



# Chancellor College BULLETIN

## EDITORIAL: LEADERSHIP AND TRANSITION

When one talks to colleagues, and takes the moment to reflect on on-going events at Chancellor College, it feels like we are living in a period of transition. There is generally a sense of change in the air. Our focus is on the events going on at Chancellor College, even though this sense goes beyond the campus.

One of the clearest indications of this change is the fact that there is now a new Students Union of Chancellor college (SUCC) Executive running the show. This executive comprises a group of young men and women with a clear vision of how they want to improve the academic and social lives of all students

at the college. We applaud their zeal and wish them all the best. In the same vein, we would like to extend a word of gratitude to the outgoing executive for maintaining cordial relations with the college administration.

We have entered a period when there will be changes in Headship and Deanship in departments and faculties, respectively. This is the cycle at Chancellor College. Nobody gets to be Dean or Head forever, no matter how much they may enjoy the job. This provision ensures that others with fresh visions for the college are given the chance to implement their ideas.

The idea of transition also comes to mind when we think of a possible

shift in the way science subjects are regarded in the country. As the Africa Science Week showed us, the domain of STEM subjects can no longer be defined as one that is exclusive to men.

And of course the delinking project remains on everyone's minds. Staff and students alike are slowly realizing that it is becoming a reality that Chancellor College will be the new UNIMA, possibly in the next few months. And we will be here again as part of a transition that we shall be talking of in the future. We can only imagine that that must have been the feeling back in 1973, when the college that God loved the most was formed on the slopes of Zomba mountain.



*SUCC Presidency: outgoing and incoming*

### Editorial Team:

Dr. Ken Lipenga Jr (Chief Editor), Prof Samson Sajidu (Vice Principal), Mr. Nestor Chinangwa

### Highlights

*New SUCC Executive sworn into office*

*New book tackles homosexuality in Malawi*

*Chanco hosts Africa Science Week*

*Philosophers host South African Ethics scholar*

*Phindu Banda launches poetry album*

*Kainja attends conference on data protection*

## SCIENCE

### Chanco hosts Africa Science Week

One of the highlights of this semester has been the Africa Science Week, when an entire week (24th to 28th September) was dedicated to displays, competitions, and activities related to science on the continent.

Leading the organizing of the event was Ms. Chikondi Shaba, a lecturer in the Chemistry department, who also happens to be the Next Einstein Forum (NEF) Ambassador for Africa. Various other organisations also assisted in several ways.

During the event, a number of activities were held. It commenced with a Science and Tech Expo, a Coding Challenge, and presentations and discussions at Chancellor College. After that, the

events continued in Blantyre, where young students from Blantyre rural were taken on an educational visit to Wellcome Trust. The week ended with a Women in Science Commemoration in Lilongwe, where several women working in science related disciplines were invited to engage in discussions.

Ms Shaba points out that as the NEF Ambassador, one of her main objectives is to make STEM subjects attractive to young girls in the country.

There are plans to follow up the Africa Science Week with more events. "With Malawi Girls in STEM and Dreams Innovation Challenge, we have made

plans for events like career and science fairs, leadership conference, and planned rural school visits where we meet with students introducing role

models and carrying out the scientific experiments" Shaba says. "And we are also open to invitations, collaborations and sponsorship."



Ms. Chikondi Shaba and Ms. Bridget Nyirongo at one of the ASF events

### Kaombe wins best PhD student award

The sub-Saharan Africa Consortium of Advanced Biostatistics Training (SSACAB) under Developing Excellence in Leadership and Training in Advanced Statistics (DELTAS) initiative has its overall aim of enhancing and sustaining Biostatistics Capacity in the region. The SSACAB-DELTAS project is headquartered at University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, with partner Institutions from across Africa and Europe. It holds an annual conference for postgraduate students funded by the consortium, in addition to presentations by postgraduate faculty members at participating

institutions. This year's meeting was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 10th to 14th September, 2018.

As part of this event, best poster and oral presentations from among Masters and PhD students presentations as judged by a panel of Statistics professors were awarded with prizes.

Tsilizani Kaombe's presentation, "Identification of Outlying and Influential Districts in Modelling Child Survival in Malawi" was judged the best oral presentation by a PhD student.

This was part of the application of the statistics methods developed in his PhD study which is funded by the World Bank's Skills Development Project (SDP) at University of Malawi. Kaombe's supervisor is Professor Samuel Manda of the Medical Research Council of South Africa. The research started in 2015 and is in its final stages. Both the candidate and the supervisor felt greatly honoured with the award. It was a timely and great feedback and motivation to the candidate as he winds up his PhD work.



Tsilizani Kaombe (3rdL), with his supervisor Prof. Samuel Manda (L) and other awardees plus their supervisors



## HUMANITIES

### Philosophy hosts South African Applied Ethics scholar

The Department of Philosophy is one of those that has exemplified the spirit of inviting scholars from outside campus to engage in philosophy discussions with its students. From 10th to 13th September 2018, the Philosophy Department through its Master of Arts Applied Ethics Programme hosted Prof. Johan Hattingh, a renowned professor of Ethics from Stellenbosch University in the Republic South Africa.

Speaking at the welcome function, Prof. Johan Hattingh applauded the Department for introducing the Master of Arts in Applied Ethics programme and thanked the Head of Department, Dr Yamikani Ndasauka, for extending the invitation to him.

Dr Sydney Kankuzi, speaking on behalf of the Dean of Humanities,

thanked Prof. Hattingh for visiting Chancellor College and for accepting to share his vast research experience with students

pursuing the Master of Arts in Applied Ethics programme.

"Your visit to Chancellor College cannot be taken for granted because we are sure to benefit from your knowledge and research

experience particularly in the area of Applied Ethics," he said.

For four days, Professor Hattingh spent time drilling students in case study research methods in Applied Ethics. Areas of focus were Sen's capability theory, Flyvbjerg's theory of progressive phronesis, communitarian frameworks and a move from theory to practice in Applied Ethics.

After the workshop the students remarked the sessions were 'an eye opener', 'enlightening', 'excellent', 'moulding and thorough', 'inspiring and educating' and 'wonderful and helpful'.

Johan Hattingh specializes in Applied Ethics, Ideology Critique, Development Ethics, Environmental Ethics and Climate Change Ethics. He has acted as supervisor or co-supervisor of 15 completed Doctoral dissertations and 43 completed Master's theses.



*Hattingh poses with staff and students from the Philosophy Department*

### New book on homosexuality

We all know that one of the hallmarks of academic work is the publishing of books. That is why we feel the need to always celebrate whenever one of us manages to publish a book.

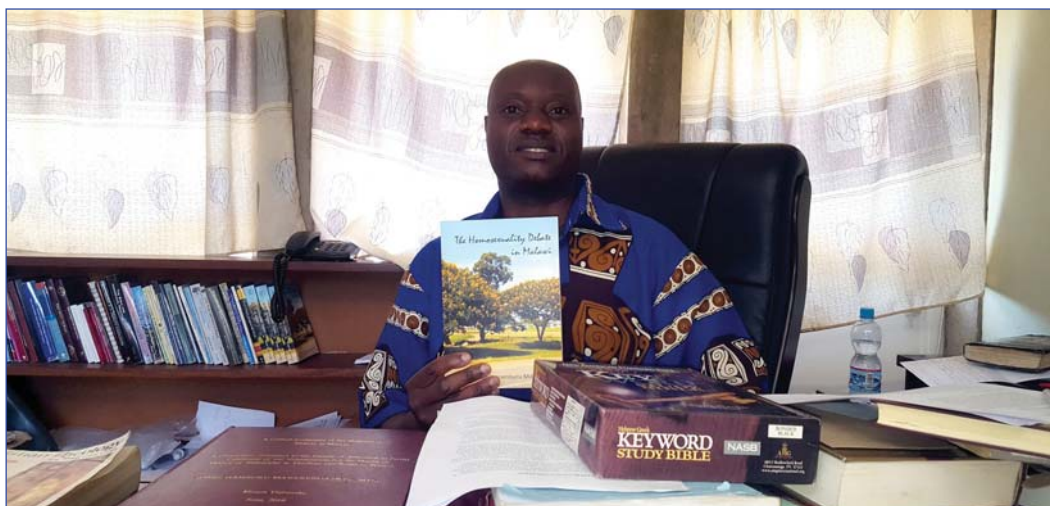
The latest publication on campus is Dr Jones Hamburu Mawerenga's *The Homosexuality Debate in Malawi*, published by Mzuni Press. Dr Mawerenga is a lecturer in the department of Theology and Religious Studies at Chancellor College.

Mawerenga points out that the book grew out of research that he did while studying for his doctorate.

Although he has training as a theologian, Mawerenga's book does not present the religious perspective alone. Indeed,

the book is quite rich basing on the fact that it presents a comprehensive variety of perspectives that have been forwarded with regard to the homosexuality debate in the country.

We often hear of informal debates on the topic of queer identity. With the wealth of research behind it, Mawerenga's text is a valuable resource for academic discussion on the subject.



*Dr. Mawerenga displays his publication*

## CONFERENCE CIRCUIT

### Gondwe presents on the Education discourse in Malawi

On 25th October 2018, Mr Foster Gondwe of the Education Foundations Department, Chancellor College, was invited to present and participate in a symposium panel discussion organized by the Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation (IDEC), Hiroshima University, Japan. Themed 'SDGs and Educational Development in Africa', the symposium interrogated the relevance and progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly the SDG4 that focuses on education) in the context of educational development in Africa.

Mr Gondwe - whose educational development research focuses on

teacher education, comparative/international education—presented on the education, policy, educational technology,



Gondwe addresses a question at the symposium

discourse dimension of SDG4, questioning whether the way we talk about education in Africa matters. In the presentation, apart from comparing the focus of SDG4 against Malawi's education priorities suggested in the National Education Sector Plan (2017-2020), he also took a historical and critical perspective to illustrate how the way we talk about education matters.

Among others, Mr. Gondwe reiterated the view that the current status of education in Malawi - especially dependency on foreign funding and education borrowing/importing - could be traced to the talk about education in colonial education policy that generally undermined the African intellectual culture.

### Creating awareness on data protection and privacy

The issue of internet privacy and data protection is one which has not caught on with many internet users in Africa. Very few people think about the ways in which their data is collected and stored in various databases by different bodies.

This is one of the reasons why media experts met at the State of Internet Freedom in Africa Conference in September, 2018 in Accra, Ghana. The conference was organized by Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA). After every conference, an annual report on internet freedom is produced.

This year, the focus was on data protection and privacy. Jimmy Kainja, a lecturer in the Language

and Communication Skills department, attended the conference. He points out that one of

the most worrying things is that some countries, such as Malawi, do not have data protection laws. "There are no laws to ensure that the data that government, for example, collects from its citizens

will be safely stored. Malawians need to think about this as they go about submitting their personal information to bodies like MACRA and the Electoral Commission," Kainja observes.

This is compounded by the fact that the notion of privacy carries a negative connotation in most African languages. "When translated into Chichewa, for example, the word we use is *chinsinsi*," Kainja explains. "For a lot of people, the implication is that you have something to hide, something which may be harmful to others".

Luckily, the idea of privacy is partially covered under Article 21 of the Constitution of Malawi. However, there is still need to explain to people what privacy is, and why they need to have it with regard to their personal data.



Mr. Jimmy Kainja at the SIFA Conference



## STUDENT AFFAIRS

### New SUCC Executive sworn in

It is that time of the year when the student body chooses new leadership. It was quite a tight competition, but at the end of the day the Chancellor College student community elected new leaders, led by Mr Kennedy Ganthu.

As has been the tradition after the elections are over, the college administration organized a handover ceremony on 22nd October, 2018 in the Great Hall. The ceremony was attended by the incoming Students Union of Chancellor College (SUCC) executive, the outgoing leadership, and other well wishers.

The guest of honor during the function was the Principal, Prof. Richard Tambulasi. The function was also attended by the Chair of University of Malawi Council, Reverend Dr Billy Gama, his deputy, as well as some Assistant Registrars from the

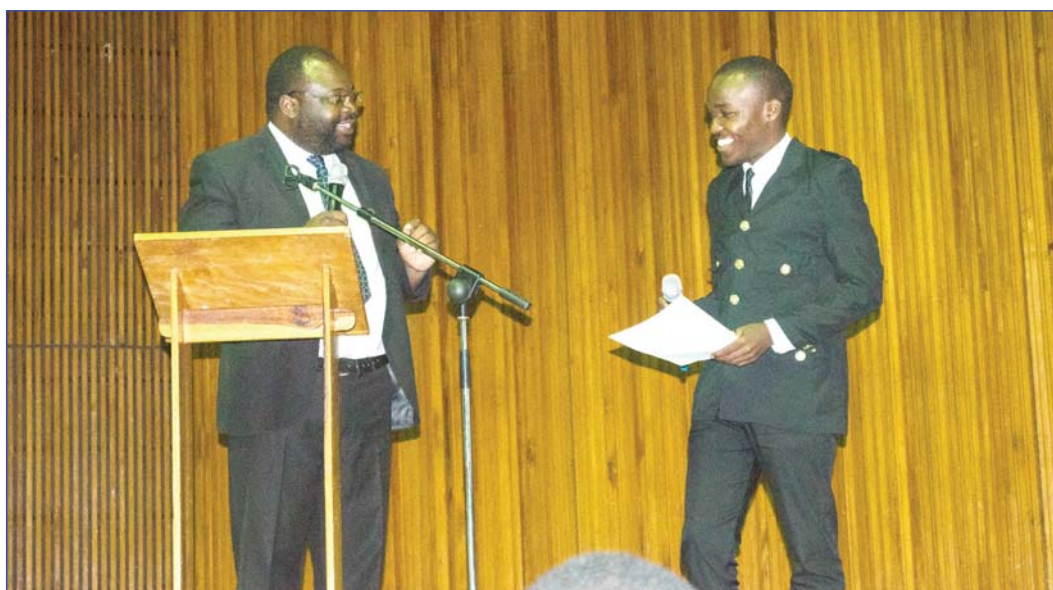
college.

Giving his final speech, the outgoing President of SUCC, Mr Raphael Nedi expressed sadness to be leaving the office, but observed that it was a necessary step to be taken. He listed a few key achievements that SUCC had registered, including

the establishment of a physical office, where members of the executive can easily be reached by the student community. He also shared a few words of advice with his successor, particularly on how to work well with the college administration.

On his part, the new SUCC President stressed that his would be an executive that will work closely with the

administration for the betterment of all students at Chancellor College. He identified various areas that the new executive will focus on, including UNIMED, improvement of living conditions in students' hostels, assistance for students with special needs and stopping vandalism of college property around the campus.



*Off to a good start: the Principal and the new SUCC President during the swearing in ceremony*

### Poets speak of bodies at album launch

Phindu Banda is no strange name when it comes to poetry. She is the previous President of the Writers' Workshop at Chancellor College, and has performed poetry at so many other venues in the country.

It is therefore no surprise that when she announced the launch of her poetry album, *Bodies are (not) Homes*, the Little Theatre was packed with people who wanted to sample what the young versifier had to offer. And people were not disappointed.

Banda's poetry mostly draws on private

experiences, expressing emotions about family and personal events, which nevertheless resonate with the audience. Some of the issues dealt with include rape, miscarriage, and fatherhood. As she said during the launch, "the entire album is a very personal journey for myself and for my family."

Supporting acts during the launch included fellow students from Chancellor College, as well as some from Catholic University.

Commenting during the launch, Dr. Asante Mtenje, a lecturer in the

English department, observed that the poetry was deeply lyrical, and she hoped that such

events would inspire other poets on campus to come out and share their creativity.



*The poet performs in the Little Theatre*