

SALUTATION

Our Chief Guest, Dr Patrick Amoth, the Director General for Health

The Governor, Vihiga County, Dr Wilberforce Ottichilo

The Members of the University College Council present

The CEO, Nursing Council of Kenya, Ms Edna Tallam

The Vice Chancellor MMUST

The staff

Our students

Ladies and gentlemen!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you here today as we launch the BSc. Nursing programme.

This occasion is the culmination of a growth process with several developmental stages and I am immensely grateful to everybody involved for bringing the School of Nursing to launch.

I wish to extend our deepest gratitude to the Commission for University Education and the Nursing Council of Kenya, which, while acting as a stringent regulator have also been supportive partners in starting the programme. I wish also to thank our partners in the clinical sites who opened their doors and will support us in imparting the relevant field skills they need to become sought after professionals.

The support of these partners, coupled with continued Government goodwill, gives me confidence as we launch the school today and I'm looking forward to making it a success.

The Chief Guest,

It is important to acknowledge that the first formal training center for nurses in Western Kenya was established right here (in Kaimosi) in the

1930s by the missionaries, who also, founded this education and health complex.

It is therefore reminiscent that we are reigniting their dreams to provide a pool of professional frontline health workers at a time of increased demand.

The new school offers us the opportunity to transform the model of nursing and midwifery education and research at this time of significant change in our health sector. It equally gives impetus to our quest for a center of excellence in Health Sciences.

The Chief Guest,

I wish to reiterate that nursing is a noble profession which requires a colossal amount of commitment to learning, treating and caring.

Nurses are the pillar of any country's Health Sector; the whole world needs nurses. Doctors need nurses and patients need nurses. Nurses, no matter how long they have been practicing for, have to frequently update their understanding of the procedures.

Consequently, nurses never stop learning. In future, we intend to offer refresher training courses for the already trained nurses alongside other nursing degree programs. An interest in academia will help you achieve your requirements and ensure you constantly learn more about your turf as you work.

The Chief Guest,

We recognize the extraordinary role nurses and midwives play in healthcare across the world. This role has, especially, been truest in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic

And as affordable healthcare initiatives give more Kenyans access to healthcare services, more highly skilled nurses are required and we have

committed to support the School so as to deliver high-quality world-class supply of professionals.

We are alive to the fact that nursing remains the backbone of health systems and instrumental in offering responsive solutions to health challenges.

We are therefore establishing this school with vision of helping alleviate shortage of nurses in the country and across the region.

The Chief Guest,

You are aware currently, in this country, there only 11 nurses per 1000 members of the population, a pale comparison to developed nations like the United States where the ratio is 145 nurses per 1000 members.

To create this pool of professionals with relevant skills we have equipped the school with education resources including a well-equipped skills laboratory, access to anatomy laboratory in our mother university – MMUST, library, sufficient lecture rooms, computer laboratory and highly qualified lecturers and support staff.

Sir, we will also work closely with the National Health Ministry, the Nursing Council of Kenya and County Government Health Sector to produce nurses who are qualified and competitive both nationally and internationally.

To further align this programme with trending international practices, we have employed a hybrid approach to delivery strategy of combined traditional face-to-face classroom with digital learning.

We understand that blended learning brings depth to nursing education and fosters student engagement. Our School of Nursing becomes the first to fully embrace this blended delivery approach supported by the Commonwealth of Learning.

We want to offer our students the flexibility to learn where and when it is convenient while retaining the critical aspects espoused by the face-to-face

engagement in order to drive student retention and transform campus experience.

To conclude sir, no other career offers the opportunity to make such an intense change on the lives of people who truly need and appreciate it. Worthy nurses significantly contribute to the success and stability of healthcare institutions and to the mental and physical wellbeing of their patients, children, colleagues and society at large. Those who prosper in nursing and gain the most personal fulfilment from it start their careers with certain distinctive qualities.

If you are caring, responsible and have great communication skills, you may already have great qualities to become a successful nurse. Nursing is not for the faint hearted, so being hardy, dedicated in high stress situation while remaining kindhearted to patient and family feelings, would also help maintain a great nursing career. Above all, as a nurse you need to be committed to your position, be knowledgeable in your field and have a strong will.