



M-PESA
FOUNDATION
ACADEMY



THINKERS.DOERS.LEADERS

Celebrating Our J^ourney



The Journey

09

Jan 2020

Celebration of Achievement

10

23rd Feb 2020

MPESA Foundation Academy at 4

23rd Feb 2019. MPESA Foundation Academy at 3

07

08

October/ Nov 2019

our pioneer
students sit for
their KCSE Exams

06

24th Oct 2018.
President's visit
and Official
Launch of the
Academy

05

5th July 2018. Launch of the
Academy's New Brand

04

23rd Feb 2018: MPESA
Foundation Academy at 2

03

10th Feb 2018: Launch of the
Airbus Little Engineer Program
at The Academy

02

22nd June 2017: Launch
of the Resource Center by
Foundation Trustee Keith
Hamish

01: START

23rd Feb 2016: Launch of the
MPESA Foundation Academy

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CREDITS

MIRIAM NYOKABI -EDITOR

GLORIA IRERI- CREATIVE DIRECTOR



Editorial: by Miriam Nyokabi

This year began on a high note with the promise of nothing but double blessings just like the twin year itself 20-20. I vividly remember a sermon in church on New Year Eve titled give me this mountain, it was a call to ask God to provide us with the challenges for the year and the strength, to conquer them. Everything looked bright as the term and the year commenced and had we been told to forecast what the months ahead would bring, nothing negative would have come to mind. Now, as I write this, we find ourselves facing the biggest battle of our times the COVID - 19 Disease. The epidemic has seen schools shut for several months now and of course, changed the way we work now that we are working from home. Yet, even in our isolation, we've had many blessings as an institution and have grown tremendously. This issue of the term magazine is a reflection of these achievements from an individual perspective with some members of staff taking us through their personal experiences over the last four years and others also sharing with us their functions is part of the team. Our students too, though the term was cut short, have written about the many events and trips they experienced over the 10 weeks they had at the Academy.

It is hard to believe how time flies by and how easy it is to forget where we have come from, this is a reflective memoir, a tribute to our concerted efforts in our small ways, lest we forget.

As I look back on my journey in the Academy, which begun somewhat different from most, I am overwhelmed with mixed emotions. I was lucky to have secured a three months internship back in September of 2015 as an admission intern, then we were called admission consultants. Our team of 21 was tasked with the recruitment of the first cohort of the Academy's learners. I was delighted to be working for Safaricom, the role and title notwithstanding, I had passed by Safaricom house many times on my way home to Kinoo where I had resided since 2007. Each time I saw the two buildings, I couldn't fathom what it was like to work

there and now, I would experience just that. When we finally finished the task at hand, we were given the opportunity to go on the county interviews and home visits together with the Safaricom staff teams. For a young woman who had hardly stepped outside Nairobi county, I was thrilled and always I'm to this day as we embark on this journeys. I got an extension of the contract for three more months, from January to March of 2016 to help settle the new team of staff and students at the Academy. We helped provide resources for them while at BrackenHurst and later brought them to Academy when some buildings we ready for occupation. Never in my mind had I thought I'd end up working in the institution but just as my contract was to end, I was given the opportunity to start the communications department. Here I was, just like a pioneer looking out on a blank landscape where I could build structures and strategies that would pave way to a robust department. It was the best opportunity ever and I embraced it, I knew I could do it, I had the capacity. First forward to 2020 and the department has grown, we are a cohesive team, and we have achieved so much, our platforms and publications are some of the best, and we have managed to capture the international standards of the Academy. ' I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create a ripple effect,' Mother Teresa, in our own way, we are each casting stone and creating a ripple effect in the lives of our learners, Kenya and the world. We invite you to sit back as you browse through the pages of this edition and hopefully let our stories ignite a flame of hope within us that indeed, we shall prevail and recover from this. Memoirs are the icing of life, let us not forget the before.

Life is
a Journey
Enjoy





Word from the CEO: by Les Baillie

There is a miss held view that the saying “May you live in interesting times” is an ancient Chinese curse, implying that the expression is used with the clear implication that “uninteresting times’, of peace and tranquillity, are more life-enhancing than interesting ones. There is a strongly held belief that the phrase is neither Chinese nor ancient but actually emanates from the 20th Century. The person who really brought this phrase to the public attention was Robert Kennedy in a speech in Cape Town in June 1966 in which he said:

“There is a Chinese curse which says “May he live in interesting times.” Like it or not we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty; but they are also more open to the creative energy of men than any other time in history”.

That speech is as true in our current circumstances as it was in 1966. We are certainly living in “interesting times”, they are times of danger and uncertainty (there are many thousands of people dying around the world and we do not know when this will end) and will be more open to the creative energy of men (around the world thousands of scientists are trying to develop a vaccine for COVID 19, their creative energy will succeed in producing one, hopefully very soon).

At the time of writing I have no idea as to when we will return to “normality”, whatever that is. Normality going forward will be very different for our learners that it was for my generation. I hope that, whilst it will be different, it will be better and that our learners will need to play an important role, along with their generation around the world, in defining the new “normal”.

Being at the Academy will give our learners the opportunity to think differently, to analyse and solve problems, to give back to their communities, to understand right from wrong and to be a source of inspiration to all those that they interact with in the future. Their education has been interrupted and we do not know for how long this interruption will continue, there are so many uncertainties which will be resolved over the coming months.

It will be the responsibility of all Academy staff, from the gardeners to the CEO, to ensure that the current situation is not detrimental to the development of our learners. When they return to the Academy, hopefully sooner rather than later, they will be anxious, stressed, have unanswered questions and need our full support. As a family we will work together, we will ensure success, we will answer their questions and we will come out of these times stronger.

Let us look forward to “uninteresting times” and a return to education as soon as it is possible.

Keep, well, keep safe and keep healthy.





Facing Up To Challenges By Dr. Stephen Walker

As of April 2020, I have had the privilege of serving as **Director of Teaching & Learning** for 3 years and I am still learning how to face up to that challenge! Upon arrival at the Academy, the present Uongozi Scholars were in Form 2 and sitting on a combined academic average of D plain. The Academy was operating on a curriculum that was heavily based on rote learning with no assessment around skills and thinking and yet our vision was based around producing 'transformational leaders' for the future. There was no room for developing 21st Century skills like problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration, all key skills for future leaders. The heavily content based curriculum left little time to schedule Entrepreneurial Leadership or STEAM or the President's Award programs, never mind a truly effective pastoral care program. As much as the Academy's hardworking teachers tried to teach the curriculum in a more student-centred way, it was like trying to push a giant bolder up a very rocky hill. We also needed as many of our students to transition onto University, furthering their education and eventually taking their places as the leaders of tomorrow. But how could we achieve that with a mean academic grade of a D plain?

Something had to change, and quickly.

We had to focus on the academic improvement of students if we were to stand any chance of transitioning them on to University. We then introduced the 'Personalised Learning' programs for students struggling in certain subjects and

the 'High Achievers' program to expand our B and A subject grades.

The Form 4 students of 2019 worked so hard with their teachers over their last 2 years in the Academy and didn't loose heart through the long and difficult process of lifting their grades. By the time that our first candidate class came to sit their KCSE examinations in November of 2019, they were well prepared, calm and very focussed on achieving success. We were all extremely delighted when we learnt that they had lifted their mean grade over 2 years from a D plain to a B minus in the KCSE examinations of 2020 - that is a massive achievement by both students and teachers alike, well done to all of you. We are delighted to report that we have aimed at 100% transition of the present Uongozi Scholars onto university this autumn, with 24 scholars gaining places at US universities, 74 going to UK universities and 4 students transitioning onto USIU, Stathmore University and University of Nairobi! They have truly set the bar high for our future candidate classes. The Academy is a great supporter of the President's Award (PA) program which compliments our vision so well because it develops self confidence, personal development, community awareness and leadership skills. I am delighted to report that all Form 3 completed their Gold Awards last year, and 192 students were due to attend State House in March for the award ceremony before the COVID-19 outbreak. 192 students, from one institution, gaining Gold Awards in PA is a Kenyan record and we await verification that it may even be a global record! Well done to all the students and the staff for the successful delivery of this program in the

Academy throughout 2019.

The Elite Sports Academy's have also grown in strength. This was the first year that our Rugby Academy competed in the Kenya Secondary Sports competitions and as of the date of writing, they have qualified for the Regional Finals which is a massive achievement and we wish them well as they try to qualify for the National Finals. The Football Academy has also further developed its program, British Sports Limited who oversee the MFA Football Academy, have bought Commercial United, based in Thika. This young, semi-professional squad now train alongside our own Football Academy and we have agreed that talented players from MFA will be absorbed into the Commercial Utd squad as appropriate, thereby giving talented players an early taste of the step up required into the professional game. Our Basketball Academy has now been admitted into the NBA Junior Basketball League in Kenya and will start competing once COVID restrictions are lifted. NBA Africa also still plan to hold their Basketball Clinics for talented youth players from East Africa at the Academy and now that Safaricom are sponsoring this partnership, we foresee our Basketball teams going on to reach new heights going forward. Our talented athletes also continue to train at the elite training camp at Iten. So sport at the Academy is also looking very healthy!

As we embark upon a process of curriculum review at the Academy, the next few years are going to be very exciting as new opportunities unfold for students and staff alike. I am very happy to be your DTL at this enthralling time in the Academy's history. Let us all go forward and 'face the challenge'!





Tracing the footsteps of the Languages at MFA

By: Victor Onsarigo

Senior Teacher for Languages (2016-2019)

It is early February. The morning is chilly and somewhat misty. It is somewhere in the outskirts of Nairobi. I would say, safe for the biting cold of this February morning; the surrounding can be described as serene. A small group of young men and women are seated in a conference hall ready to begin the day's training. The facilitator distributes copies of a story about the Building of a Cathedral. The next few minutes would be spent combing through the script before the readers can start to discuss its content in relation to their newly acquired status as ding faculty of a leadership development learning institution of its kind in Africa. The year is 2016, and the setting is the Brackenhurst Hotel and Conferences down in Limuru.

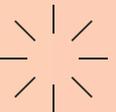
The story of the building of a Cathedral, you may call this “the parable of the construction of a cathedral” is where I begin tracing the footsteps of the Languages at M-PESA Foundation Academy. In a somewhat simplistic statement, I would say the story is about the individual perspectives of what three mythical men working at a construction site of an upcoming cathedral think they are doing: laying bricks; building a wall and building a cathedral. I would liken the three weeks of training that my inaugural team in the department spent at Brackenhurst as laying the foundation for a Cathedral.

At the Languages department, we began as a team of five members: two teachers of English, two teachers of MFL (French and German) and one teacher of Kiswahili (who also doubled as the team leader). Having been the team leader at the inaugural stage of what is currently one of the most dynamic faculty team at the Academy, I must say February the 23rd 2016 spelt the enormity of the task we had ahead of us as we received the first cohort of MFA students. Their English language, in particular, needed a complete transformation if we were going to turn up at the big stage and be counted. Lucky enough, my team was very supportive as we rolled out an ambitious language training plan for our students with a specific focus on the English Language.

To tackle the seemingly gigantic task, we introduced all students to the Toast Masters programme besides allocating each of the five teachers in the department a specific group of students to coach. We also rolled out an aggressive lunch-time communication-training programme where we had activities like TEDx, Engage, The Shark Tank, DEAR (drop everything and read) and debates every 40 minutes of lunch hour from Monday to Friday. Through these programmes, MFA's first

cohort gradually polished their English and eventually emerged as the trendsetters for the rest of the schools in public speaking, running away with prizes at the most important stages like MUN (model united nations), GDC (great debaters contest) and World Scholars Cup, the culmination of which was the impressive performance in KCSE where English, Kiswahili, German and French surpassed set targets to perform beyond expectations.

I must acknowledge that this achievement couldn't have been realised had the inaugural team not believed that they were building "a cathedral" which would outlive their stay at MFA. Indeed, as the students grew both in numbers and in knowledge, the faculty equally grew, expanding from a founding faculty of five to the current sixteen members within the department. We have also added a new feather to our cap by onboarding one teacher of Mandarin and hope in the near future to introduce Arabic. Suffice to say; this team has realised great personal development at the individual and team levels. A good number of them now occupy middle and senior-level management positions at the academy. However, beyond holding positions of leadership, I would say that the most significant development for this team is the complete shift in their instructional approach, transforming their approach from "didactic lecturing" to "a collaborative and constructivist approach". The current phase of professional development is focused on growing our skills in formative assessment (assessment for learning), embedding project-based learning and building a robust approach to literacy teaching and learning.



LANGUAGES



MY JOURNEY AT MPESA FOUNDATION ACADEMY

By- Edward Kisaka: Accountant

I remember joining the Academy with much nostalgia back in February of 2016, the thought of joining one of the biggest Teleco Company's in the East and Central Africa was amazing, and I could not contain my expectations even though I knew that the Academy was just a project of Safaricom.

On 8th of that month, we (all recruits) converged at Michael Joseph Centre, Safaricom house, along Waiyaki way for a briefing on the nitty-gritty about our new employer as well as the receiving of our appointment letters.

The induction sessions took place at Brackenhurst in Limuru where we had to reside for the few weeks it would take to get things rolling. It was such a cold rainy place though the weather did not dampen our spirits. I was still trying to wrap my head around the fact that we were staying in a hotel, but I enjoyed my stay. We had sessions facilitated by guests from Africa Leadership Academy (ALA), South Africa, among many others and a most memorable and powerful session from Sanda Ojiambo, Head of sustainable business & Social impact.

Sanda used the analogy of building a cathedral in Barcelona in the thirteen to the fifteenth century to exemplify the magnitude of the task ahead of us and also the rewards this task would bring. It was such a valuable insight that inspired us to want to be part of the change. Later on, we relocated to care-pay offices in Nairobi, where we had a temporary office to start and where we had an opportunity to do some benchmarking.

A month later, we finally headed to the MPESA Foundation Academy along Thika Road Exit 16A. Had one been told that the institution would be as grand as it is currently, one would have had their doubts because the site was under construction with most of the buildings found now being nothing but half-built foundations and walls, there was no grass then, just lots of fine dust.

The sight was shocking, and I almost gave up on my new career, especially coming from an already established agency with adequate processes and procedures in place, I didn't think I could hack it.

Interactions with colleagues from different backgrounds and professions as well as the expectations of making a difference in my country gave me the strength to carry on even though the gnawing thought of whether I had made a wrong career move would creep in from time to time. As we bonded, we become close, and this gave us the drive to see things through.

The reality was that we needed to set up a working methodology for finance; we needed a system to incorporate all the processes for the Academy especially having our first cohort of student and

being a start-up company there was much work ahead, and I braced myself, it wasn't going to be easy, but then all things that are worth it never are.

We sourced for ERP systems after manual workflow systems and listened to several system developers presentation to tailor-make our requirements. Finally, after much deliberations, we settled on Sage X3 ERP, which simplified our procurement and payables processes. We had to Map our needs as a school to befit a calibre of an international school.

Things were finally looking up, and the system made it easier to manage most of our processes. We continue to improve on the best practices to surpass all expectations even as we strive to be Thinkers Doers and Leaders in Africa and beyond.



Staff Training at Brackenhurst



Team building at Brackenhurst



Academy Rebranding /Open Day





Then and Now

By Winnie R. Makokha: Safety Supervisor

It was a bit dusty then, September of 2016. Much construction going on, of course, this was expected, and the environmental impact assessment report had alluded to it. In the report, it outlined ways to minimize the dust. It was also quite hot, which made the dust seem a lot like a brown cloud sometimes, especially when the winds came by. The dust often settled on the few roofs that had been erected in the complete buildings, the Form 1 block, the dining hall, the then Amboseli and Tsavo residences, the water tower, the indoor sports hall. But just like the wind passing, I knew even the dust would soon end.

It is cool and not dusty at all now. Even when the sun is scorching hot, the shades of the planted trees all around the compound were clearly defined and grown now, bringing a cool breeze. I remember one Wednesday of February 2020 when I told the girls in my mentorship group, "I saw a tree that finally has good shade, let's go sit there and have our lunch." That tiny tree behind the current Agriculture room, in the quadrangle between Block E and the Administration block, that tree now has a shade we can enjoy with well-manicured green lawns. Adopt the pace of nature; her secret is patience; 4 years later, I see how true that is.

Did I mention the few buildings that were complete then? They were few, but they served the purpose and the population - 96 students, about 55 staff. It was enough. But I wondered about the grand plan for more staff and more students. See I am not good at visualizing spaces, especially from paper. I saw the architectural model, but I couldn't envision how they will all fit in. But the architects saw it.

Now, a drive through the gate and then a walk around the 75 acres, the buildings are almost triple the initial ones. Six more student residences up from the initial two, all named after various parks around East Africa. More staff housing, a well-resourced (pun) resource Centre, all the three classroom blocks complete, including one that is double-storied, various sports fields, a swimming pool, an ever-busy maintenance yard, 9 Academy vehicles. All this being able to be occupied and utilized by about 680 students and 180 staff.

We bought drinking water then; we bought chicken, we bought fish. All these were part of the catering menu, and the water, well- water is life. We bought vegetables, we bought tomatoes, we bought milk, we bought eggs. At the furthest end of the 50-acre site of the Academy, we had the grand plan of a farm. It had a mixture of construction material and soil. A farm manager and her team began the work of turning into arable land.

Turns out what you have read or heard about land reclamation is feasible. Now, we rear chicken for

eggs (layers) and meat (broilers), we have a dairy unit- the most recent addition to the farming unit, we treat and distribute our drinking water, we have fish ponds for our fish needs, we plant assorted vegetables, we have greenhouses...we even sell some to staff and a few customers from outside the Academy. It's a spectacle to have witnessed that transformation.

Then it started with a skeleton staff in each department, stringing the pieces together to make it whole. Sometimes it was a one person or two people job—all on their own.

Few student activities and clubs, we had to stretch ourselves thin, sometimes the footballer also doubled up as the basketball player and the poet was the musician.

Now, it's a bustle of activity seeing meetings within departments, inter-departmental collaboration, distribution of roles across different sections, having students participate in numerous activities, full sports teams, having our trophy cabinet filled with pride, our Mondays colourful with all the awards that the learners have won. All of us, working towards a shared vision.

Then, it was a vision on paper; a few people sat and conceptualized it. Now, we have a functional Academy, whose vision has been brought to life by the committed, hardworking staff, creating an opportunity for our learners to become transformational leaders.

THEN

BLEACHERS

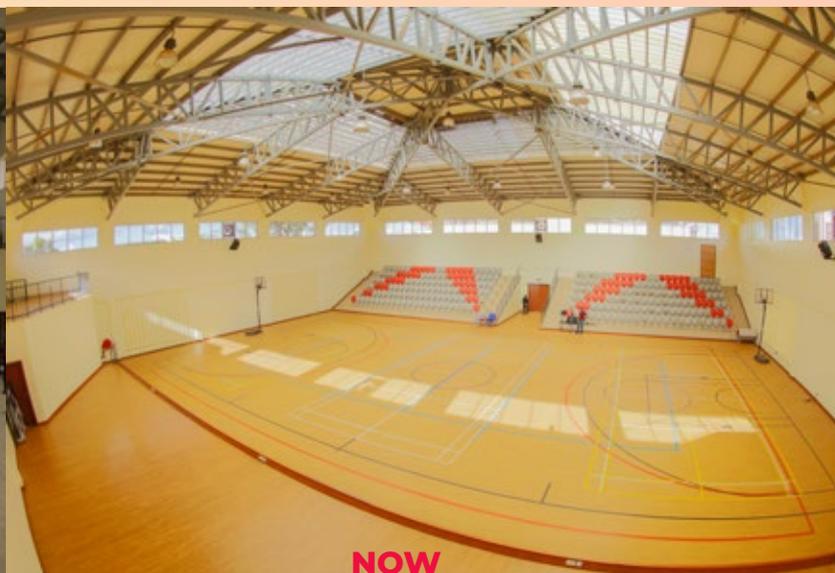
NOW



SPORTS HALL

THEN

NOW





**MPESA FOUNDATION ACADEMY JOURNEY
THROUGH THE EYES OF CONSTRUCTION**
By Rhoda Igosangwa

The construction journey of the MPESA Foundation Academy facilities into what they are today has been interesting with very many adjustments along the way. It would be hard to imagine the academy today from what it was back in 2016 when the first cohort came. But with Gods help and the combined effort of the CEO, contractors, consultants and staff we have been able to come this far.



The current form two building was the official academic /administration / CEO's office/library for one year.

When the time came for students to report, very little had been completed and therefore the project was structured into phases. Phase one included two student residence blocks, staff houses, form two building (Watendaji), and the kitchen/dining. The first cohort of students was received after phase one.

Phase 1B had the sports hall, hardcourts for basketball and volleyball, paving of the driveway from the gate, the administration building, the resource centre, the double storey academic block (Wasomi), form one academic building (Kuwaza), the principals house (now Head of Academic house), water tower, part two of the kitchen and dining and the receiving store.

Phase 2 was completed in three parts phase 2A, B and C.

For the first one month, the students and some staff were hosted at Brakenhurst retreat, while the rest worked from Care Pay offices in Lavington.

There was a lot of pressure to get the buildings ready and shorten the stay at Brackenhurst. We had to move out of our comfort zones and work against time to deliver. Finishing the work in record time required working day and night shifts. Many times staff would be called upon to go beyond their line of profession to get things done. This was challenging as everyone was still new and had not worked together before.

Eventually on February 2016 the team at Brackenhurst arrived at the academy while construction was still going on. The occupied section was hoarded and students assisted in painting the hoarding.

This journey would not be complete without a walk through photos of different phases of the academy's growth.

PHASE ONE



Receiving store



Kitchen



From far left, The sports hall, Administration building, Form two building Auditorium, music centre and workshop.
In the front is the form two building.



Kitchen/ Dining



Senior staff houses



Main parking area outside auditorium



CONTINUATION OF PHASE 1 (PHASE 1B)

This phase involved completion of various buildings, the parking lot and playing fields that had been not completed by the time students came to the academy.



Wasomi (double storey building)



Auditorium



Main road clear view fencing



Access gate to the staff housing



Main Gate



The kitchen from behind



Inside prep room in the kitchen



Installation of cooking range

And finally our first cohort arrived from Brackenhurst on 23 February. It is hard to describe the feelings as this group of 96 boys and girls arrived at the school. Their excited reactions to facilities that were not yet complete yet they were so overjoyed to come were so humbling. The faces of their parents and their words, I am leaving my daughter in your hands, please take care of her.



PHASE ONE COMPLETION

This phase was undertaken by three different contractors in order to make up for lost time. The phase included completion of ; sports hall, swimming pool, site works, administration building, principles house, farm buildings .

PHASE 2A – STUDENT RESIDENCES

SITE HAND OVER PHASE 2B - FOUR STUDENT RESIDENCES

PHASE 2C

The final phase of the main campus was phase 2C and this comprised of more staff houses, the creche, Uongozi Centre, the CEO's residence and Directors residence

CEO'S RESIDENCE

This master piece took five different contractors with different specialties to complete. We had a myriad of challenges transitioning from the main contractor for builders works, to the interiors specialists. Many times our teeth were set on edge by the interactions of the different contractors. Mrs. Baillie with her expertise in interior design, guided the team to come up with an interior décor like one straight out of the latest interiors magazine.

READ MORE ON



www.mpesafoundationacademy.ac.ke/mpesa-foundation-academy-journey-through-the-eyes-of-construction-by-rhoda-igosangwa/



Manual and Small Beginnings

A Journey To Building An Exemplary Stores Section

By: Peninah Mutethia Accounts and Stores Assistant.

2016 was a profound year, and as I took up my new role as an Accounts and Store Assistance in the month of August, I still remember vividly the excitement and anticipation of what lay ahead. The buildings were few, and there was a lot of construction ongoing. I was glad to be part of the pioneers of this great Institution. By then, there was minimal working space; all staff would sit in one room, the current Form 2 block. This embraced the spirit of togetherness and open-door policy among staff. In addition, students and staff interacted freely like one big family. This later became our culture at the Academy.

The store's journey began in a small room in the Form 2 block. This was the main Academy store; however, some departments had their sub-stores managed by the various head of departments. As the Institution grew, there was an obvious need to increase storage capacity. This growth was very exciting for me as it meant that I would be able to have a chance to learn and execute my role optimally. As a result, the store temporarily moved to the workshop area before relocating to the current central receiving area next to the dining hall. This made my work more comfortable, as all Academy supplies are received and distributed from one central location.

The entire procure to pay process was manual and tracing supplies was a tiring process. ICT, being an enabler department facilitated the procurement and implementation of a cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system (SAGE X3) that automated the entire process. Currently, it is an easy task for any staff to be issued with supplies by just a click of the button at the comfort of their offices. As a section within the finance and procurement department, we endeavour to offer all the academy entities the best and timely services as we work towards developing transformational leaders.

Down Memory Lane

@Brackenhurst, Limuru Year:2016



Down Memory Lane

The Anniversaries

23rd February every year we celebrate our anniversary, we appreciate how the school has evolved and grown over the years. Usually the anniversary commemorates the positive aspects of the Academy, remembering traditions and instilling a sense of pride in the current staff, students and stakeholders.

Cake cutting has always been the highlight of our anniversaries

1st Anniversary



2nd Anniversary



3rd Anniversary



4th Anniversary



Down Memory Lane- The Anniversaries



Our 1st Anniversary was a major milestone for us, we marked this day with song and dance to celebrate the one year journey. We enjoyed reflecting on our impact, while looking ahead to more years of being "THINKERS, DOERS and LEADERS".



2nd Anniversary was unforgettable, the theme was African, we appreciated our heritage and culture through cuisine, folklore, music, decor and dress code. Expressions of the African culture were abundant, with large amounts of cultural diversity being found not only across different countries but also within a single countries in this case, Kenya.



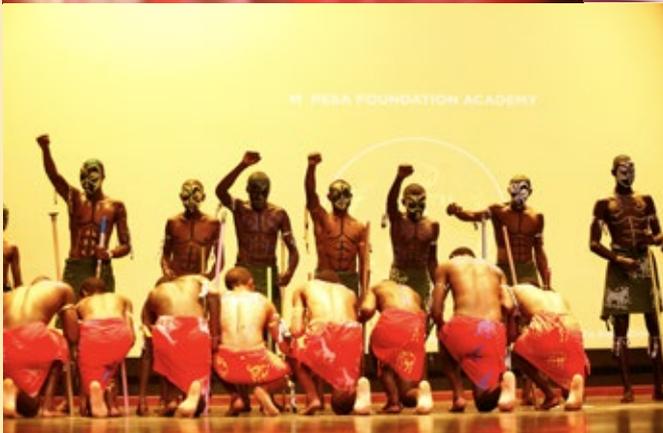


Our 3rd Anniversary was themed "Discovering the World around you", everything was curated in line with the theme from the decor, dress code and the performances. All staff and students were grouped to perform acts originating from the 7 continents.





This year, 2020, was no different we celebrated our **4th Anniversary** in pomp and colour, and by hosting our first-ever talent show with a stellar line-up of the finest talent from both staff and students.





Getting MFA ready for COVID-19

By Denis Ogada - HR Manager

In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease in Hubei Province, China, to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO stated there is a high risk of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) spreading to other countries around the world. As Africa contends with the Covid-19 virus and its global effects, organizations must rethink their people management strategies to maintain the delicate equilibrium between staff, welfare schemes and stakeholder's expectations, especially of profit and revenue.

To get workplace ready for COVID-19, The MPESA Foundation academy adopted three-tier measures as follows

1. Students and Staff well-being and protection from the virus.
2. Business operations continuity and how to keep the workflow.
3. Return formula when we eventually return.

1) Employee and students' well-being and protection

The health and well-being of our staff and learners is supreme and should be jealously guarded, and with that in mind, the Academy immediately put the following measures in place.

- *Put together internal guidelines for coronavirus – COVID -19 to communicate information that would be useful to students, staff, visitors and external stakeholders for prevention during this pandemic. The instructions were drawn from the WHO guidelines and the government of Kenya press releases on the epidemic.
- *Populate the document in a form that students could easily understand more above COVID-19 (How it is spread, signs and symptoms, Preventing the spread of COVID-19 and how to protect oneself and others).
- *Keeping staff informed on medical insurance position on the pandemic.

2) Business operations continuity and how to keep the workflow

The Second area was how the Academy would keep the work going amidst the suspension of operations as per the government and ministry of education guidelines to contain the spread of the virus.

The following measures were put in place

*Set up a COVID-19 team that is meeting three times in a week and update staff on the epidemic, actions taken to prevent the spread of the virus

- Embark on work from home
- Retain bare minimum staff that provide essential services
- Reduce face to face interactions and adopt video conference

3) Return formula when we eventually return

In as much as the conundrum right now is between what is urgent versus what is important. At this point, a larger population now understands COVID-19 with most of us generally having zero medical expertise, by now we have some level of understanding of the various compositions and DNA of the virus. This coronavirus is now our business, and there is a need to be proactive and start thinking of return formula. Our way of life has been interrupted by this epidemic we now talk of social distance, face mask, sanitizers, work from home etc. These are the aspects that are going to reshape our future working environment and need to be well thought of in our return to work formula. The return to work formula has and will be the bigger conversation for MFA COVID-19 team. Government and other agencies guidelines will significantly reinforce this.

COVID19 PREVENTIVE MEASURES



Wear mask



Wash hands



Boil your food



Avoid contact



Use soap & Antibacterial gel



Cough on your elbow



Keep your distance



Regular sleep



PROJECT BASED LEARNING: THE NEW BORN

by Alice Ntabathia and Muthondeki Peter - Faculty



The introduction of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in February 2020 was one of the most exciting activities that marked the beginning of a series of various academic activities in the faculty department for the year. This training, facilitated by a South African based education architect Ms Lindsay, also served as an eye-opener to most of the participants amidst a breeze of the uncertainty of the aftermaths of the changes associated with a paradigm shift from what was our normal. As opposed to the traditional methods of dissemination of knowledge, PBL is student-centred, student-oriented as well as student-initiated, away from the teacher facilitation throughout lessons.

Bringing together several members of staff drawn from different departments, the inter-relationship between various disciplines was curved out to mask the normal subject-individualisation whereby the student needed to attend several subject classes and later infuse them into one complex formation. This is in favour of the one student project branching out to fetch information from various sources that are interrelated or interdependent in one way or the other. The week-long activities were highly collaborative and the final projects prepared were very rich in content which was a clear indicator to the inception and understanding of the pros and cons of the new system by the participants in readiness to transferring it to the learners over the learning period.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and as such, after the midterm break, the form one and two students had a taste of project-based learning materials and were equally excited at the new way of getting knowledge with more than one teacher in class facilitating the learning. As always, any new introduction of a new idea brings forth some alertness and curiosity which the students exuded with admiration and uncertainty of grasping the contents in equal measure. Nonetheless, these were softly the baby steps. We must walk the baby severally, to build its feet and strength them, so it can fully self-support in mobility considering the gravity of the details of the program in its entirety.

We believe most of us are now eagerly looking forward to full-time implementation and utilisation of this method in teaching and learning both the students and the teachers.

With the fore exposure to creative and critical thinking, we have previously infiltrated to our learners before the introduction of PBL through various clubs and associations in the academy, and its our candid believe that we might have unknowingly been slowly preparing the basis of this program. With clubs like Kenya Science and Engineering Fair, Young Innovators, Flora and Fauna, Debate, Cuisine, enterprise to mention but a few of the many, most learners have been exposed to the art of research methods and information acquisition through personalised subject line research hence they won't have to start from scratch. PBL is the baby we all need to care for to maturity and beyond.





My Four Years in a Nutshell

By Margaret Njambi, Teacher

There are those who wish, those who dream and those who fantasise. I belong to the latter. One day, as I was making my way home for the long holidays, I saw the then 'Proposed' Academy and immediately went into a realm of fantasies as I envisioned myself teaching in the school. As amazing as that possibility seemed, I dismissed the thought and went on to other more pressing matters that required my attention. Little did I know that two years later, this fantasy would actually come true.

My exciting and fulfilling journey as a teacher in one of the most prestigious and admired school began in January 2016, what made this journey even more satisfying, is being able to be part of the start-up and eventually preparing students to sit their KCSE four years later and they in turn carrying our flag high through their exemplary performance. The beginning, of course, had its challenges, as any project would as it embarked on growth. I remember how we had to share limited projectors back at BrackenHurst where our journey began, how we would improvise textbooks and other resources as we tried to engage our first ninety-six students, but in the end, the challenges were worthwhile.

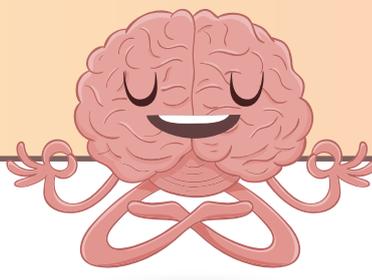
The Academy gave me a unique opportunity of nurturing adolescents who were naive, bewildered, and eager to learn as most of the students who join the school usually are. Moulding them into young independent thinkers and leaders throughout the four years I have been in the Academy has been most rewarding and fulfilling.

This transformation journey is not only for the students in the Academy but also for the teachers as well. There is always something new to learn as you continue to interact with wonderful colleagues and students. It's a journey with both ups and downs, a discovery and I'm elated to be part of it. Personally, my pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning have immensely grown and shifted from a teacher who was the centre of all knowledge to a facilitator of learning allowing the student to be in the centre of the learning, my teaching and assessment strategies have grown over time due to robust training offered by the Academy, and for this, I am very grateful. I was a good teacher, but the Academy has made me better.

Through IB and BTEC training the school is equipping me with skills geared towards making me a global teacher and I can't wait to be the best teacher there has ever been!

As B. B. King states "The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you."





THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC- (Mental Health Perspective)

By Everlyne Mutamba – School Counselor

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many changes to our familial and social life, uncertainty, financial pressures, social isolation and altered daily routines. Most people are worried about getting infected by the virus, questions are being asked on how long the pandemic will last and the aftermath of it. With information overload, rumors, misinformation, it is evident that the pandemic is contributing directly and indirectly to psychological and social well-being of most people across the globe. The pandemic is occurring against the backdrop of increased prevalence of mental health issues in most countries.

During this pandemic, terms such as social distancing, social isolation, quarantine, lockdowns, stay home, wash hands have commonly been used and these have led to various reactions in people as they perceive them as things that need to be done but have adversely affected their normal life. The COVID-19 has been associated with changes in mood (from normal to rollercoaster moments), feeling irritable, being too anxious to a point of getting angry, change in sleep pattern either having difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much. Change in sleep patterns may in turn lead to changes in appetite and weight might change our mental aspect. Cases of increased clinical anxiety and depression are bound to be high which might contribute to self-harm or suicide. To most couples, staying home has brought about sharing confined spaces while navigating with working at home, sudden unemployment, child care, unceasing uncertainty which has led to cases of increased domestic violence/child abuse. Other psychosocial risks associated with this pandemic are; alcohol/substance misuse, gambling, hoarding, lack of meaning in life, relationship breakdown, fear, feeling a burden and cyberbullying. People will respond differently to the psychological effects of the pandemic, if an individual realizes that their normal coping strategies are not working and symptoms seem to interfere with work, family or social life, “that’s probably where support is needed”. In trying to maintain mental health equilibrium, self-care strategies may help and these may include:

•Get enough sleep by ensuring you get to bed and wake up at the same times each day even if you are staying home

- Engage in regular physical activity to reduce anxiety and improve mood**
- Eat healthy (well-balanced diet) avoiding junk food and refined food. Limit caffeine intake as it induces anxiety and stress. Avoid alcohol, tobacco and drug use. Only lowers your coping skills and makes matter worse.**
- Limit your screen time and exposure to news/social media. This helps in shielding you from rumors and false information that might heighten your anxiety levels.**
- Stay busy, get distracted from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Engage in hobbies you enjoy while at home, try something new(cooking), clean up the house, play with kids etc.**
- Be grateful and focus on the positive aspects of your life at the start and end of the day. Maintain a sense of hope by drawing your strength from your belief system.**
- Make connections, build and strengthen relationships by keeping in touch via email, texts or phone calls. Do something for others more so vulnerable groups, families and friends who might be quarantined or isolated at home**
- Do not underestimate or overestimate children's and adolescents understanding of events during this pandemic. Provide honest, clear, age-appropriate information about the disease and changes in the family**
- Seek support if need be. Hoping that symptoms such as anxiety and depression will go away on their own might lead to severe symptoms**

The impact of the current pandemic will be felt in several years to come to both children, adolescents and adult population. After experiencing various forms of traumatic incidences (one month to a year) most populations may manifest with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This may include symptoms such as hyper-vigilance, trouble sleeping, avoidance behaviour (some might fear reporting back to work/school, going to hospitals or thinking about the pandemic or domestic/child abuse experienced during this period), trouble concentrating, invasive thoughts such as nightmares, flashbacks and upsetting memories. It will be important when normalcy return after this period we all be aware of these symptoms in our students, colleagues and family. Our way of life should be based on empathy, connection, seeking safety and trust in building resilience now and after the pandemic. We all need to move from the fight-or-flight mode that most people are exhibiting at the moment as it causes more fear/anxiety. Let's remain optimistic that we shall all come out of this pandemic strong in spite of the challenges. "Just as we develop our physical muscles through overcoming opposition (such as lifting weights) we develop our character muscles by overcoming challenges and adversity."(Stephen Covey).



THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT- The Journey

By: Leonard Matolo Head of Finance

The roles of the finance department of the academy include strategic budgeting, cost containment, cash flow management, procurement and inventory management, tax planning, enterprise risk management, running entrepreneurship program, financial literacy, ensuring accurate record keeping and accounting for all activities of the academy that involve cash – all these roles were established from scratch in 2016 from the first day when we walked into empty structures at the academy and have been evolving and improving day after day towards excellency.

The finance department of the academy is guided by the following vision, mission and core values.

Vision

“To be a leading finance service provider offering the highest level of service to the Academy that is consistent with international standards and regulatory guidelines”

Mission

“To pursue financial management function of the Academy that provide leadership in the area of financial services, resource rationalization and professional consultancy to aid efficient and effective achievement of Academy’s strategic plan”

Our Core values

In order to realize the above vision, and mission, certain shared values shall be nurtured. The Department shall observe the following core values:

- Espouse the virtues of truth, integrity, honesty, tolerance, professionalism
- Provide valued service to our customers and stakeholders in a courteous and responsive manner
- Professional excellence and stewardship
- Nurture the spirit of Team work.
- Be creative and innovative.
- Respect the beliefs and values of others in service delivery

•Have the courage to initiate and adapt to change

•Optimizing the use of resources through responsible stewardship

The Academy is unique. Other than just running normal school programmes, it has blended unique programmes into its system such as entrepreneurship, a technology driven curriculum, revenue generating enterprises among others. It is for this reason that it acknowledges and embraces enterprise risk management in its operations. During the year, any risks that faced the academy are sufficiently mitigated to the best of its ability through the leadership of the Head of finance. In 2018, a formal process of identification, mitigation and management of risks was started, and this has continued to improve year on year, with planned automation in year 2020.



The MPESA Foundation Academy Student Entrepreneurship program supports all students in developing their enterprising and entrepreneurial skills. Since 2017 when this program was started from the scratch, students have excelled in various enterprises, innovation competition such as Technnovation, Junior Achievement, Innovate Kenya, Diamond Challenge, Zayed Sustainability prize, Young Leaders and Enterprise Challenge among others. As at end of 2019, the students had 30 running businesses in the areas of farming, food and beverage, art, printing, handcraft, sewing, sports, detergents, entertainment, Salon and Barbershop with each business comprising of 3 to 6 students and making combined profit of over Ksh1 million.

The entrepreneurship curriculum was written down with the 21st century skills in mind, which include;

1.Critical thinking

2.Creativity

3.Collaboration

4.Communication

5.Information literacy

6.Media literacy

7.Technology literacy

8.Flexibility

9.Leadership

10.Initiative

11.Productivity

12.Social skills

These skills are intended to help students graduating from MPESA foundation academy keep up with the lightning-pace of today's modern markets and be ahead of other students in Africa in tackling leadership challenges facing the citizens.

The finance department has been core in ensuring the success of the entrepreneurship program by facilitating each student to open and own a bank account and debit card with standard chartered bank, get funding for their enterprises and ensuring that the businesses are run as practical to business world as is possible.

Above all, ensure that the entrepreneurship curriculum reflect a practical business world.

In order that M-PESA Foundation Academy can strengthen its back-office efficiency, The Head of Finance spearheaded the implementation of Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management. Modern education is a complex business. Beyond the classroom there are a

host of procurement, finance, and HR challenges. For M-PESA Foundation Academy, a state-of-the-art, coeducational residential high school in Kenya, Enterprise Management enables it to make sense of the administration and focus its attention on teachers and students. Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management has ensured a seamless, streamlined workflow for the academy's administration. Procurement is more efficient, and payroll is automated. It has removed many of the manual processes.

As the academy continues to build, this back-office efficiency enables M-PESA to focus resource where it is needed: on students and staff as well as enable finance other administrative staff get spare time

participate in out of class student training such as sports, entrepreneurship, mentorship among others.





MY WALK IN THE ACADEMY

By LILIAN NANJALA WABWILE - Procurement Officer

I joined the MPESA Foundation Academy in the month of August 2016, during that time we all had that mixed feelings about the Academy being a new organisation, as usual, start-up organisations are not without teething problems, despite that we managed to beat the odds and we can celebrate our first cohort of students who graduated in the last year (2019). On joining the Academy, many construction works were still ongoing, there was limited office space, and we thus had to work from a classroom. This was quite interesting because all administration staff members were operating in one room, and the faculty staff in the next class. This open office working set up offered an excellent friendly environment to work in, we gelled in well as most organisations globally were at the same time, embracing the open office system. This working model offered a very serene workplace ambience making workflow quite smooth.

In August 2016 the HR department organised the first team building event held at Great Rift Lodge in Naivasha. This event offered the most memorable moments for staff, it was the first for all the staff at the Academy and offered the best opportunity for staff to know each other and the specific roles they played at the Academy. We also had the chance to interact more freely with our CEO Mr Les Baillie a great stage setting for many and even more eventful ones to come. At the event, we were able to get a more in-depth insight about the Academy, its Vision and Mission and our roles in the realisation of the same. I would want to recognise the efforts of the team building facilitator, who was able to clearly explain the Academy values and come up with our acronym of CLAIRE. In straightforward terms, it became effortless using the abbreviation for both staff and student to be able to explain the values of the Academy to anyone. We enjoyed the event, and it was hugely impactful.

Having come from the Government sector, which is very bureaucratic in nature, it was not easy to settle into the private sector. Government procurement is riddled with many committee stages. The Academy is a private sector with less bureaucracy, and we had to re-engineer how we work and borrow a lot from our mother Company Safaricom's procurement system. Being the pioneers in the department, we had to develop the systems from scratch and move operation from manual to technological. The Academy acquired the sage X3 system on which we got trained. In due time we eventually moved from a manual system to a technological one. We Still experience a few challenges since it's not an end to end system, but we are working on moving up the ladder to paperless operations. The sage system has been beneficial during this COVID 19 pandemic, making work from home realisable and seamless.

Team Building - A Look Back

@Great Rift Valley Lodge Resort





My Journey at the Academy

By Beverley Moraa

After I received the letter of employment, I was so elated and could not wait to join the MPESA Foundation Academy. My brother Peter and I visited the academy in December, 2015.

When I walked into the school, I mean there was no school, all I saw was a construction site. Having resigned from teaching a small school in Dadaab, a refugee camp in the Northern part of Kenya due to frequent attacks by the suspected Alshabaab, I had prayed to get a stable Institution.

At that particular moment as I walked around the site, it was not a campus yet, I got very scared and wondered if I had actually made the right decision. Then I remembered the bigger picture; The Vision to nurture and develop the next generation of transformational leaders from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. I wanted to be part of the big dream that Mpesa Foundation had started, to give back to the society. I had seen how children at the refugee camp yearned to learn but the environment could not allow. Being a very renowned company in Kenya, I was hopeful.

Since the beginning of the Academy on the 22nd February 2016, just over four years ago, I had the opportunity together with my colleagues to receive the first cohort of 92 students from all the 47 counties who looked unto us to guide, and nurture them with high quality education and tap into the diverse range of talents. I have been privileged to witness immense growth in our amazing students. They have become confident and great speakers through the various programmes, clubs and am blessed to have trained and worked with them in the Debate club. As a teacher, I am so humbled and blessed when I look at the milestone. Our first cohort did their Kenyan National Examinations, KCSE and out of the 92 students, 69 received direct entry to the university and the 23 enrolled to various collages. Mpesa Foundation Academy is a place where the true face of our nation; race and continent at large is clearly witnessed. In addition to that, it is place where fairness and integrity can be tested, where the 47 counties of our great country can dine together as brothers and sisters despite their background, religion, ethnicity and share their thoughts guided by CLAIRE values. The Academy is where bridges are broken and every child is given the opportunity to go for their dreams. The Academy admits 4 students per county, refugees and learners with disability from any part.

This is not just a school but a family. We are the CLAIRE family, CURIOSITY, LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY, INNOVATION, RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP and EXCELLENCE. I have had the opportunity to participate in the students recruitment process which requires one to go to the counties and homes. It is fun because I get to transverse across the country and learn a lot. From what I learnt in the recruitment process, I do not generalise or see them as students, but as family because I have walked with them from their home to the Academy. I have seen them at their lowest moments, hence I understand and know how they feel during their high and low moments. This is a journey and a dream that we are walking together. That is what makes us the Claire Family.

I must not forget to mention that I have grown as a teacher, mentor and as person. To actually prove that, I weighed about 56kg when I joined the academy, if you were to see me now, blessings all round. I am embarrassed to disclose my weight. Most importantly, I am a better teacher who understands my learner's needs individually. The management of the institution is dedicated in ensuring we go through continuous training such as experiential learning, developing a teachers' critical reflection on the new pedagogy, use of technology and differentiation learning. All these is aimed at making us the best hence able to create an impact in the lives of our students by presenting holistic leaders to the society to make the world a better place.

To actualise the Mission of the school: To be a leadership development institution for high school students providing high quality education to nurture the next generation of transformational leaders, the Academy is transitioning to IB so as to provide our learners with the opportunity to not only make an impact in the country but also globally. This is aimed at exposing the learners to the various cultures by them being curious enough to understand the globe and hence make it a better place. Just like students, we dare to explore and experiment. I am looking forward to becoming an IB facilitator. The IB training that I am currently undergoing has definitely changed my perspective. We need our learners to be inquirers, and critical thinkers who come up with solutions to the many global issues and make the world a better place for all of us.

Here I am today four years later, a proud teacher in one of the prestigious schools in the country meant for learners from needy backgrounds. I started as a teacher then came an added responsibility of being a Residential parent for 2 years. Today I am better teacher and Head of Form 3 class with total of 160 students. My colleagues call me Madam Principal because a times the Year 10 feels like a school on its own. I am still in a journey to even become better.

I recently celebrated my birthday on the 24th of April, allow me share one of the messages sent to me by one of my former students.

Happy birthday to the coolest teacher on the block. A lady build in faith and gives her job the best. I will not stop to thank you for your constant believe in me. Your patience and encouragement meant a lot to me. I love you Ms. Bev and continue blessings many more souls. I am always proud to say my teacher is cool (emoji). I really admire your energy and I want to tap into it. I am seriously summoning it up. Wishing you all the best and I pray that your goals and dreams come to a reality. Continue ageing like fine wine. Thanks for being a role model.(love emoji)

Brenda.

What more can I say, I am a blessed teacher I want to continue touching lives.



Team Building at Brackenhurst



2nd Anniversary Celebrations



Taking Nick Read, CEO of Vodafone Group, through a classroom Ipad session.



Receiving the Great Debators Champions Award.



2019 End of year staff party



Classroom Session



2020 Form 1 Admissions Day



My Journey at MPESA Foundation Academy as an Educator

By Junita MaryBoy

My professional journey began long before I ever wanted to be a teacher. I began working with children as a teenager and learned how to interact with and teach children. I had a small understanding of the skills necessary to become a teacher such as caring for the well-being of students through various volunteer experiences. I studied Education and Counselling Psychology in my Bachelor's degree with the intention of becoming an Educator and Counselor.

Joining MFA, I believe was and continues to be a light bulb moment for my professional learning journey because the moment that I stepped into the academy, my "aha" moments began.

I realized that everything that I valued and cared about could be fulfilled through my career and commitment to CLAIRE values of the academy. My journey has involved and constantly continues to inform new learning and discoveries.

What are my Educational Commitments?

An important part of my classroom is hands-on, minds-on learning that involves supporting students in developing their own interests and pursuing their passions.

Technology in the classroom is an important part of 21st century learning as students learn new skills to prepare them for a rapidly changing world. It is important for children to learn to be critical thinkers, global citizens, and cooperative learners. I continuously pursue an inquiry project-based methodology around technology to help pursue a topic based around technology and the well-being of my students.

In my journey at the academy, I have come to believe that all students are capable of learning and growing. All students have strengths and challenges and in this experiential journey, it has and continues to be my job as an educator to work with my students to create a learning environment that will help them to succeed. During my stay at the academy, I have discovered that student learning should be hands-on, engaging, and relatable, that learning should be engaging and relevant for students. I have come to believe that it is important for students to find meaning in their learning and by finding meaning be responsible and invested in their learning. I have come to believe that students deserve to be respected and valued as individuals, children, learners, and teachers. I have come to believe in fostering good relationships with students, parents, and other educators are the key to a positive learning and teaching environment. Last but not least, I have come to believe that students should be free to explore their passions and interests with guidance and support from their teachers. These beliefs are the driving force behind all through my journey as an educator and which will continuously inform the setting up my classroom climate



International Baccalaureate (IB) MATHEMATICS AT MFA

Mr. Ndombi- Teacher of Mathematics.

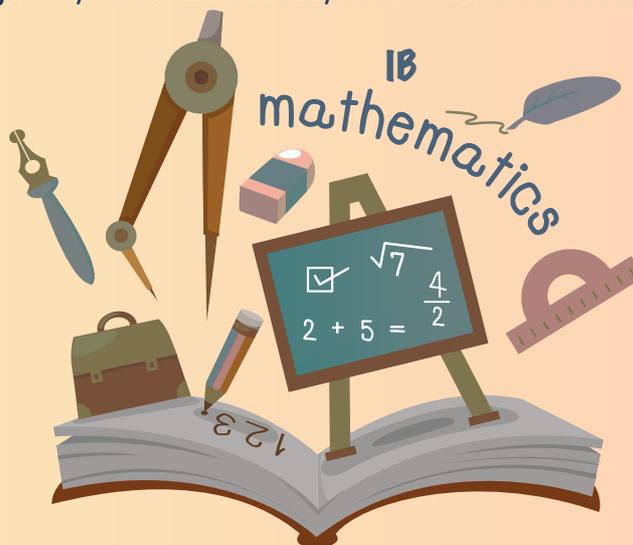
Mathematics has become a tool rather than just a subject in the curriculum. It is a tool that develops a learner's skills in critical thinking, creativity and innovation, problem-solving, decision making, to mention a few. With the introduction of IB, the learner will automatically become a great thinker who will lead the world in developing solutions to challenges using mathematical modelling and techniques.

Why study mathematics at MFA?

The subject greatly helps learners with mathematical techniques such as organization and interpretation of information. Furthermore, this course will help the learner to apply the techniques to solve problems in the current world. The department boasts of a team of over ten very professional and experienced teachers of both genders who teach not only the subject but also model learners to become great scholars internationally.

Differentiation in learning, peer teaching, collaboration, demonstration, among others, ensures that all students' needs are adequately met. Frequent use of ICT through quizzes and assignments on online platforms such as Kahoot, Quizziz, Zoom, Google Classroom, Nearpod, GeoGebra, and CK-12 and use of keynotes ensures that learners look forward to learning Mathematics.

Our outside class activities ensure that mathematics is fun and engaging, for example, mathematics quizzes, projects, KMO contests, and research work.





How to prevent Accidents at the Dinning Hall By Joshua Mutua

Most dining room accidents are food-related, such as spilt tea, water, sauces and fruit slices on the floor. Health and safety should be a primary concern in the dining hall that should be taken seriously by both students and staff while dining. Here are tips on how-to on how to make the dining hall accident-proof;

Step one:

Wipe out spills promptly.

Food spills on the floor can cause slips, trips and falls. Liquid spills on the table can make a mess and trickle on the floor. Food messes can start a chain reaction of mishaps and accidents. Report any liquid spills, especially on the floor to kitchen staff for the floor to be wiped immediately to avoid slips.



Step Two:

Serve one thing at a time.

While serving breakfast, ensure after serving your tea, you take it directly to where you are sitting before serving the bread. This will avoid bumping to others while carrying the hot tea, which may cause severe burns to your hands or to the person you have bumped into.

Always serve one thing at a time to allow smooth flow in the dining area.



A Look Back- Random Photos





My journey at MFA by John Chiira

“ Hello , I am i speaking to John Francis, Yes you are, i responded, I am calling you from Delloitte on behalf of Mpesa foundation academy, First of all i want to tell you congratulation for emerging successful during our interviews.” Who am I speaking with? I asked.

Oh I am Cate(not her real name) from deloitte you remember me?Oh yes I do how on earth can i forget you? The Hr will communicate to you shortly, once again congrats and have a good day. It was in August 2016.The day was so hectic for me in the labs as I was incharge of seven labs and at that specific time I was arranging for physics practical mock exam. I sat down and wondered is this a dream? I exhaled.

I continued with my work and within a few minutes the HR was surely there and after a few minutes Iknew it was for really had a job at Mpesa Foundation academy. I decided to talk with my Boss . He told me to go ahead and work just like he used to see me work to quote his exact words, “ **Mundu wakwa niwateithika**” meaning my friend you have succeeded here.He wished me the best in the next work station after agreeing to finish all mock practical,Before Joining MFA.

I promised to assist him get a replacement and true to my words I did but not without a few challenges. I remember when i posted in one of our lab technicians WhatsApp group that i was leaving my place of work everyone wondered how I could leave such a school which everyone wished to get a chance to work in.So many calls and text landed in my phone people were trying to convince me not join a school that was not even an year old. One of my Former colleague told me and i quote “better the devil you know that the angel you dont”. I believed in my self and had faith in the recruiters.

To cut my story short Ijoined the same August .The school was so small as far as infrastructure was concerned. I remember during an ongoing training and during introduction the joy the staff we met had. I felt so much at home and for the first time I felt this was the place i had ever wished to work in. The following week we headed for a team building in Naivasha and I wish to say that what happened in two weeks was too much to take for a new comer.We felt so much appreciated and valued.The only challenge

we had was mismatching names when addressing people.

Come third term, I started working in the labs, drafting so many documents, so many meetings, weekday and weekend duty allocation due to the meagre faculty size, arranging, labelling and manning 3 labs was not an easy task. Figuring out what was missing what should be where etc but I managed due to team work from all staff. We were a family and each felt and took it as his/her duty to assist the the staff. As the school population grew so did the number of staff and things now were flowing easily. This helped us engage in more activities outside our JDS like clubs, sports and societies. I remember in 2016 the joy i had when i shared the idea of detergent production in the school and it was embraced. I felt so nice that i experienced something i had not experienced before which drives me even today. That there is more joy in giving than in receiving.

We have grown so much that we rarely cannot exhaust the opportunities already there. I also learnt and embraced the value of giving back to the society and continuously do that daily. I remember when I started training staff and students on detergent making, one person told me that I was not a businessman since I was training everyone hence all would start making and i would be left with no one to sell to. It did not deter me from training which always do willingly.



It should be noted that gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.

EXERCISING YOUR BODY

By Elgah Chepatiy

Exercising every day helps your body stay healthy

When you exercise your body works harder

Your heartbeat is more robust, and you can feel your pulse goes fast

Even though it takes energy to exercise

Getting exercise helps you feel more energetic.

Some exercise makes you stronger

muscles that get no training become weak and flabby

And may shrink in size

other exercises help your body stay flexible

And the more you exercise, the longer you'll be able to play without getting tired.

There are many different games and sports

The only way to find out which ones you like is to try them

Some sports take a lot to practice to get good at

But you don't have to be perfect at a game to have fun

Don't worry about what you can't do be proud of what you can!

Remember that everybody is different.



KARATE

By Praise Ashyla

Karate was introduced in the academy at the end of 2018, and since then, there has been much progress thanks to our sensei, Peter Ochieng our very supportive patrons Mr Wanzala and Miss Alice. On 31st January 2020, we were able to attend Taifa Leo 2020 championships in Nyali, Mombasa at Greenwood Groove Academy. It was tough because there were very many participants from all over the country. This did not make us underperform, belonging to Mpesa Foundation Academy, we lead others to follow. We scooped the top positions in our categories and came home with four gold medals, four silver medals and eight bronze medals. Despite the anxiety we had before the competitions, we were ranked number three in the championships, and the standard media group even mentioned us.

On 7th March 2020, we participated in the Kenya Opens Karate Championship, a national event but for 11-21 years of age only. It took place in Afraha High School, Nakuru. There was much competition, among the participants was Skyclife karate club, Munawar karate club, Magharini, Muli's children's family being adequately represented. However, despite all, we made it clear that with the academy around, they would be fighting for 2nd and 3rd position only. We were ranked top performers in the championships and our school recognised in the newspaper a second time.



I shall succeed

By Ivy Kemuma

Though everything looks dark and dreary

I shall succeed.

Though failures voice speaks in my ear,

I shall succeed but

I do not fear misfortune's blow,

I tower with strength above each foe,

I stand erect because I know,

I shall succeed.

Night swoops down with the darkest wings.

But I shall succeed

I see the start that darkness brings,

But I shall succeed.

No force on earth can make me cower,

Because of each moment and each hour

I still affirm with strength and power

I shall succeed

**DON'T STOP
UNTIL
YOU'RE
PROUD**



BELIEVING IN YOURSELF
By Orpha Mariachana



*Never stop believing in yourself,
When others doubt, don't you
Do what you love to do,
No one knows you better than you.*

*Life is too short to live other's dreams,
Follow your dream,
Push yourself to reach your goals,
And live the life you once dreamed.*

*Trust your instincts,
Be true to yourself,
You know what is right for you,
Never give up or give in.*

*Forget the words "I don't know how."
You can learn,
You can research,
You can do, think and lead.*

*Your mind is powerful,
When you believe you can,
You will find a way
You won't waste your time.*

“
**LOVING
YOURSELF
IS THE
GREATEST
REVOLUTION**
”

Scouts Founders Camp

by George Mwakio, Nelly Weddy and Esther Mukami

On the morning of Wednesday, 17th February 2020, we woke up jovially and eager to start our journey to Nyeri. We began preparing our camping gear immediately after breakfast; time was on our side since we were to leave at 1300 hrs. We took the sleeping bags from the laundry and put them in the bus which was already parked behind the dining hall. We went for the utensils in Amboseli residence took them behind the Dining Hall where we washed them thoroughly and made sure they were spit and span before finally packing them. We then collaborated in carrying the 40 pieces of twenty litres bottles of water that we would be using during our camping, one at a time we moved the containers from the water tower to the parked bus. We then proceeded to the packing of foodstuffs like maize flour, wheat flour, milk, 15 trays of eggs each containing 30 eggs, rice and fruits. Some of us had the opportunity to enter the freezer room in the dining hall, where we picked meat. Before embarking on the journey, we were then divided into patrols of 6-8 scouts. In total we had six patrols with each boys patrol having a sister patrol, finally into the bus the journey begun, it was around 1400 hrs.

With our bellies full from the lunch meal, many took a much-needed nap, but I decided to take in the scenery along the road instead. The mood was hyped by the music, which echoed softly in the buses speakers. Three hours later, we arrived at the camping site, which was at the Nyeri Agricultural Show Ground. As we alighted the bus, each patrol was given a task, and there were many to do if we were to set up our sleeping quarters, cook our evening meal and eat before darkness engulfed us.

As the patrols were offloading the bus and pitching tents, Mr Odero and Mr Muthomi went to buy slashers which we used to clear the bushy camping site. To our delight, there was a watering point that was about 400 meters from our campsite, which allowed us to fetch water for our morning baths as well as washing our evening utensils. Being the first time that some of us had been tasked with cooking for a group, we had to endure partially raw ugly and hard chewy meat, but we took it in good stride as we learnt from our mistakes. We slept at around 12:30 am, and we were expected to wake up at 05:30hrs for the morning run.

Being a light sleeper, my night was entertained by the snores of others as I tossed and turned, trying to find some semblance of sleep. Barely had I caught some rest and I had three whistles, it was already 0530 hrs, the jogging session was a damming task. After breakfast, we took our pens and books ready for the three classes of the day; the classes were; Investiture, Mwanzo and Mwangaza. Classes went on until 1230 hrs, and we broke for the day. We used our afternoons to mingle with scouts from other schools, including some from as far as Wajir. That evening after dinner, we did some drills for about four hours.

Though the night was cold, I managed to catch some sleep; I was exhausted.

The following morning followed the same routine as the day before, but things were a bit easier as we had gotten used to the schedule. On this day, we were taught how to match and the different styles of matching in our Mwamba category. That afternoon, those of us who were tired took the opportunity to sleep. Dinner preparations begun at 1700 hrs, on the menu was Ugali and scrambled eggs. Three blows of a whistle and it was the dawn of the most important day, the

Founders Day, this was the day when our founder Lord Baden Powell and his wife were born and the main reason for the camp. This day took place on 22nd February each year. We took our breakfast very early compared to other days at around 06:55 am, dressed up quickly, and at 07:15 we all gathered at the bus ready to depart to Paxtu which was the home of Baden Powell.

Upon the arrival of the Governor of Nyeri, Hon. Mutahi Kahiga we were to march 500 meters to where Baden Powell was buried. We went up to the gravesite, and we were allowed to see it. The event took around 3 hrs. That evening, the camp was abuzz with conversations of the days we had been there, being the last evening before heading to the academy, the meal was ready by 1900 hrs. Soon after washing up, we put on our warm clothes and went to sit at the campfire.

Our laughter broke the silence of the night as we told stories and did fun activities as we edged the night away, we hit the sack at almost 1:00 am. The camp was fruitful, and we learnt many things such as teamwork, anger management, collaboration and had fun while at it. By 05:30 am we were up and ready for the jog, we had only slept a few hours but the thought of travelling back to the comforts of the academy proved the one incentive we needed to take on the challenge. After breakfast, we all waited eagerly as well as the investment of some of our colleagues. A quick unhitching of our tents and packing into the bus and off we went for our exams and wards of the badges. One key thing I learned is that a command is bigger than the one giving out the command, and when you are asked to do something do it without complaining. It was such a unique opportunity.



The Game of Scrabble - Kirinyaga County Competitions

By Mercy Mumbe

It was a great privilege to get an opportunity to participate in high school scrabble competition. A group of fifteen students departed from the academy on Saturday 26 March 2020 for Kirinyaga County for the completion.

Scrabble is a board game where two to four players compete in forming words with letters tiles on a square board. The words spelt out by letters on the tiles interlock like words in a crossword puzzle. Players draw seven tiles from a pool at the start and replenish their supply after each turn. There are a hundred letter tiles each imprinted with a point value for different letters, approximately corresponding to the frequency of occurrence of the letter in English words. Words are scored by adding up the point values of their letter. At the end of the game when one player has no tiles, or the board is deadlocked, the player who has scored the highest number of points is the winner.

Playing scrabble helps to foster communication, competitiveness and confidence and with relations, Scrabble provides a way for students and teachers to expand their repertoire. It also a fun way for students to learn new and complex words for their English language classes.

It was a pleasant experience for all members of scrabble club as we leant new words, socialisation and communication skills.



The Game of Football

By Ismael Mwarumba - Uongozi Centre Scholar

The Uongozi Stars is a football club that was founded by the passionate football players in the Uongozi centre who had been playing in the school team while in high school. Most of the clubs' activities are self-sponsored, and this gives the members a sense of belonging and ownership in the club.

The club aims to develop the young talents further as they make maximum use of the facilities provided by the school. It is also the scholars initiative to utilise their free time well without any form of supervision emphasising the true meaning of leadership as young adults capable of making their own decisions, and to some, it is a part-time job.

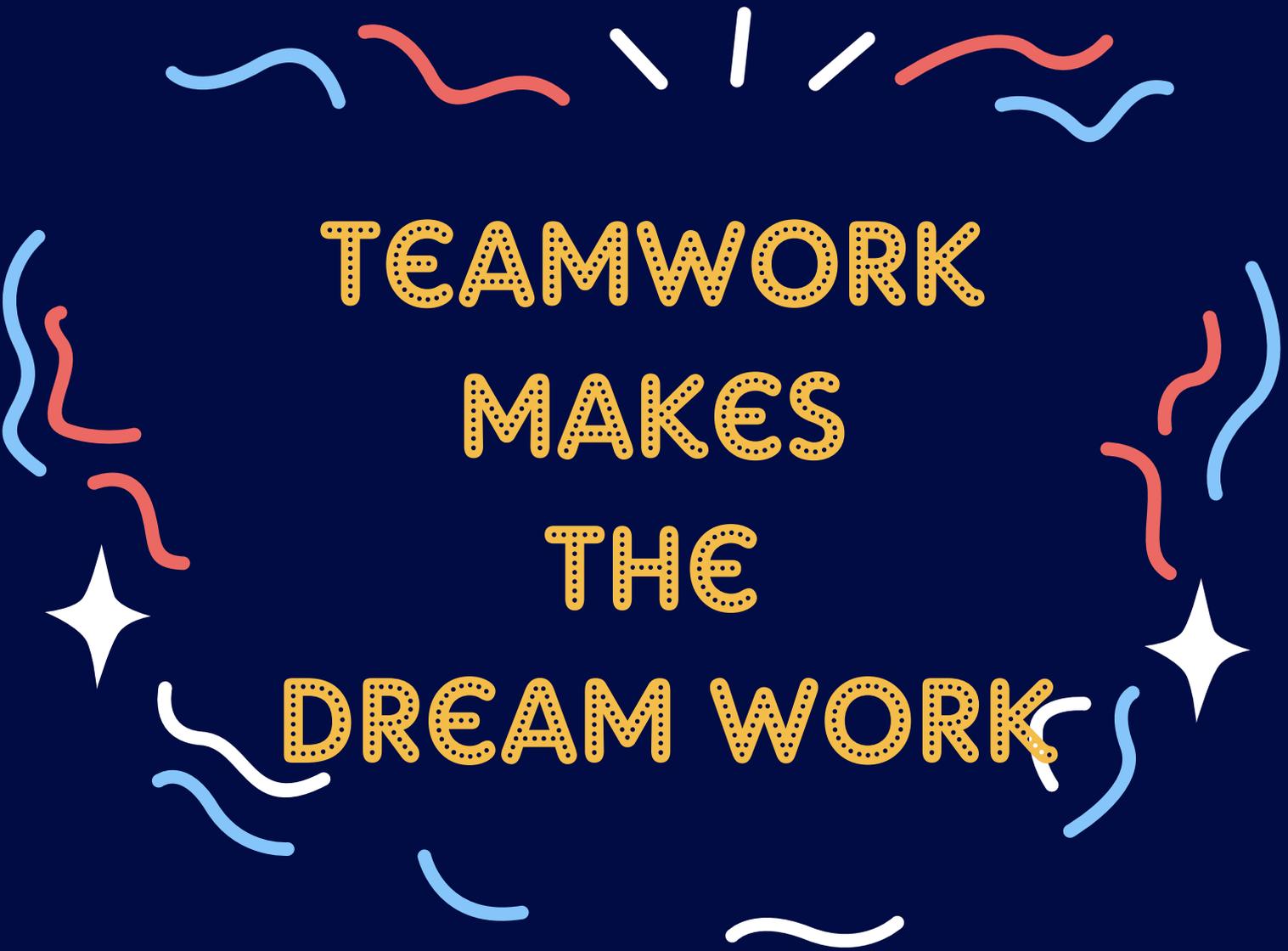
The club has a simple leadership structure with the coach being the highest in the club's authority. The captain and his assistant are second in command and then the members. Currently, players training is their initiative where the players assist each other with the drills with one of them taking leadership during training time which is from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

During matches, the captains take full control to ensure that all things are moving as planned.

As a young club, it has already had a massive impact and achievements. The Uongozi stars have on many occasions dealt a big blow to their opponent's egos including both school teams in the Mpesa Foundation Academy open tournament.

In the Mang'u tournament the club won all games with no other team managing to score in games against the Uongozi Stars. The team has shown its expertise in the game, and a few of its members have now been assimilated into the MFA STAFF football team. With the boys now flying the team's name high, we hope to establish a girl's team who will also take part in lifting the Uongozi Centre's name high.



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TEAMWORK
MAKES
THE
DREAM WORK

Celebrating
Our  rney