

CANVAS MAGAZINE

FOR THE
STUDENTS,
BY THE
STUDENTS.

JANUARY - APRIL
2026
Issue 1

The Dawn of a
New Era

IPARK
Innovation

Wins for
SPU Drama
Club

YOUNG
CATHOLIC
VOICES 2026

SPUSA
Election

SPU to Host
16th EACA
Annual
Conference



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Jemimah Kithinji

Editor-in-Chief

The university emphasizes developing well-rounded individuals with academic knowledge, ethical values, and skills for global service. This semester's highlights enhance campus life, inviting readers to explore more in this quarter's publication and dive into vibrant experiences.

In this issue

Canvas Magazine presents a recap of an eventful semester, featuring heartwarming moments such as the swearing-in of new VC Prof. Esther Mombo and the farewell to Rev. Canon Prof. James Kombo. Highlights include the Elimu Bora walk, the SPUSA elections 2026, and the Startup Training for African Revival in Kenya, which fostered global partnerships and exposed students to recognized industry trends for better preparation for global service.

The university's commitment to developing well-rounded individuals combines academic knowledge with ethical values and essential skills for global service. This semester's highlights have enriched campus life, with more exciting experiences featured in this quarter's publication. Are you ready to explore the vibrant content of this edition?

Editor's Note

I am thrilled to share that I, Jemimah Kithinji, have been appointed Editor-in-Chief of our departmental magazine, the Canvas, taking over from Jetinah Khamasi. My aim is to authentically represent student voices on topics like student life, academic pressure, and culture. I want the Canvas to be informative, inclusive, and thought-provoking, while engaging with the St Paul's community through collaboration and strong editorial standards.

MEET THE CANVAS TEAM



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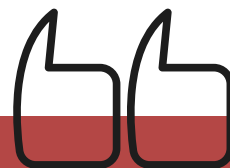
WELCOMING PROF. ESTHER MOMBO

Leadership transitions at St. Paul's University represent a poignant bridge between a legacy of achievement and a future of fresh possibilities. We pause to honor our outgoing Vice Chancellor, Rev. Canon Prof. James Kombo, whose five-year tenure was defined by a steadfast commitment to academic excellence, spiritual groundness, and the cultivation of strategic global partnerships. His leadership leaves behind a stronger, more stable institution dedicated to both intellectual growth and character formation. As this chapter closes, we enthusiastically welcome Prof. Esther Mombo, a distinguished academic whose deep roots within the university and extensive international experience uniquely qualify her to lead us forward. Her appointment signals a season of renewal, offering an opportunity to deepen institutional dialogue, strengthen the bond between leadership and students, and reimagine our role as a transformative academic community. As the Canvas team, we remain dedicated to documenting this evolution with integrity, ensuring that student perspectives remain at the heart of our story. We thank Prof. Kombo for his purposeful guidance and look forward with great anticipation to the vibrant future Prof. Mombo will help us create.

05 2026



PROF. ESTHER MOMBO



Over the past five years, Prof. Kombo's tenure has been marked by steady leadership grounded in both academic excellence and a strong spiritual foundation. Under his guidance, the university strengthened its position as a leading private institution while fostering an environment that prioritizes not only intellectual growth, but also character formation.

By Gatwiri K.

SPU HOSTING EACA CONFERENCE 2026

BY JOSHUA KOMU

The East Africa Communication Association (EACA), founded in 2011, is a premier organization that bridges the gap between media practitioners, researchers, and policymakers across East Africa and the globe. Its primary mission is to build capacity and share cutting-edge research within the rapidly evolving media landscape. At the heart of its activities is the Annual Regional Conference, hosted rotationally across East African countries, alongside the publication of the African Journal of Communication, a peer-reviewed platform for scholarly excellence.

SPU's Selection and the Journey to 2026

This year, St. Paul's University (SPU) is honored to host the conference under the School of Communication and Computer Studies. Securing the hosting rights is a competitive process; SPU submitted a comprehensive bid showcasing its capacity to manage an event of this magnitude and was successfully selected among numerous prestigious universities in the region. It has been five years since the conference was last held in Kenya, making this a significant homecoming for the association.



06 | 2026

**EAST AFRICA COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION**

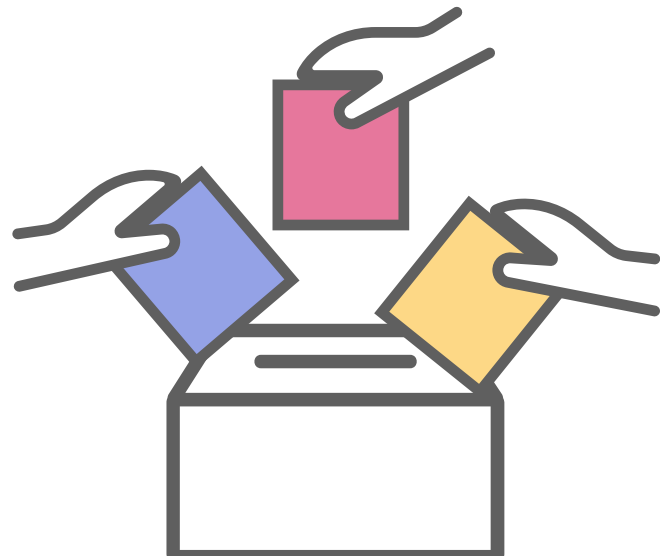
SPUSA ELECTIONS 2026

BY GATWIRI K.



The SPUSA elections at St. Paul's University unfolded under a cloud of tension and uncertainty, after disruptions in the delegate voting process forced the postponement of a highly anticipated exercise. The elections, which saw a competitive race between Team Maina and Team Kateria, had initially generated significant interest among students. However, what began as a routine democratic process quickly escalated into concern when irregularities were reported during the delegate voting phase. Allegations of interference and possible manipulation led to widespread dissatisfaction among sections of the student body, raising questions about the integrity of the process. The situation was further complicated by technical challenges, as a number of students reported being unable to access their student portals, the primary platform for voting. This led to overcrowding at ICT offices across campus, where students gathered in large numbers seeking assistance. The delays and confusion added to an already tense atmosphere, with frustration mounting among voters eager to participate in the elections.

In response to these challenges, the university administration announced a one-week postponement of the elections. While the decision was met with mixed reactions, it created space for the institution to address both the technical failures and concerns surrounding the credibility of the process. When elections resumed, notable changes were implemented to restore confidence. Students were required to update their portal passwords, and an additional layer of security was introduced through a one-time password (OTP) verification system. These measures aimed to enhance the integrity of the voting process and ensure that each vote cast was secure and verifiable. A student described the initial process as 'chaotic,' but noted that 'the new security measures made the second round feel more credible.'





The re-run proceeded with significantly fewer disruptions, allowing students to participate more smoothly in the electoral process. While tensions between supporters of Team Maina and Team Kateria remained evident, the improved systems helped stabilize the exercise and rebuild a measure of trust among voters.

Following the conclusion of the elections, Kateria David was officially announced as the new SPUSA Chairperson and School President. The announcement marked the end of a turbulent electoral period, one that not only determined student leadership but also highlighted the critical importance of transparency, accessibility, and accountability in university governance.

For now, the events of the past week serve as a reminder that democracy, even at the student level, requires both strong systems and collective trust to function effectively. As the new leadership takes office, many students will be watching closely, not just for policy direction, but for assurances that future elections will uphold the standards of fairness and inclusivity expected by the student body.

To all those elected, we offer our sincere congratulations. Your leadership begins at a time when students are more aware, more engaged, and more expectant than ever. This is an opportunity not just to lead, but to unite, to listen, and to serve with purpose. The mandate you carry is not only one of victory, but of responsibility to the entire student body.



Kateria David
SPUSA Chairperson



VOICE VICTORY VISION

By Sabina Nzuna

In a world driven by voices and ideas, communication is not just a course — it's the making of a leader. Beyond the classroom, leadership sheds its theoretical comfort and presents a harsher reality. A space that once seemed simple is now filled with criticism, pressure, and constant scrutiny; it does not tone down, and it is not about position — it is about navigating opinions, conflict, and pressure. The leadership spectrum is inspired by different things; the purpose is rarely the same. For some, it is a platform to build influence and gain recognition; for others, it is a bumpy road with a broader sense of inspiration and purpose. I took the chance and vied for the campus vice chairperson. Every moment tested my patience, grit, and determination, and for sure, nothing had prepared me for the whirlwind of challenges, rivalries, and high-stakes decisions that lay ahead.

At the core of my leadership is my innate passion for SDG no 1. No Poverty aligns closely with my role as my campus leader. As a communication student specialising in public relations and mass communication, I understand the power of messaging and engagement. Leadership at its core is about serving people, identifying needs, and creating opportunities for those who might otherwise be overlooked. This drive comes from witnessing individuals meet even the most basic needs; potential blocked by circumstance. My leadership is fueled by SDG no 1: to create programmes that support those in need, to amplify voices that are often ignored, and to turn empathy into action. As an active member of various national clubs,



LIMURU CAMPUS VICE
CHAIRPERSON SABINA NZUNA

I have found them to be my learning grounds for diverse strategies and ideas on eradicating poverty. Being part of these national networks also strengthens my commitment to causes such as SDG 1, enabling me to bring innovative solutions, share best practices, and advocate for students beyond my immediate community. As I step into my tenure, I am fully cognisant that leadership is never about a title but about purpose in action. I am aware that challenges lie ahead, and the demands of leadership can be relentless. This is just the beginning of my journey, and every decision, initiative, and voice I amplify will shape the story of what leadership can truly achieve. The road ahead may be demanding, but with purpose as my guide, I am ready to lead, inspire, and make a difference one step at a time.

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND COMPUTER STUDIES HOLDS ANNUAL RETREAT IN LIMURU

By Canvas Team

Staff from the School of Communication and Computer Studies came together at the Main Campus in Limuru on Thursday, March 26, 2026, for the School's annual retreat. The gathering brought together staff from the Nairobi, Limuru, and Nakuru campuses for a day of reflection, celebration, and planning for the new academic year.

The retreat provided an opportunity for faculty to review the achievements made over the past year and discuss priorities for the future. It also created space for staff to share ideas, strengthen collaboration, and renew their collective vision for the School's growth and academic excellence.

The session was led by the Dean, Dr Susan Mwangi, together with the Heads of Department from the Communication and Computer Studies departments.

Their leadership guided discussions on the way forward and encouraged staff to remain committed to innovation, quality teaching, and continuous improvement. The retreat ended on a positive note, with staff expressing renewed commitment and enthusiasm as they prepared to begin the new academic year with fresh energy and shared purpose.



Staff from the School of Communication and Computer Studies pose for a group photo during the school's annual retreat at the main campus.

SPU HOSTS WORLD DIGITAL MEDIA SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

By Joshua Komu

We are the story changers and the change of tomorrow, if we do not stand and defend our climate the climate will turn and change us instead. Across the African continent, vulnerable communities are bearing the brunt of climate change and food insecurity. Yet, in local media, these critical struggles frequently remain underreported.

St. Paul's University held a Digital Summit that brought in media experts and digital experts from across Africa. The summit was held in collaboration with The Newsroom Africa (TN Africa), in partnership with the PRMC, Beyond Classroom Club, and the Department of Communication. The theme of this summit was Telling Africa's Climate and Food Story in the Digital Age.

The summit's message was clear: it is time for the continent's storytellers to take the lead. "Who is in a better position to tell our own stories aside from we ourselves?" asked Senanu Damilola, a veteran journalist from Ghana, reflecting on his decade of experience in the industry.

The Head of Department of Communication Dr. Winnie Ndeta called upon media experts and journalists. "As communicators and digital creators, we need to take up this space."

Damilola emphasized this undeniable shift toward online platforms, noting that "the world is moving into the digital space now." Pointing to the massive audiences engaging with online content daily, he stressed that the impact of digital creation and journalism is something "we cannot underestimate."

As the summit concluded, the mandate for Africa's youth was undisputed. Equipped with smartphones, social media platforms, and their own lived experiences, the next generation of African content creators is perfectly positioned to move the continent's climate and food security stories from a mere footnote to the forefront of the global conversation.



Dr. Winnie Ndeta, Head of Department Communications Studies giving her Keynote Address



HANDONG GLOBAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH
KOREA

IPARK HOSTS THE AFRICAN START-UP REVIVAL 2026



Final day of IPARK start-up revival at the amphitheater

Innovators from St Paul's University had an opportunity to participate in the prestigious training offered by the Handong Global University of South Korea in collaboration with UNESCO and UNITWIN. The training brought together a rigorous five day training from the 19th of January to the 23rd of January.

BY JOSHUA KOMU



Some of the winners during the startup competition



The Training was climaxed by a Closing Ceremony at the Students Amphitheatre where all students pitched high-impact bio-based business ideas. The Winners of the Start Up African Revival Training in Kenya 2026 were: **Aqua loop** at position one, **Nazizi** position two and **Eco Crown Wigs** position three. This training reaffirmed SPU's commitment to promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and industry-relevant skills through global partnerships

The theme of the Training was Bio-Entrepreneurship. The training brought together Renowned Scholars and Professors from South Korea. The training was opened by the Ag Vice Chancellor Prof Esther Mombo. In her remarks she emphasized the fruits of the collaborations between Handong Christian Global University and St Paul's University. The event was steered by The University Management, IPARK Coordinator Mrs. Elizabeth Kimaru Chema, Dr Muhoho John, Director Post Graduate Studies, IPARK Committee, SPILL, staff volunteers and student volunteers. The training also brought in industry experts from Kenya and within

Mrs. Elizabeth Kimaru Chema - Serves as the Coordinator of IPARK at St. Paul's University, where she bridges the gap between academic theory and real-world impact. With a rich history in student mentorship, Elizabeth has been a driving force behind social entrepreneurship at the university, working closely with the Enactus Club since 2018 and participating in Handong training since 2010.

During the iPark event, a student Joshua Komu had a chance to interview Ms. Elizabeth Kimaru on the upcoming iPark event at St. Paul's University.



**MRS. ELIZABETH KIMARU CHEMA
COORDINATOR/HEAD OF
INNOVATION AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PARK
(SPU IPARK)**



What gap does IPARK fill at St. Paul's?

Following our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, we realized there was a lack of structure between classroom learning and real-world solutions. IPARK exists to mentor entrepreneurs and shift the mindset of our students from being job seekers to becoming job creators.



Is innovation strictly for "IT geniuses"?

Not at all. Innovation is simply problem-solving and communicating solutions. Whether you are in Theology, Social Sciences, or Education, every department has unique insights. We encourage students from all schools to bring their perspectives to the table.



What is the ultimate goal for the university community?

We want students and staff to discover their potential beyond the classroom. A major focus is commercializing research—taking ideas out of academic "silos" and turning them into ethical, applicable businesses. As a Christian institution, we believe in being ethical co-creators with God.



Where do you see IPARK in the future?

I see us becoming a premier global hub. We want to scale innovations that venture into international markets and eventually accommodate innovators from other universities, positioning St. Paul's as a leader in global impact. "We are here to work with you and encourage you. Karibuni IPARK!"

SHAPING INNOVATORS, GLOBAL SERVICE

SUCCESS STORIES FROM STUDENTS

My name is Paulette Hawi, a Business Management student and Innovator at IPARK. Initially lacking innovative ideas and public speaking skills, I have grown significantly thanks to the support from the IPARK team, especially Madam Elizabeth, who mentored and encouraged us. A highlight was traveling to Germany to pitch my business ideas. The STAR training provided valuable insights into innovation. IPARK has transformed my perspective and taught me collaboration skills. It's open to everyone, regardless of academic background, so I encourage others to consider joining.



When I started, I did not have any innovation idea, I also did not have public speaking skills but now I feel iPARK has equipped me. The iPARK team has been really supportive.

My name is Faith Muthoni, a Communication Studies student currently attached to IPARK. This opportunity, introduced to me by Elizabeth, has allowed me to develop skills in inclusion and collaboration. I envision IPARK as a world-class hub providing real-life solutions. Embrace beginnings with discipline, and trust that God will provide. Welcome to IPARK—discover your potential!



The Future of E-Commerce

IPARK success stories

IPARK isn't just a mentorship space; it is a launchpad for internationally recognized enterprises. By providing resources in design thinking workshops, business modeling, and pitch coaching, IPARK ensures that **"Made in SPU"** brands are ready for the global stage.

EcoBana: Perhaps the crown jewel of IPARK's mentorship, this student-led venture manufactures biodegradable sanitary pads from banana fibers. They made history by winning the \$1M Hult Prize at the Clinton Global Initiative, proving that SPU innovations can lead the world in sustainability.

Captain Compost: A brilliant solution to waste management, turning organic refuse into high-quality fertilizer, addressing both environmental hygiene and agricultural productivity.

Sacco App: A fintech solution designed to digitize and streamline the operations of Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies, enhancing financial inclusion for local communities.



SPU @ REGIONAL DRAMA FESTIVALS

By Janet Kirunga

St. Paul's University delivered an outstanding performance at the Central and Eastern Region Drama Festivals held at Lukenya University Main Campus from 11th to 14th March 2025.

The university showcased exceptional talent across multiple categories, earning top recognitions and solidifying its position as a competitive force in the creative arts.

Following this impressive performance, the team has qualified to represent St. Paul's University at the National Drama Festivals in Nyeri.



Drama Festival participants on stage

Key Achievements

- 2nd Runners-Up – Male Dancer (Certificate)
- 2nd Runners-Up – Creative Cultural Dance (CCD Trophy)
- 2nd Runners-Up – Soloists (Certificate)
- 2nd Runners-Up – Instrumentalist (Certificate)
- Adjudicators' Award – Pharbel Henry (Spoken Word)
- Overall Performance
- Position 2 – Central Region
- Position 3 – Overall Ranking
- Next Step: Nationals





SPU CELEBRATES CHINESE NEW YEAR

BY JOSHUA KOMU

馬年



Faculty and students of St Pauls University, At Confucius UON

On February 12th, staff and students from St. Paul's University joined a vibrant gathering of scholars and students at the University of Nairobi's Confucius Institute to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Centered on the theme, "The Galloping Steed Strides into the Year of the Horse," the event served as a significant milestone for cultural diplomacy, bringing together over 30 collaborating institutions that have integrated Chinese language and culture into their academic curricula.

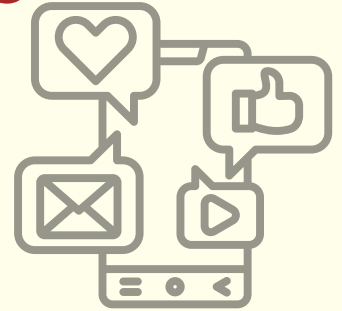
The festivities marked the traditional arrival of spring and the beginning of the lunisolar calendar, a period traditionally defined by reflection and celebration. Professor Wang Xiangxue, Director of CIUON, highlighted the event's evolution into a prestigious "brand event" over the last five years, noting that the increasing number of participating schools is a direct testament to the deepening academic and bilateral ties between Kenya and China. Professor Wang emphasized the shared values between the two nations, remarking that the mutual celebration fosters a sense of being "one family."

The Spring Festival provided a rich immersive experience, allowing attendees to engage with authentic Chinese customs, traditional games, and culinary delights. The highlights of the day were the cultural performances, which showcased a unique blend of traditions; drum-led parades and lion dances were infused with distinctive African rhythms, while Chinese dance troupes performed in African attire. This creative exchange beautifully symbolized the spirit of cultural reciprocity and the strengthening bond between the two communities.



Scrolling Through Silence

By Felix Kirimi



Across university campuses, digital consumption is replacing genuine human engagement. While lecture halls are full, students are often mentally absent, trading eye contact for scrolling in an environment where social media now shapes identity and emotional well-being.

Digital interaction has become the default, but it lacks the nonverbal cues—tone, gestures, and facial expressions—essential for emotional depth, often leaving exchanges feeling efficient but superficial. Furthermore, the pressure to curate a perfect online identity fosters a culture of constant comparison, tying self-worth to digital visibility. This is especially intense for students already navigating the complexities of belonging and ambition.

However, social media remains a vital support system for staying connected across distances and fostering niche communities. Emerging tools like AI are also expanding how students express ideas and participate online.

The challenge is not the platforms themselves, but the balance of their use. Experts and universities now advocate for "digital wellness," urging students to use these tools to enhance, rather than replace, real-world interaction. In an hyper-connected world, the most valuable asset remains genuine, face-to-face human connection.



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“THE CREAM OF THE UNIVERSITY”



St. Paul student choir posing in their uniform.

By Angela Mumo

Who are these individuals I'm referring to as the 'cream of the university'. What do they do? And how do they do it? They are the voices that rise above the chatter of lecture halls and the silence of the library. This is the University Choir, a vibrant community of voices blended into one lifting spirits and enriching every occasion they serve.

What makes them "the cream" is not a singular sound, but a rich blend of four distinct vocal textures. At the foundation lies the Bass grounding the music with strong resonant tones. Above them, the tenor brings warmth and lyrical passion to the music. The alto provides rich and warm harmonies while the soprano carries the high soaring melodies. Together, these four voices blend seamlessly to produce music that is both powerful and moving.

Every Wednesday, their voices fill the air during the community service creating an atmosphere for reflection and spiritual renewal. During graduation ceremonies, they stand as a symbol of achievement and celebration, marking one of the most important milestones in students' lives. Their presence is also deeply felt during sacred seasons as they present Easter and Christmas cantatas that tell stories of faith, hope and renewal. Beyond campus gates, the choir extends its ministry to ACK All Saints & Gideon Mt. View Parish, where their ministry becomes a form of worship and connection with the wider community.

The University Choir dedication has not gone unnoticed. They have proudly worn the trophy twice for being the best chaplaincy group. A clear testament to the commitment, discipline and excellence demonstrated by them and the wider chaplaincy team. This achievement reflects not only musical skill, but also spiritual devotion and teamwork, setting a standard that continues to inspire current and future members.

More than just a singing group, the University Choir is a family bound by faith, harmony and a mission to inspire through music, from soulful hymns to vibrant anthems. They carry a message of hope and love wherever they go. The university choir truly embodies the cream of the university not just in skill, but in commitment, unity and service. In every note they sing and every stage they grace, they remind us that excellence is not just about being the best, it is about giving your best in service to others.

Advancing Climate Justice: The YTICA Movement

By Penuel Ndichu

The Young Theologians Initiative for Climate Action (YTICA) at St. Paul's University (SPU) stands as a powerful testament to the impact of student-led advocacy.

The Young Theologians Initiative for Climate Action (YTICA) at St. Paul's University (SPU) stands as a powerful testament to the impact of student-led advocacy. Founded in March 2023 by a visionary team across various disciplines and hosted within the School of Theology, YTICA bridges the gap between spiritual conviction and environmental responsibility. Under the patronage of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Esther Mombo, the club integrates ecological care into the heart of theological education, viewing the stewardship of the Earth not just as a scientific necessity, but as a moral and spiritual calling.

Nature's Timeless Beauty

YTICA's influence is growing rapidly. The recent launch of YTICA Kilgoris marks the first step in a broader strategy to establish chapters across Kenya, building a national network of young climate leaders. A central pillar of this growth is the focus on children and youth. Rather than seeing them as victims of climate change, YTICA empowers them as "agents of creation care," equipping the next generation with the skills to sustain long-term environmental resilience.

Guided by the motto "Care for Creation," YTICA draws inspiration from the biblical mandate of stewardship to address the urgent climate realities facing Kenya—from devastating floods to unpredictable weather patterns. The initiative translates faith into action through:

- **Climate Advocacy & Awareness:** Engaging in local and global forums, including those hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- **Intersectional Action:** Linking climate change to health, fashion, and gender to address the root social and economic causes of environmental injustice.
- **The Hummingbird Toolkit:** A resource inspired by the story of a small bird doing its part, symbolizing how collective small actions lead to massive systemic change.





YTICA members during a past meeting

A Vision for Justice

The initiative is deeply rooted in climate justice, acknowledging that while African communities contribute the least to global emissions, they often bear the heaviest burden. YTICA seeks to amplify youth voices to challenge these systemic inequalities.

The initiative is deeply rooted in climate justice, acknowledging that while African communities contribute the least to global emissions, they often bear the heaviest burden. YTICA seeks to amplify youth voices to challenge these systemic inequalities.



Looking forward, the club is set to launch a tree nursery project at SPU to support reforestation and biodiversity. This project will serve as both a practical contribution to climate mitigation and a hands-on learning lab for the community. Through the integration of faith, research, and grassroots action, YTICA continues to prove that students are not just observing history—they are actively writing a sustainable future for Africa.

The Price of Authority: Redefining Freedom at University

By Omondi Joy



Students walking down a corridor unsplash image.

Freedom vs. Vice: A Silent Tether

We must confront a difficult question: What is freedom, really? Is it the ability to skip a 7:00 AM class simply because no one is there to drag you out of bed? Is it the right to lose ourselves in the temporary escape of drugs, alcohol, or lifestyles that inevitably lead to stalled dreams?

If freedom is simply the "right to ruin ourselves," then it isn't freedom at all—it's just a different kind of cage. A vice is a silent tether; while you think you are choosing it, it soon begins to choose for you. True freedom is not found in these escapes, which freshers often flirt with, but in the authority over oneself.

For four years, high school felt like a series of cages, its rhythm set by the bell and its paths carved by others. We were constantly soothed by the same promise: "Just finish this, and then you'll be free." Now, we have arrived at the university. The gates are open, and the monitors are gone. But suddenly, that long-awaited "freedom" doesn't feel like a vacation; it feels like standing on the edge of a cliff.

The Great Deception

The most profound shift is the sudden silence. In the university corridor, no one is coming to push us. No one stands at the lecture hall door checking our presence or our pulse. This is the transition's great deception: we mistake the absence of a warden for the absence of consequence.

Stepping out of the high school cage forces us into an environment where the only guiding voice left is our own. For many, that voice is still a whisper compared to the clamor of the world around us. In this disorientation, we find ourselves asking, Is this what they meant?



A real view
of the front
Drive way
from the
main gate

Building the Foundation

We are often told university is a place for "character building," but you cannot build a structure without a strong foundation. If we are not educated on what freedom truly means, we may spend four years dismantling our potential rather than constructing our future.

Freedom in these corridors is, fundamentally, the power to say "No" to the distractions that do not serve your vision. It is the hard discipline required to show up even when no one is watching. It is the stark realization that while you are finally allowed to do whatever you want, you are also now the only person responsible for the outcome of those choices.

Architects of Our Futures

We are no longer children being told how to run; we are the architects. The freedom we were promised is not a vacation from responsibility—it is the highest form of it. As we walk these halls, let us strive not to be defined by the rules we can break, but by the standards we set for ourselves. The gate is open, and the map is blank. The question isn't just "What will you do?" but "Who will you become while you're doing it?"

The "freedom" we were promised isn't a vacation from responsibility, it is the highest form of it.

Hidden in Plain

Sight

By Felix. K. Kirimi



Blue belt karate holder

On the first floor of the Students' Amphitheatre, in a space where many pass without a second glance, a different kind of training unfolds. In the late afternoons between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., a small group of students gathers, not for lectures or meetings, but for discipline, movement, and mastery.

Despite being part of campus life, the university's martial arts club remains largely unnoticed. While disciplines such as Taekwondo and Karate are officially recognized, awareness of the club itself is limited. For many students, it exists in the background: hidden in plain sight.

Yet within this quiet space, training is anything but ordinary. Sessions are structured, focused, and physically demanding, blending technique with mental discipline. Students are guided not only to improve their strength and coordination, but also their patience, control, and resilience.

At the Students' Amphitheatre, a quiet martial arts club is shaping discipline, confidence, and opportunity for those who find it.



Students practising Karate techniques

Guiding this process is a trainer whose journey reflects both skill and continuity. A former student and once a captain within the club, he has remained committed to developing others beyond his time at the university. His experience spans multiple disciplines, with a strong foundation in Taekwondo and Karate, while also incorporating elements of boxing and aspects of Judo into training. This blend creates a dynamic learning environment, exposing students to different fighting styles while allowing them to develop as well-rounded fighters and appreciate the philosophy behind each discipline. The emphasis is not on aggression, but on control, awareness, and continuous self-improvement.

For those involved, the impact extends far beyond the training space. Martial arts provide an outlet in the midst of academic pressure, helping students manage stress while building confidence and discipline. Rooted in the tenets of Taekwondo; courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and indomitable spirit, training shapes not only physical ability but also personal character. The environment also fosters a strong sense of community, where members support one another's growth and progress. The environment also fosters a strong sense of community, where members support one another's growth and progress.

Beyond campus, the club opens doors to wider opportunities. Students have the chance to participate in inter-university tournaments held across the country, traveling to institutions such as USIU Africa, Kenyatta University, and Maseno University among others. These events are structured and controlled, with proper protective gear and an emphasis on sparring rather than harm. They offer not only competition, but also exposure, interaction with other students, and a sense of pride in representing the university.



Sparring session between two karate students

However, the club's low visibility continues to limit its reach. Without consistent promotion, many students miss the opportunity to be part of a space that offers both personal and social growth.

For those willing to step in, the door is open; literally and figuratively. Training sessions continue each weekday afternoon at the Students' Amphitheatre, welcoming anyone interested in learning, improving, or simply trying something new.

In a university environment often defined by noise and visibility, this small community proves that impact does not always demand attention. Sometimes, it grows quietly; one session, one student, one disciplined step at a time.

SHE WHO WALKS IN BORROWED SKIN

By Mariara Samuel

Tavani was almost out of the library when a book slipped from a desk, hit the floor, and spilled loose pages at her feet. She bent quickly to gather them. "I am very sorry," she said to the student using it. As she pressed the pages back together, a photograph slid out. Old. Black and white. Faded. She started to tuck it back in, thinking it was some forgotten history project, but something in the picture caught her eye and held it there. The photo was dated 1987. Five students stood outside a building she recognized at once. Four were strangers. The fifth had her face. Tavani stared. Not almost her face. Not a passing resemblance. Her face. The same jawline. The same eyes. And when she brought the picture closer, her stomach turned. The woman in the photograph had the same scar along her jaw. Same place. Same shape. Identical. Tavani touched her own face. The scar had been there since childhood. Her mother had always told her it came from a fall. "What is this?" she whispered. Then she noticed faint writing showing through from the back. She turned the photograph over.

Amara tivelku, Tavani. The library seemed to drop away. The voices. The scraping chairs. The hum of the lights. All of it disappeared behind those words. She had seen them before. She knew that with a certainty that made no sense. A memory rose fast and cold: crayons scattered on the floor, a child's drawing of a house with a red roof, a blue door, and red windows. And on the back, in her own childish hand, those same words. Amara tivelku, Tavani. "Hey, miss, are you okay?" A hand landed on her shoulder. Tavani opened her mouth, but the floor came up too fast. When she woke, the first thing she felt was paper crushed tightly in her fist. The photograph. "They could not get it out of your hand." Lireva was sitting beside the clinic bed, watching her. Tavani sat up too fast, ignoring the dizziness, and looked at the photo again. The face was still there. The scar was still there. Then something clicked inside her. "The drawing."

Minutes later she was back in her hostel room, dragging the framed picture from the wall with shaking hands. It slipped, shattered on the floor, and glass burst around her feet. She pulled out the drawing and turned it over.

There it was.

In the rough handwriting of her six-year-old self:

Amara tivelku, Tavani.

Lireva said nothing. She only stared from the drawing to the photograph to Tavani's face.

"How does a child write words she has never known," Tavani asked quietly, "and find them again in a photograph taken before she was born?"

Still silent, Lireva took photos of the writing and sent them to her brother.

The linguist.

He called almost at once.

"Where did you get those words?" he demanded.

"From Tavani's photograph," Lireva said.

"And from a drawing she made as a child."

There was silence.

Then his voice came back, urgent and sharp.

"Run. Lireva, run now."

Before either of them could speak, a sound scraped along the corridor outside. Slow. Heavy. Like something dragging itself across the wall. They opened the door.

The hallway was empty.

At the far end, on the toilet door, words had been scratched deep into the paint.

Amara tivelku, Tavani.

Neither of them moved.

Then the handle turned slowly from the inside. The door opened a crack.

A cold smell drifted out—damp concrete, metal, something old.

They stepped closer, shoulder to shoulder, breath caught in their throats. The door swung wide.

Lireva screamed.

Tavani did not even have time to.

Something seized her with impossible force and dragged her off the ground into the darkness beyond the doorway. One second, she was there.

The next she was gone.

The toilet door slammed shut.

The corridor went still.

Lireva stood alone, staring at the carved words on the door, her brother still shouting through the phone on the floor behind her.

And from inside the toilet, in Tavani's voice, came a whisper:

"Don't let her wear me."



Illustration on Ion the story

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

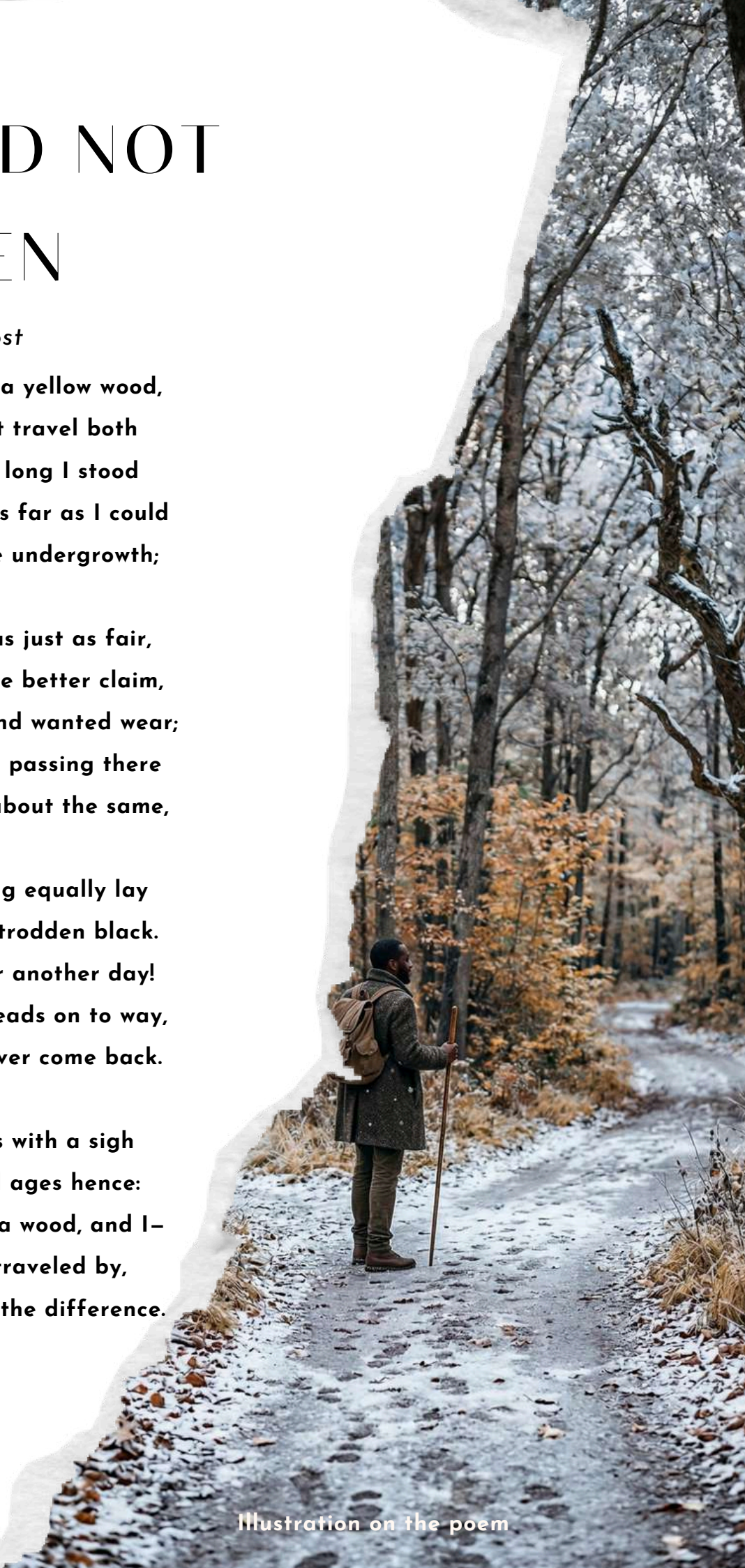
By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



BOOK REVIEW

THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI



Cover art on the book

By James Mureithi

Author: Miyamoto Musashi
Genre: Philosophy / Martial Arts / Strategy

Written in 1645 by the undefeated samurai Miyamoto Musashi, *The Book of Five Rings* transcends its role as a sword-fighting manual to become a deep exploration of strategy, psychology, and mastery. Musashi divides his teachings into five "books"—Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and Void—each symbolizing aspects of conflict and existence. While focused on swordsmanship, its insights are relevant across various competitive fields, emphasizing flexibility, eliminating unnecessary movements, and recognizing the unseen.

My Comment

My standout takeaway from Musashi is his distinction between "perceiving" and "seeing." He argues that a warrior must look at distant things as if they are close and near things as if they are distant.

In our modern world, we are often distracted by "seeing"—reacting to the immediate, noisy chaos of the present. Musashi teaches us to "perceive"—to look past the surface to understand the underlying mechanics of a situation. This shift from reactive sight to proactive perception is the hallmark of a true strategist.

My Favorite Quotation

"There is nothing outside of yourself that can ever enable you to get better, stronger, richer, quicker, or smarter. Everything is within. Everything exists. Seek nothing outside of yourself."

What is the moral of the story?

The book's core message is that mastery is a unified path. Musashi emphasizes that understanding the "Way" broadly reveals its presence in all aspects of life. Excellence is portrayed as a state of being rather than a specific skill. Key principles, such as timing, balance, and "no-mind" (acting without hesitation), apply universally, whether in leadership or craft. The ultimate aim is to achieve the "Void," where skills become instinctual, allowing for effortless spontaneity.

A photograph of a modern university building at dusk. The building features a prominent entrance archway with a maroon and cream color scheme. The archway is illuminated from within, and the words "ST. PAUL'S" and "UNIVERSITY" are written in large, white, illuminated letters along its top edge. In the center of the archway, there is a circular emblem with a red and white design, and below it, a small sign that reads "Yster University of Clinical". The building's facade is a mix of maroon, cream, and dark grey panels. The sky is a deep blue, and some windows are lit up, suggesting the building is active. There are some green plants in the foreground.

ST. PAUL'S

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