

**SPEECH BY PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI, PRINCIPAL, EMBU UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2015 STAFF END OF YEAR
LUNCHEON TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY , 18th DECEMBER 2015 AT 12.00
P.M. IN THE DINING HALL**

- ✓ Our Chairperson of Council – Dr. Margaret Gikuhi
- ✓ Distinguished Council Members
- ✓ The Deputy Principals
- ✓ Members of the University College Management,
- ✓ Deans and Directors
- ✓ Heads of Departments,
- ✓ Academic and Administrative staff,
- ✓ Colleagues,

Good afternoon,

First, I take this opportunity to welcome members of the Embu University College Council led by the Chairperson Dr. Margaret Gikuhi to the 2015 End of Year Staff Luncheon. This is the first time the council is joining our staff in such an event and we are truly honored to have you with us today.

This is indeed one of the great days for us at Embu University College because it is not common to find a forum like this which brings together ALL staff, the University Council members and the University Management to celebrate together the successful conclusion of yet another year and also recognize the staff for the achievements they have recorded during the year.

Secondly, I thank you all most sincerely for honoring our invitation and finding time to join us during this occasion.

Personally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my warmest thanks and deep appreciation to all staff for your individual and collective contributions, efforts and dedication in making EUC a success story that it is today.

From the onset, let me say that EUC starts with you and me – and without you, it would not have been possible for us to gather here today to celebrate the many achievements that we have recorded during the year 2015.

We all acknowledge that we have had our fair share of challenges. However, with trust, faith, respect and teamwork, we have managed to collectively surmount our problems and move on to greater heights with a great sense of satisfaction.

Once again, as we celebrate the end of the year, it is a special time for me to recognize my colleagues in the journey, and my special time to say thank you to all of you. Your dedication to working together as a family has resulted in a great learning environment we can all be proud of.

This year has specifically been very good for us at Embu University College;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Allow me now to highlight some of the key achievements that we have recorded during the year.

1. CUE Inspection and Charter Award progress

The year started with an inspection by the Commission for University Education in February followed by a confirmatory technical inspection. A final report was submitted to CUE. Subsequently, a team from the Commission held a two-day retreat at Embu to prepare an Accreditation Report for the Award of Charter to EUC.

I am glad to inform you that according to the information we have got from CUE, Embu University College has met all the requirements for the award of charter and we are only awaiting communication from CUE on the Date of the Award of Charter.

*I am hopeful that in the coming year, we will receive the charter and become a fully-fledged University known as **“The University of Embu”***

2. Increase in KUCCPS and SSP students enrollment

During the year ending our efforts to increase students enrollment paid well and the students number doubled from 1257 to 2685; thanks to each one of you, especially the marketing team for the role you played to market and increase awareness of the university in your own way. I also wish to thank the students for being the greatest ambassadors of the University by maintaining discipline and good image of the University where ever they go.

3. ICT

During the year 2015, the University Management embarked on a journey to automate operations in the Finance Department. An ERP system has been implemented; which encompasses the Student Finance, payments, cashbook reconciliation, General Ledger, Financial Reporting among others.

A new computer lab has been established with a capacity of 103 computers and our backbone infrastructure has been extended to the Library, New Computer lab and Estates Department.

We have recently signed new agreement to upgrade our internet connectivity from 20 Mbps to 30 Mbps

4. Learning progress

In 2015, we increased our academic programmers from 31 to 43 covering both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes up to PhD level.

Learning in the three Semesters this year progressed and ended successfully with all courses achieving the set course objectives. The pressure associated with shortage of lecture rooms was considerably eased following the completion of additional classrooms at the Learning Centre and the New Administration Block.

Incidences of examination cheating dropped significantly following a sensitization programme for all students on matters of examination irregularity. Also close vigilance and strengthening of invigilation in all examinations rooms has played a big role in discouraging irregularities.

The first group of pioneer students is expected to complete their studies mid-next year, 2016, so arrangements have started to plan for their classification and graduation including issue of certificates and transcripts.

5. Infrastructure development

The University continues to be transformed as the projects we embarked on in the year are completed. We have seen the completion of the following projects

- *Learning Center Classrooms (Farm)*
- *New Admin Classrooms*
- *New 103 seater computer lab*

6. Ongoing projects

- Completion of the New Administration Building
- Deceleration and acceleration lanes at Gate B
- New Library
- Tuition Block
- Office block
- *Multipurpose Classroom (almost complete)*

7. Library expanded

The University Library moved from 100-capacity Lecture hall 6 - to a more spacious building that was housing the New Multipurpose Classroom. It now has a double capacity of 200 users.

The Library has fully embraced the open access movement which has greatly enhanced our teaching and learning. I urge all staff and

students to fully utilize these freely available resources. We have also created a 30 seater capacity Computer Lab in the Library to enhance the dissemination of e-resources and assist our students in their research work.

8. Celebrations to mark ISO certification & launch of Strategic plan

If you recall, this year we were honored to host our Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi and the Entire University of Nairobi Management led by VC, Prof Mbithi during celebrations to mark the launch of the Strategic Plan and ISO 9001:2008 certification. It was indeed a great occasion for all of us.

I must say that we have continued to live up to the expectations of the Quality management system that we subscribed. This has been confirmed by several external quality audits carried out by the Kenya Bureau of standards during the year. We are also on course in the implementation of the 5-year strategic plan.

9. Peaceful student elections / benchmarking with other students leaders

In March 2015, we held our students' government elections which turned out to be free, fair and peaceful. The students were happy with the elected leaders. This is our traditional reputation at EUC where we have cultivated the values of governance in whatever we do; no petitions were received for any position contested. The elected students' leaders were then taken through an induction

training workshop on leadership as well as a tour of other Universities to benchmark with other student leaders.

This is one of the reasons why Embu University College students have remained relatively calm and continuing with their academic work despite the turmoil that has been witnessed in other Universities especially during students' elections.

I am sure that next year we will live up to this reputation once again.

10. Students Sporting activities

During the Year we opened new sports facilities for hockey, handball, basketball and netball.

The year also started with EUC soccer team joining the Annual FKF Lower Eastern Branch League where they have finished in 2nd position and qualified for regional playoffs to be held early next year in Isiolo. The team is expected to do well and be promoted to provincial league next year.

Our basketball achieved major milestones by scooping 3rd position in Mt. Kenya basketball tournament in both men and women and our men are currently leading in Zuku basketball league and women being at position 2 in the same league pitting 9 Universities. Both teams qualified for the national playoffs to be held in SEKU later next year.

At the Kenya Universities Sports Association Central Conference (CEKUSA) Athletics Championships our women's team won a trophy for 2nd position and in men we produced a double gold medalist in 10,000m & 5,000m.

I congratulate the sports and games section for these achievements and I urge you to put even more efforts so that our students and staff can get more opportunities to nurture their talents in sports.

11. Staff teambuilding

In August this year, we held our first teambuilding exercise for all the staff – teaching and non-teaching. I am sure that you all remember that day.

The objective of the team building exercise was to encourage cohesion and establish a high performing team at EUC, who are highly inspired to perform better and better. It was also designed to allow the staff to recognize the importance of each of our processes and systems so as to organize their departmental and individual workload, as well as gain satisfaction from shared achievements.

12. Research grants and publications

Our staff are actively engaged in publishing their research findings. The target for the Financial Year 2014/2015 was 6 publications but we achieved 20 instead, we also got several research grants for various top-notch research work won competitively by our staff.

A University e-repository was established and all the research work and publications that our staff are involved in is available in the repository.

Dear Colleagues,

I must admit that each and every one of these achievements was made possible by the staff, and often students, too, pulling together for the betterment of the university.

The achievements I have mentioned are only a small part of the full list of achievements recorded during the year across the Embu University College.

I am sure you will all join me in congratulating the University Council, Management and each one of us for your personal commitment to see the dream of this University, come true.

PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

Today also marks an important occasion for us all because we are not only celebrating the successful end of the year; but also we recognize the exemplary performance of our University College in the 11th cycle (FY 2014-2015) Performance Contract.

Performance Contracting is a management tool that operates on the principle that 'what gets measured gets done'. It helps improve efficiency and accountability in the management of public institutions.

It is important to note that Embu University College first participated in the FY 2012/2013 Performance Contract in which we achieved a composite score of **2.6897** which is in the **very good** category.

In the FY 2013/2014 we got a composite score of **2.7062** still in the **very good** category while in the last financial year 2014/2015, Embu University recorded its best performance with a composite score of **1.9826** Placing us for the first time in the **EXCELLENT** category which effectively rates us among the best state corporations and in particular amongst higher education institutions.

LET US GIVE A ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO ALL OF US FOR MAKING THIS HAPPEN!!

Madame Chair,

Indeed, this is a great achievement worth celebrating given that EUC is still a new institution at the nascent stage of growth.

The current Performance Contract is broader and more challenging. It was negotiated with our parent Ministry and vetted by the Directorate of Performance Contracting. This is a deviation from the previous norm where the Ministry was in charge of both negotiation and vetting. The rationale for this change was to make the performance contracting process more objective.

Looking to the year ahead, I therefore, encourage all of us to put more effort in ensuring achievement of the above. Our resolve to move the University to even higher heights remains very strong but as they say the largest room in the world is the room for improvement. There is always an opportunity for review, renewal and reinvigoration that awaits us at

every corner. The New Year awaits us and brings a sense of anticipation as we journey onwards to realize the full potential of The University of Embu.

In closing, I extend my thanks to all members of the University Council for your energetic contributions and engagement with our work during the year 2015. This has been a significant year for our University and I am most grateful for your support and encouragement and your willingness to challenge ideas and provide wisdom as we have progressed.

I also wish to congratulate the staff for their achievements in their private lives; for instance; some got married; others got new babies; while others graduated with higher qualifications; indeed we shared cakes at the Principal's square many a times.

There are also some of our colleagues who got many blessings that we never got to know of at EUC but all the same we congratulate you and wish you all the best for the future.

I cannot fail to mention that during the year some of our colleagues lost their loved ones and as the EUC family we are always there to support one another in times of happiness and in times of sorrow. I pray that we continue with the same spirit in the coming year.

Finally, my dear colleagues I urge you to remain focused on this journey of making this University College one the greatest institution of higher learning in Kenya.

I hope that you will have some time off to spend with families and friends and that the Christmas spirit of love and sharing will prevail. To

those of you who are travelling, may you all have a safe and pleasant journey.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2016.

Thank you and God bless you.