," Mark said, adding that UCU Partners contributors provided \$25,000 (over sh92m) for the container.

"UCU Partners is grateful to be in partnership with UCU and the School of Medicine and School of Dentistry and to provide some of the equipment needed to train the next generation of doctors and dentists in Uganda," Mark noted.

"We believe that as UCU trains medical and dental students in a Christ-centered context, they will be prepared to serve and make a difference to thousands who very much need quality medical and dental care."

With the statistics from the Uganda Dental Association indicating one dentist for every 142,000 Ugandans, Midmark's donations comes as a "God sent gift" to bridge the doctor to patient gap in the country, Mark said.

The donation also comes at the early 2020 backdrop of a directive by the East African Medical and Dental Practitioners Council for UCU to stop admitting new students until it fulfilled certain conditions, including acquiring more dental equipment for the school. The University has since complied with the directive and is continuing to recruit new students.

How Mwima's life was molded by pain and pen

School of Social Sciences

By Jimmy Siyasa

(This article was edited from the July 2021 published version)

Two tragedies occurred in the early life of Simon Mwima. One, he lost his sister to AIDS. Two, the son of his departed sister succumbed to the same scourge. Those two deaths left an indelible mark on Mwima that later determined his career path.

"Due to structural and institutional barriers, poverty and stigma, my sister, Alice, could not access the care that she needed, leading to her death," he said.

After watching his sister and nephew die helplessly, he made it a mission to fight against HIV and AIDS. And he is now a medical social worker, as well as an academic at Uganda Christian University (UCU). Mwima recently won a four-year, merit-based scholarship worth \$70,000, including tuition and stipend, with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's School of Social Work. According to the Times Higher Education world university rankings, the university ranks number 48.

"The offer did not come on a silver platter for the 36-year-old, who is the first person to pursue a PhD program in his family.



Journey to clinching the coveted PhD opportunity

Mwima, a son of retired primary teachers, previously worked as a clinical social worker at the Mulago Most At Risk Initiative (MARPI) clinic in Kampala. At the clinic, he managed cases of vulnerable adolescents. He is a research fellow for the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) implementation programme, a new HIV prevention intervention. He holds two master's degrees — the first in public health, from Lund University in Sweden (2015) and in sociology (2020), from Makerere University. His undergraduate degree, which he obtained in 2009 at Makerere University, was in sociology. Five years ago, he was invited to UCU as a guest speaker. From then, Mwima has been lecturing in sociology, anthropology and social work. He also supervises students conducting research at both undergraduate and master's level at the institution. Mwima considers his employment at UCU a blessing because it has offered him opportunity to translate knowledge through lecturing, an experience he believes has afforded him friendships with fellow academics and students. The teaching job also came in handy during his PhD application. "The teaching experience is critical and matters while PhD programmes are assessing applications for admission," he says. Mwima intends to invest plenty of his post-PhD time conducting research to inform sexual health policy and practice.

36

Mwima, a 36-year-old, is the first person to pursue a PhD programme in his family. "I thank God my research interests impressed the University of Illinois.

Budaka, he cannot be more grateful for where he is now.

Mwima also earns his daily bread working for the Ugandan government in the health ministry. He has been a medical social worker for the National AIDS Control Programme since 2016. A celebrated national trainer for the Ministry of Health,

Mwima has educated over 500 social workers, as well as spearheading various HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

With the Covid-19 Mental and Psychological National Taskforce, Mwima has contributed to the development of the national psychosocial plan for Covid, as well as serving as a social epidemiologist.

UCU alum wins scholarship to US college

Ugandan basketball star Abby Priscilla late 2021 won a scholarship to study a bachelor's in business administration course at Grayson College in Texas, USA. The UCU alumna said winning the scholarship had a lot to do with her performance on the basketball

court. The 19-year-old noted that playing basketball at such a level will make her not only a better athlete, but also a competitive one.

(Article by Ian Asabo, edited from a longer version published in February 2022)



By Eriah Lule

(This article was edited from the March 2021 published version)

While Covid-19 severed sports in Uganda, including at Uganda Christian University (UCU) for nearly two years, it is important to recognise the role athletics continues to play in shaping a well-rounded individual and, for some, propelling a career. Athletes have to be prudent to run both their exam timetable and tournaments because they are subjected to the same time frame and rules as other non-athlete students.

The sports at UCU include football, rugby basketball, volleyball, netball, handball, wood ball, and tennis. There are many successes of UCU sports alums, including these:

Ruth Aturo

Like her counterpart Hasifah, Ruth Aturo has shined on the national level in football.

Having graduated in July 2019 with a UCU Diploma in Business Administration from the School of Business, Aturo notes that she persevered in sports despite her family feeling she would be better suited to focus on another career.

Aturo has soldiered on, being the captain of the national team, the Crested Cranes; and being named the best goalkeeper of the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations. In 2018, she was Uganda football association's female footballer of the year.

Fayed Bbaale

A student in the UCU Bachelor of Business Administration degree path within the School of Business, Fayed Bbaale takes no prisoners while on the basketball court. His impeccable performance and shocking spring power have seen him take flights to represent UCU in competitions overseas. Bbaale has competed in Tunisia, with his club, the Silver Backs, for the Afro Basketball Championship, a continental tournament.

David Dkong

David Dkong, who pursued a Bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, has represented the university as part of the Silver Backs national basketball club. "I used to play basketball for fun. It was when I started playing in the national league, while on scholarship from UCU, that I started playing competitive basketball," Dkong said. "All I can say is UCU just showed me the worth of my talent."

Paul Mucureezi

Paul Mucureezi, an alumnus with a Bachelors in Procurement and Logistics Management, is a player with Vipers Sports Club in Uganda's premier soccer league.

"I don't regret studying at UCU because the University polished my talent, positioned me strategically and, now, I'm shining at my club, as well as earning a living," Mucureezi said.

"I just didn't know what the future held for me, until UCU threw the light to the direction that I needed. I'm grateful and humbled and if there is any need, I will not hesitate to show my appreciation to my alma mater."

Peace Proscovia

A four-time winner of the Uganda Sports Press Association (USPA) netball player of the year award, Peace Proscovia was the first Ugandan to play professional netball in the United Kingdom.

The captain of the Uganda national netball team is a multi-talented player of basketball, handball and volleyball, but more known for her exploits in netball. With her academic and netball roots

UCU'S SPORTS AMBASSADORS



Nassuna Hasifah

Nassuna Hasifah, a graduate of Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication within the School of Journalism, Media and Communication, is a forward for both the Uganda national women's team (The Crested Cranes) and UCU Lady Cardinals in the Federation of Uganda Football Association (UFA) Women Super League.

At only 24, she is a household name in Ugandan women's football.

Nassuna's awards include Female Player of the Year in the 2016 Airtel-FUFA awards, Most Valuable Player and top scorer awards in 2019. On May 5, 2022, Nassuna became the first player in the Uganda Women's Premier League history to score 100 goals.



in UCU, from where she pursued both bachelor's (2013) and master's degrees in Business Administration (2016). [Proscovia](#)

is a world-class netball player. An October 2021 Sky Sports story described her as "one of the world's leading goal shooters."

Ex-UCU female athletes train girls in football

By Ian Asabo

(This article was edited from the March 2022 published version)

Football is a man's game. Women should sit and enjoy it being played on the pitch. These are two of the gender biases that have strengthened the bond among four former female footballers in Uganda.

Bridget Nabisaalu, Mercy Nabulobi, Collines Ahumuza and Ruth Akao – all alumnae of Uganda Christian University (UCU) – have formed an organization to further the access and acceptance of women into football.

The Women in Football Uganda (WIFU), an organization birthed in November 2021, has so far registered 15 girls, who are being indoctrinated into embracing football as a sport for everyone.

Nabisaalu said the girls who registered early are from teams in Mukono. However, she said, there are plans to expand the registration to cover the whole country.

"WIFU partners with the girls' teams to coach them," Nabisaalu added. The program targets girls below 17 years.

The organization's role is not limited to coaching the girls on how to play football, but also teaches them other life skills that can help them off the pitch. "Many coaches teach girls how to play football, and that is all," Nabisaalu says, adding: "Other aspects of life are not taught, which, I think, is a detriment to an athlete's development."

Nabisaalu and her compatriots have in the past helped UCU's team win prestigious trophies at the national level. Nabisaalu played for the UCU Lady Cardinals for some time, before becoming an assistant coach of the same team. Ahumuza is a trainee coach for UCU Lady Cardinals.

Akao retired and is the current coach for Muyenga Soccer Academy in Kampala.

"We are working with girls in different age groups, which allows us to be flexible in our training," Nabisaalu said, noting that they give the trainees the basics of personal hygiene as well as discipline to ensure they become "complete footballers and exemplary sportswomen."

In addition to the one-hour session on pitch with female coaches, the mentees are taken through issues concerning menstrual hygiene, discipline, mental health, public speaking and financial literacy.

Last year, since schools were in a Covid-19 lockdown that meant no classes during the week, the programs would run every Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. However, this year, since schools have now opened, the sessions are held every Saturday. The venue for the sessions is the grounds for Champions United FC in Kauga, Mukono.

It is not just the stigma against female footballers that the mentors face as a challenge. The founders of the organization say some coaches at academies are reluctant to let their players participate in the mentorship program, thinking that they may be snatched by other teams. Financial constraints, including the ability to get equipment, also have been a challenge.

Lady Cardinals head coach Christian Magoba praised the quartet for their commitment to the mentorship project, saying that he is confident the program will have a positive impact in the community.

"I am proud of what these ladies are doing both on and off the pitch," he said.

"It takes a lot of commitment to undertake an initiative like this."