

Mount Kenya



University

ADDRESS

BY

Prof. Victoria Wells Wulsin

CHANCELLOR

ON

INDUSTRY - UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

AT

MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY 8TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY

ON

FRIDAY, 7TH AUGUST 2015

AT

MKU HAPPY VALLEY GROUNDS, THIKA

Salutation

- ❖ Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology,
- ❖ Prof. Richard Sikora, Chief Guest,
- ❖ Dr. Simon N. Gicharu, Chairman, and members of the Mount Kenya Board of Trustees,
- ❖ Prof. Chacha Nyaigoti, the Pro-Chancellor,
- ❖ Prof. Grace N. Njoroge, Chairman, University Council and members of the University Council,
- ❖ Honorable County and National Leaders present
- ❖ Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners present,
- ❖ Prof. Stanley W. Waudu, Vice-Chancellor,

- ❖ Vice-Chancellors and Representatives from other universities present,
- ❖ Religious Leaders present,
- ❖ All Distinguished invited Guests,
- ❖ Members of the 8th Congregation,
- ❖ Graduands,
- ❖ Parents and guardians,
- ❖ Staff,
- ❖ Students,

Welcome Remarks

I am happy and honoured to be with you today on this occasion that will remain memorable in our minds, as I confer various degrees and award diplomas and certificates at this congregation of the 8th Graduation Ceremony of Mount Kenya University.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to also take this this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Simon Gicharu, the founder of Mount Kenya University for winning East African region Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the year Award and also representing East Africa in the World Entrepreneur of the Year Hall of Fame, 2015 in June, 2015.

Industry - University Partnership

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Reliance on knowledge economy is putting pressure on industry to be innovative in order to remain competitive. The need for industry to be innovative was captured in a keynote address at a Science Industry Forum by, Dr. Itsno Watanabe, Chief Executive Officer, Hitachi Chemical Company who said.

"We cannot do everything ourselves, we need cooperation with universalities."

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

University-industry partnerships have many advantages. They bring about a cultural change which allows interaction between industries and universities.

Industries gain expertise in areas they need most to facilitate being innovative because universities generate knowledge and serve as suppliers of the knowledge to industries.

According to Florida (1999)

“Industry - academic research partnerships have become an important part of corporate Research and Development (R & D). Decrease in funding of academic research, an explosion in technology and greater competition. These factors have created an environment that fosters co-dependency between universities and industry.”

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Although synergetic partnerships are designed to promote free exchange of information in a survey of more than 1000 technology managers and faculties in the United States, 39% reported that corporations restricted their academic partners from sharing research funding, more than 50% of the corporations forced a delay in publishing results of joint research and more than 33% of the respondents reported that industry sometimes deleted information from papers before publication (Rahm, 1994; Florida, 1999).

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Although industry may have legitimate concerns about sharing and disseminating research funding, we need to acknowledge that any restrictions to sharing and disseminating information can lead to slow rates of innovation, the pillar of industry competitive advantages.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is usually understood that value addition is guaranteed by applied research more than basic research. Consequently, industry usually places less importance on basic research forgetting that the basic research that is a precursor of applied research has led to many technological breakthroughs. For example, basic research was crucial to attaining advances in telecommunications and internet technology. Although for purposes of value addition, industry funding should support research that gives findings/results that have immediate application, basic research which forms the foundation for applied research needs to be supported and promoted.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

In order to effectively exploit opportunities associated with partnerships, we at Mount Kenya University established a position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Linkages and Resource Mobilization whose main responsibility is to forge partnerships for value addition in the areas of teaching, research and service provision. Our efforts to forge partnerships are producing dividends. We have more than thirty five (35) active partnerships.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Our partnerships are in the following categories:

- (i) **University - Hospital Partnership.** Our partners in this category include Thika Level 5 Hospital, Machakos Level 5 Hospital, Mathare Hospital, Nairobi West Hospital and Chuilambo Hospital.

- (ii) **University - University Partnership.** Our partners in this category include Gulu University in Uganda, University of Cincinnati in U.S.A, Northern Kentucky University in the U.S.A, Jingganshan University in China, Xavier University in the U.S.A and Copenhagen School of Business in Denmark.
- (iii) **University - Research Institute Partnership.** Our partners in this group are Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), the Institute of Primate Research (IPR) and Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI).
- (iv) **University - Professional Body Partnership.** In this category we have the Kenya Pharmaceutical Association, CFBT Education Trust among others.

- (v) **University - Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Partnership.** Partners in this category are Partners for Care, Association of Volunteers Services International (AVSI) Foundation, Rafiki Microfinance and Danish Refugee Council among others.
- (vi) **University - Industry Partnership.** Partners in this category include IBM East Africa Ltd.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Our synergetic partnerships promote:

- (i) Impacting to student's knowledge theoretical and practical skills that are responsive to societal needs.
- (ii) Sharing knowledge and information
- (iii) Academic scholarship

- (iv) Mutual access and use of facilities
- (v) Sharing benefits of commercialization of innovations.
- (vi) Creation of synergy.
- (vii) Fundraising for mutual benefits.
- (viii) Maintaining collegial relationships, and
- (ix) Assembly and consolidation of academic resources among others.

Our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

We are grateful to all our partners for nurturing a steady growth of synergetic partnership.

In conclusion, we at Mount Kenya University aim to promote partnerships that can find ways of breaking down barriers that may exist between academia and industry and promote sharing of knowledge that is crucial for discoveries and innovation.

May God Bless you all.

Thank you.

References

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