



SMU ^{In} **STRIDE**

Quarterly Newsletter

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Committed to Excellence!

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Greetings and a very warm welcome to our Vol. 21 Issue No. 46 of the quarterly **SMU in Stride** Newsletter. In this edition of the newsletter, you will find news of the commendable achievements of SMU under the usual columns of Teaching and Learning, Research and Development and the Partnership, Outreach and Community Services.

The Teaching and Learning column highlights the news of two events organized by Student Support Services Office and Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (GHAPCO). These are a sensitization workshop on anti-sexual harassment towards ensuring safe campus environment and the celebration to mark the International Women's Day. Outlined under the Research and Development section includes news of the Annual Research Review Meeting, a training on Research Methods and Public Lectures. In the Partnership, Outreach and Community Services section, we present St. Mary's assistance to the people displaced from Gedeo Zone, SNNP Region. The administrative matters “**ዜና አስተዳደር**” section comprises news of training on “Customer Handling” organized by Human Resources Management as part of capacity building effort of concerned staff.

Finally, we thank you all for your time and effort. Suggestions and comments towards improving the newsletter's contents are most welcome. Please also do not hesitate to send us any of your thought or ideas for the upcoming edition of the newsletter.

Happy reading.

International Relations and Communication Office, SMU.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Teaching and Learning

International Women's Day Celebrated



St. Mary's University community celebrated International Women's Day under the theme, Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovative for Change on March 8, 2019. The half-day event, held at the Undergraduate Campus, was organized by the Student Support Services Office, Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (GHAPCO) and Student Union, in collaboration with the Youth for Human Rights International, toward sensitizing the campus community on the salient issues affecting women. Among these was the Anti-sexual Harassment Policy, which was put at the forefront of the discussion agenda. At the event, following the power point presentation on the highlights of the policy by the Dean of Students' Affairs, students, academic and admin staff actively participated in the discussion, accentuating campus code of conduct. Finally, it was stressed that the campus community should demonstrate the highest moral standards in treating women.



At the end of the session, Dr. Mary Shuttleworth, President of Youth for Human Rights International, made inspirational speech accompanied by film clips, which showed the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In her presentation, she made it clear that respecting the 30 human rights contained in the declaration would make the world peaceful and enable people lead their lives happily. In short, her talks encapsulated the idea that “we all have our own thoughts and ideas. We should all be treated in the same way since we all are born free and equal.” Finally, Ato Tedla Haile, Executive Vice President, St. Mary’s University, and Dr. Mary Shuttleworth awarded a certificate of appreciation for a female student who scored 4.00 CGPA during the first semester of 2011 E.C. academic year.

A Sensitization Workshop Held

Student Support Services Office(SSSO), in collaboration with the Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (GHAPCO), organized a sensitization workshop on anti-sexual harassment towards ensuring safe campus environment. The event was held at the Multi-purpose Hall, Undergraduate Campus, SMU, on February 15, 2019. Administrative staffs, faculty and department heads, teachers, Student Union members and student representatives attended the workshop.



At the event, a brief presentation on St. Mary’s University’s Anti-sexual Harassment Policy was delivered by W/ro Mekdes Adane, Head of Student Support Services Office. Additionally, the concept of sexual harassment from legal point of view was discussed by Ato Biniyam Ahmed, Lecturer at SMU, and the current status of harassment in the University was presented by W/rt Medhanit Bejituwal, from GHAPCO, SMU.



After the briefings, questions and suggestions were forwarded from participants and responses were given by Ato Tedla Haile and the panelists followed by hot discussions on the level of risk of sexual harassment in the University. Finally, it was agreed that working cohesively against sexual harassment is a must, not a choice so as to ensure a safe campus environment.



Research and Development

Annual Research Review Meeting Conducted



The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO), SMU, organized its Annual Research Review Meeting on 7th March 2019 at the Main Campus. The meeting was attended by 25 participants comprising researchers, research committee members, faculty deans, senior management officials and other staff of St. Mary's University.

In his opening remarks, Associate Prof. Wondwosen Tamrat, President & Founder of the University, appreciated the efforts of the researchers and RaKMO staff. He also noted that the review event is not an end by itself; but rather a means to enhance SMU staff involvement in research activities. At the Review Meeting, six research proposals were presented where all of them fall within the major Research Thematic Areas of SMU.

Following presentation of the proposals, participants forwarded a number of critical comments towards strengthening the proposals and improving the quality of the research that will follow.

The closing remark was made by the RaKMO Director, Dr. Kebede Kassa, who appreciated active participation of the staff and assured the researchers that his Office will provide them with the necessary support in their endeavors.

Training on Research Methods Held

The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO) of St. Mary University conducted the second three half-day research capacity building training on "Research Methods focused on SPSS and Econometrics" from February 27 to March 1, 2019 at SMU Main Campus. The participants of the training were 24 SMU staff mainly from Faculty of Accounting and Finance and the remaining few from administrative offices.



In her opening remark, W/ro Konjit Berhan RaKMO's Deputy Director, highlighted that the training was organized toward enhancing researchers' capacity. She also expressed her hope that the participants will gain a lot from the training.

The trainer, Dr. Sisay Debebe, delivered his presentation on Research Methods that focused on SPSS and Econometrics (STATA). The training used a participatory approach and exhaustively covered the topics: introduction-what is SPSS & STATA; data coding using SPSS; data processing & analysis using SPSS & STATA: data processing and management and data editing, entry & analysis; data problems & way out: missing data, data inconsistency and distributional outliers; data analysis using SPSS & STATA, descriptive & inferential statistical techniques; and econometrics techniques- multiple linear regression model and reporting results.

At the end of the training Dr. Kebede Kassa, Director of RaKMO, gave a brief orientation on the essence and approaches of thesis advising including preparation for advising, developing report, understanding the student and the research topic, setting deadlines, carrying out advising, following up and scheduling, and conducting defense.

RaKMo Conducted a Series of Public Lectures

The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO), SMU, organized a series of public lecture. The first of the series was the public lecture under the title, “Ethiopianism Movement in the 18th and 19th Centuries and its Implications for Pan-Africanism”, which was delivered by Prof. Nubia Kai, a poet, playwright, storyteller, and novelist with affiliation to Howard University, USA. The lecture was held at St. Mary’s University Main Campus on January 21, 2019.

In her presentation, Prof. Kai went back in time to recount the history of Afro-American and Ethiopian

relationships and elaborated how Ethiopia became an inspiration of redemption for American slaves and represented the template of African greatness. She also stated that the name Ethiopia could be traced as far back as the 9th century B.C. in ancient Greek literature. Her curiosity about Ethiopia was enhanced after she was told by her parents that they had their roots in Ethiopia.



The presentation was followed by a short discussion which underscored the need to revive Ethiopianism, particularly among today’s Ethiopians. The public lecture was concluded by the lecturer promising to send the presentation through Dr. Kebede Kassa, the Director of RaKMO so that participants can have access to the paper for future reference. RaKMO wishes to extend its appreciation to all participants in particular to Ato Tedla Haile, Executive Vice President of the University, not only for joining the lecture at a very short notice, but also for making the discussion lively by elaborating some of the historical facts and providing rich information on Ethiopianism and Pan-Africanism.

The second public lecture was the interactive lecture held at the Multi-purpose Hall, St. Mary’s University, on January 25, 2019 delivered by Dr Abera Molla, who developed Amharic Function

Key software in the 1980s in the USA. Currently, his GeezEdit App is widely used by Smart Phone and computer, and his patented software is used by



Ethiopians here at home and in the Diaspora.

At the event, he stated that his ModEth program has made it easier for any of the languages spoken in Ethiopia in writing. The problems related to the drawbacks of Geez sounds in expressing the sounds of some of the languages in Ethiopia have been solved by Dr. Abera, who has already earned four patents in the USA and three in Ethiopia. His inspirational lecture was attended by Computing Science students and other members of the campus community.

Partnership, Outreach and Community Services

St. Mary's University Extended Assistance to the Displaced



St. Mary's University (SMU) extended its assistance to the people displaced from Gedeo Zone, SNNP Region, via the coordinating committee established at the Addis Ababa City Administration, Lideta Sub-city, Woreda 10 Administration. The assistance was made in kind - used clothes estimated at Birr 35,000.00 and 10 quintals of wheat flour estimated at Birr 10,000.00. The International Relations and Communication

Office (IRCO), representing the University, coordinated the assistance and handed over the used clothes and the wheat flour to the coordinating committee on March 19, 2019.

At the handover ceremony, Ato Ayele Legesse Deputy Director of IRC Office, SMU, told the coordinating committee that the University has been offering similar assistance to the victims of man-made and natural disasters and victims of such displacement at different times, as part of fulfilling its social responsibility. Members of the coordinating committee on their part extended their gratitude to SMU for its active participation in social and economic activities of the Sub-city and the Woreda and its quick and timely assistance to the displaced people from Gedeo Zone in particular.

SMU and AAU Host a Joint Conference on Conflict Prevention and Resolution

The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO) of St. Mary's University, in collabora-

tion with the College of Social Sciences of Addis Ababa University, organized a half day conference titled, “The Role of Students in Upholding the Culture of Peace, and in the Prevention and Resolution of Conflict in Higher Education Institutions in Perspective: Past, Present and the Future” on March 15, 2019. The conference was held at Eshetu Chole Hall, College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University where more than 100 people participated.



The opening speech was made by Dr. Debebe Ero, Dean of College of Social Sciences, Addis Ababa University and member of Peace Committee set up by His Excellency Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. He was also a moderator and started his speech with a brief explanation of Addis Ababa University’s current engagement in conducting such conferences and continued by appreciating St. Mary’s University for initiating the event on such a relevant and timely issue.

The first speaker was Juhar Sultan, representative of Peace Club at the Addis Ababa University, who presented what have been done so far by the club, its strengths and challenges encountered. The second presenter was Dr. Kebede Kassa, Director of RaKMO, St. Mary’s University, who presented the topic titled, “Promoting Pluralism and the Cul-

ture of Peace in Institutions of Higher Education”. The third presenter was Professor Habtamu Wondimu from College of Education and Behavioral Studies, Addis Ababa University, who presented a paper titled, “Resolution of Conflicts in Institutions of Higher Education”. Both of the presenters, Dr. Kebede and Prof. Habtamu, outlined the causes and ways of preventing and resolving conflict. Particularly, Professor Habtamu during his deliberations elaborated on causes of conflict in general and causes of conflict in Higher Education Institutions in particular supporting with experiences home and abroad. Making the discussion more interactive and personal, he requested all participants to evaluate themselves against 12 “Peaceful Personality Characteristics” he handed out to them to help them identify their status as Low, Good, and Peaceful.



Finally, the conference was adjourned with a closing statement by W/ro Knojit Berhan, Deputy Director of RaKMO, forwarding her appreciation to the guests and acknowledgment to Dr. Samuel Tefera in facilitating the establishment of the partnership between St. Mary’s University and College of Social Science, AAU and Dr. Debebe Ero, for facilitating the conference in collaboration with St. Mary’s University.



St. Mary's Took Part in a Workshop

A three-day workshop titled, “Internationalization and Capacity Building in Ethiopian Higher Education” was held here in Addis Ababa from 05 March to 07, 2019. Organized by the US Embassy and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE), the workshop had participants from nearly all public universities and three private ones represented by presidents, vice presidents and directors of International Programs. In attendance were also key officials from MoSHE.


Welcoming remarks were made by U.S. Ambassador, Michael Raynor and H.E.Prof. Hirut Wolde-mariam, Minister of MoSHE. While the whole sessions were moderated by Dr. Charles Bankart of the University of Kansas, USA, each session had three or so panel discussants on a topic following a presentation. Presentations, largely by Dr. Bankart, were made on the following topics:

- Global Factors Impacting the Higher Education Sector;
- Overview of Internationalization in the Higher Education Context;
- Promoting Visiting Scholar and Student Mobility;
- Internal Assessment: Quality Assurance & Partnerships;
- The Ethiopian University Context Related to Quality Assurance;
- Developing University Partnerships;
- Policy Framework of MoSHE towards Bringing Foreign Scholars and Ministry's Support;
- Institutional Development and Capacity Building;
- Challenges and Possible Solutions Related to Funding Research and Community Development in Ethiopia;

- The Success of American Universities in Building Partnerships and Capacities through Grants.

While almost all the topics had a lively question and answer sessions, the one that stood out as a clear challenge to the HEIs was the quality Assurance issue. One visiting scholar asked participants whether the lofty idea of quality assurance had the slightest attention in a situation where almost all public HEIs failed to have a clean classroom and bathroom. Leaders of the universities admitted that they did not meet the quality standards in that and many other matters. Frustrated by the admin conundrum, one public HEI president stated that he would no longer be willing to accept exchange programs unless the admin division employed staff members with MAs and PhDs who would be able to communicate in fluent English. In his opinion, because of the language barrier, his university failed to satisfy the needs of exchange program scholars. It was also revealed that in the same university English Language Fellows contributed little due to poor supervision and poor screening before they came to Ethiopia.

Anecdotal experiences of visiting scholars were also shared with participants. An American of Kenyan extraction made it clear that the language barrier he witnessed in Ethiopian universities is worse than anywhere he had been to. He further stated that Ethiopian students showed little interest to ask questions and were too shy to communicate in classes. One visiting scholar of Ethiopian origin pointed out the misguided practice of opening PhD programs in many of the Ethiopian universities without having the relevant professors in their respective areas of studies. The three-day discussions had key take-aways: the importance of establishing local and international partnerships, identifying



one's needs before requesting for grants and visiting scholars, tapping into U.S. Embassy resources, involving the relevant academic and admin staff for sustainable internationalization. St. Mary's was represented by the Director for International Programs, Executive Assistant to the President, and the Executive Vice President.

St. Mary's University's Support to School Children

St. Mary's University (SMU) donated uniforms to fifty primary school students who have been receiving educational support by Betefiker Development and Charity Organization and St. Mary's University since 2009 E.C. The students are attending their education at Addis Ferie Primary School located in Woreda 9 Administration of Lideta Sub-city, Addis Ababa.

The school uniforms were handed out to the students by Ato Ayele Legesse, Deputy Director of International Relations and Communication Office, SMU, on February 28, 2019 in the presence of parents, teachers, and the coordinator of Betefiker Development and Charity Organization, Ato Muhabaw Alemu.

These students benefit from the school feeding program run by St. Mary's University, in collaboration with Betefiker Development and Charity Organization.

SMU's Participation in a Strategic Plan Launching Meeting

St. Mary's University participated in a half-day consultative meeting organized by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) on February 19, 2019, at Sarem International Hotel to launch the preparation of its seven-year strategic plan (2019-2025).


In his opening speech, Dr. Samuel Kifle, State Minister, MoSHE, noted that a six-men committee drawn from Addis Ababa University, Higher Education Strategic Center (HESC) and Higher Education Relevance and Quality Assurance (HER-QA) has outlined the necessary activities that lead to the preparation of the new strategic plan for the Ministry. This consultative meeting, according to the State Minister, is organized to have the views of stakeholders on the new Strategic Plan to be prepared. He concluded his speech by assuring participants that such meetings will continue to take place at different stages of the Strategic Plan preparation.

Following the speech, Dr. Jeylu Omar and Dr. Hussen Kedir, members of the Strategic Plan Preparation team made presentations. Dr Hussen's presentation mainly dealt on concepts and overview of strategic planning. Dr. Jeylu's presentation focused on the benefits of having a strategic plan, why MoSHE needs to have one, and what should be considered in the preparation of the new strategic plan.

After the two presentations, the Director for Higher Education Strategy Center, the Chairperson of the team, opened the floor for comments and questions. The participants raised different points that, according to the committee, were very useful. It was underlined that the new Strategic Plan should give equal attention to private higher education institutes and if possible should have a strategic direction that will support their growth.

SMU Took Part in GERD's Meeting

St. Mary's University took part in a meeting organized by the Office of National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation on the Construction of Grand Renaissance Dam on 17 January



2019 at Ras Hotel in Addis Ababa. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the status of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Project.

Opening speech and GERD's seven years progress report were made by the Deputy Director, Office of National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation on the Construction of the Grand Renaissance Dam, Ato Tagel Kenubih followed by the current performance status of the GERD Project which was presented by Engineer Kefle Horro, the newly appointed Project Manager of the GERD. According to the manager, currently several issues were raised with regard to challenges the Project had faced and factors that contributed to the delay of the Project. He also noted that, currently a new Monitoring Committee has been formed by the Prime Minister to oversee the day-to-day progress of the Project. Following the Manager's presentation, a number of questions and suggestions were forwarded by participants.

Finally, a closing speech was made by the Secretary General of Office of the National Council, W/ro Roman G/Selassie. In attendance were Government officials, representatives of private business sectors and public figures. St. Mary's University was represented by a staff from International Relations and Communication Office.

SMU Participation at a Peace Conference

St. Mary's University participated in a half-day Peace Conference organized by Addis Ababa University in collaboration with the Ministry of Peace under the theme under the theme "Promoting Peaceful Coexistence in Diverse University Constituencies", on January 12, 2019 at Eshetu Cholle

Hall, School of Business and Economics(FBE), Addis Ababa University.

The conference was chaired by Professor Bekele Gutema where papers titled, Promoting Pluralism and Peaceful Co-existence; Culture of Peace in Institutions of Higher Education; and Resolution of Conflicts in Institutions of Higher Education, were presented by scholars from AAU namely Dr. Yonas Adaye, Professor Kassahun Birhanu, and Professor Habtamu Wondimu jointly with Dr. Solomon Nigussie, respectively.

Following the presentations, discussions were held among the participants where issues related to the massification of higher education, basis for student assignment to regional universities, lack of organized peace education, absence of culture of open dialogue and change-adaptive university administration were raised as potential sources of conflict in Ethiopian higher education institutions. In attendance were Professor Tassew W/Hanna, President of Addis Ababa University (AAU), and H.E. W/ro. Amos Mekonnen State Minister of Ministry of Peace, members of the Parliament, university presidents and students. SMU was represented by members from Student Wellness and Development Unit and Students Support Services Office.

St. Mary's Took Part in a Consultative Meeting

St. Mary's University, represented by a staff from Career and Internship Unit (CIU), took part in a consultative meeting held on 10th January 2019 at Nigist Saba Hotel in Addis Ababa. Organized by Entoto Polytechnic College, the consultative meeting which brought stakeholders together discussed the performance and challenges encountered in

2018 and the 2019 Cooperative training annual plan.

In her welcoming speech, W/ro Mulu Atsbeha, Dean of the College, emphasized the role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Ethiopia's economic development. W/ro Mulu also underscored the significance of stakeholders' participation and commitment in working with the College to enhance the technological innovations in the Country.

During the discussion, various ideas, opinions and questions were put forward by the participants, to which the College's leaders reacted. Finally, a closing remark was made by a representative from Addis Ababa Technical and Vocational Education and Training Office.

SMU Participation in MoSHE's Meeting

St. Mary's University participated in the first consultative meeting the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) held with representatives of the private higher education sector on 31 December 2018 at Nexus Hotel. The meeting focused on outlining the challenges of the sector and introducing the new organizational frameworks created at MoSHE to alleviate current bottlenecks the private higher education sector is facing. During the meeting, presentations were made by the Academic and Research Directorate of the Ministry, the President of the Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions' Association and Director of the Ethiopian Education and Research Network (EthERNet), after which deliberations were held.

The meeting was chaired by Her Excellency Dr. Hirut W/Mariam, Minister of MoSHE. In

attendance were also Prof. Afework Kassu, State Minister of MoSHE and Dr. Andualem Admassie, Director of HERQA who played a significant part in responding to queries and facilitating the meeting. St. Mary's University was represented by its President, Wondwosen Tamrat (Assoc. Prof.).

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በደንበኛ አያያዝ /Customer Handling/ ላይ ውይይት ተካሄደ

በቅድስት ማርያም የኢንፎርሲቲ የሰው ሀብት አስተዳደር ቢሮ ከተማሪ መስተንግዶ ጋር ቀጥተኛ ግንኙነት ያላቸው የዋና ረጅስትራር ቢሮ፣ የአፕንና ርቀት ትምህርት ኮሌጅና የቅድመ ምረቃ ረጅስትራር ቢሮ፣ የቅድመ ምረቃ የተማሪዎች ድጋፍ አገልግሎት ቢሮና የዩኒቨርሲቲው ፋይናንስ ቢሮ ኃላፊዎችን ያሳተፈ የግማሽ ቀን ውይይት ታኅሣሥ 4 ቀን 2011 ዓ.ም በዩኒቨርሲቲው ዋና ግቢ አካሄደ፡፡



ውይይቱ ቢሮው በደንበኞች መስተንግዶ ረገድ ወጥነት፣ ቀጣይነትና ጥራት ያለው አገልግሎት መስጠት ይችል ዘንድ ለራሱ በቀጥታ የሚመለከታቸውን ሠራተኞች አቅም በልዩ ልዩ አጫጭር ሥልጠናዎችና ውይይቶች

የማገልበት ጥረት አካል ነው። የውይይቱ ዋና ዓላማ የተቋሙን የደንበኛ አያያዝ ማሻሻል ሲሆን፤ ከደንበኞች ጋር ግንኙነት ያላቸውን ሠራተኞች ክህሎትና ግንዛቤ ከፍ ለማድረግ እንዲቻል በዚህ የሥራ ዘርፍ የሚታዩ ችግሮችን በማሳየት እንዳይደገሙ ለማድረግና ተገልጋዮችም ሆኑ ሠራተኞች ያሏቸውን መብቶችና ግዴታዎች እንዲያከብሩ ለመርዳት መሆኑ ታውቋል። በውይይቱ ላይ እንዲካፈሉ ከተለያዩ የሥራ ክፍሎች ሰላሳ ተሳታፊዎች ተጋብዘው ሰላሳ ሁለቱ በውይይቱ ላይ ተሳትፈዋል።

በውይይቱ የደንበኛ አገልግሎት ንድፈ ሀሳባዊ ዳራዎች (ድርጅት፣ ሠራተኛ፣ ተገልጋይ)፣ ተጨባጭ ሁኔታዎች (የተገልጋዩ ቅሬታዎች)፣ ደንበኛ (የውስጥና የውጭ)፣

በግንኙነት ወቅት የማይጣሱ መብቶችና ግዴታዎች፣ የተገልጋይ/የደንበኛ መብቶችና ግዴታዎች፣ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት (ሙያዊ አገልግሎት መስጠት፣ መርዳት)፣ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት የሚሰጥባቸው ጊዜያት (በፊት፣ በጊዜውና በኋላ)፣ ቀልጣፋ ግንኙነት፣ ተጨባጭ ሁኔታዎች፣ ራዕይ፣ ተልዕኮና እሴቶች፣ የዩኒቨርሲቲው ሠራተኞች የሥራ ስምሪት ዘርፍ፣ የደንበኞችን ማንነት መለየት፣ ሠራተኛና ተቋም፣ ተግባራችን በደንበኞች ዓይን (የሚያጋጥሙ ችግሮች) በማጠቃለያ ላይ ደግሞ ለሥራ ዝግጁ መሆን፣ ቅንነትና ታማኝነት፣ ኃላፊነትን መረዳት፣ በባለቤትነት መንፈስ መስራት፣ ሁልጊዜም መማር፣ ተቋምን ማወቅ፣ የተቋምን መረጃ ተረድቶ መጠበቅ የተሰኙ ዋና ዋና ርዕሶች ተካትተዋል።

Success Stories of SMU Graduates

Compiled by the IRC Office, SMU



Abubeker Kedir and Bitanya Kassu are the graduates of 2010 E.C. who were awarded Trophy and Medal. Abubeker graduated from the Department of Accounting and Finance, and Bitanya from the Department of Marketing Management, regular program, with Cumulative GPA of 4.0.

Following their graduation, the International Relations and Communication Office of SMU, aiming

to draw lessons for those who are pursuing their study at SMU and beyond, had time with them asking about their stay at St. Mary’s and factors that contributed to their success. Their success story is compiled as follows.

Abubeker, before joining SMU, had pursued his study at Hawassa University with major in Electrical Engineering. He studied at the University for three and half years but discontinued in 2007E.C due to illness. But, all these years he did not share the illness and the subsequent low grades he had earned with any of his relatives hoping that he could get better but could not make it and finally decided to quit his study. He had some information about SMU and his brother who was teaching a summer course as a part-timer at SMU suggested that Abubeker should pursue his education at St. Mary’s University. His parents recommended that he should study Accounting instead of wasting another four or five years studying Computer Engineering and therefore he joined the then Department of Accounting and now Faculty of Accounting and Finance at SMU in 2008E.C.

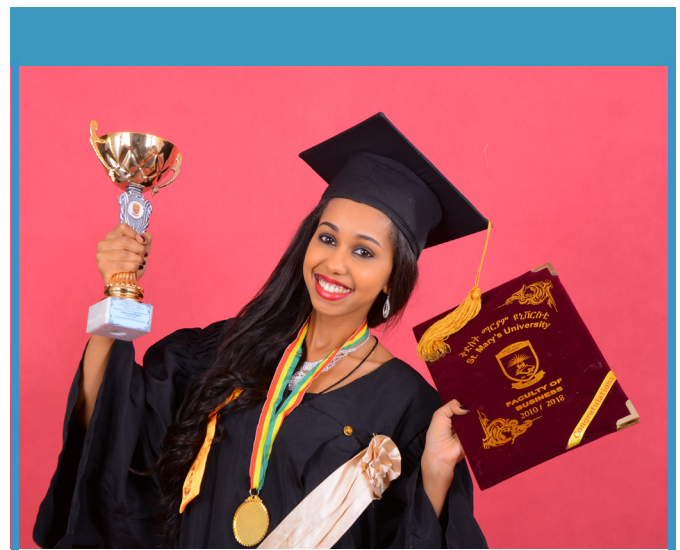
Right from the beginning, based on his bad experience at Hawassa University, he set to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 and above and to become a certified accountant and devoted his time and effort to achieve these two goals. He committed himself to realize his dream by attending classes regularly, and by creating good relationship with his colleagues and teachers. His being a class representative had helped him a lot to closely work with his instructors (asking for their assistance). After he scored 4.0 CGPA in first semester of his first year study, he decided to work hard for “A” grades in all subjects. Each semester, his concern was whether or not he scored “A+” or “A”, and grades less than these two were totally unthinkable for him.

Abubeker attributes his achievement not only to his personal commitment and effort but also to St. Mary’s high regard for quality education, which is attributed to strong continuous assessment of students’ performance, strong follow up of teachers’ attendance, high regard for students, use of feedback from students for further improvement, which, he said, he is proud of and his instructors, who according to his words are highly competent and with very good conduct. He told us that he was particularly grateful to his instructor Mr. Redwan Kedir, who taught him the course, Principles of Accounting I during First Year First Semester which laid him a concrete base and made him successful in his study.

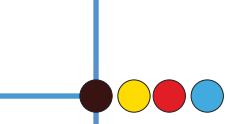
Shifting our attention to the core of our discussion, to draw lessons for those who are pursuing their study at SMU and beyond, we paused a question to Abubeker about his personal qualities that contributed to his academic success, to which he responded as here under.

Abubeker told us that class attendance and partici-

pation and team work are the two major strategies he employed while studying at St. Mary’s and those highly contributed to his success. He believes in sharing what he has. He doesn’t like studying alone and strongly believes that he learns a lot while assisting other students and does not take it as a burden. Besides, unlike many other students, he gives equal attention and focus to all subjects. He always aims to do a quality and original job of his own - No compromise when it comes to the issues of quality and originality. We wish him all the best in his future career and endeavors.



Before joining SMU, Bitanya had pursued her study at the University of Gondar with major in Medicine. She studied at the University only for one year but discontinued her study because she learned that the field required extreme hard work which according to her, was beyond her capability and subsequently put her under stress. After leaving the University, she decided to pursue her study in a different field at a private university in Addis Ababa. She together with her mother looked into the options to choose a field of study and the university to join. Marketing Management was a field she felt appealing to her interest and St. Mary’s University, they felt, stands “first among the private universities”. “A friend who had studied at St. Mary’s also confirmed the



same truth to us”, she said. Therefore, she joined St. Mary’s to study Marketing Management.

While reasoning out that her personal qualities and commitment were key factors for her remarkable achievements, Bitanya attributes her success to cumulative efforts of different parties - the University’s teachers, academic environment and the support from her parents. The instructors at her department were very good at pushing students to read a lot by giving students various individual and group assignments. Particularly, those assignments which required students to conduct interview and compile findings in an organized manner, had helped her acquire skills to organize herself in general and build a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence in particular. The abundant reference materials made available to us in hard and soft copies were also instrumental.

The practical components of the teaching-learning process played vital role to my success, said Bitanya. Salesmanship in Action is the event Bitanya appreciated most and witnessed saying, “this is where SMU excels”. She added, it has helped her most to turn the concepts she learned in the classrooms into practice. Salesman in Action is an annual exhibition which is organized by the Department of Marketing Management in order to allow students demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired through action. Students exercise from A to Z of sales and marketing.

We paused a question to Bitanya about her personal qualities that contributed to the academic success she exhibited in her career to which she responded as follows.

Bitaniya attended her classes regularly, followed lectures attentively, did her assignments with utmost care, managed her time properly and sought clarifications for unclear ideas. If she missed a class due to a reason/s beyond her control, she would compensate it by joining another section where the topic she missed was taught. She was very serious on time management. She budgeted her time among her schooling, recreation and others tasks. She did her assignments on time and did not procrastinate. She applied the same for group assignments and pushed her group members to work hard to meet deadlines without compromising quality. She also believes in what she calls “Knowledge sharing”. Helping her classmates in group assignments and during preparation for exams was her favorite thing she always did as she strongly believes that she learns a lot while helping others. Bitanya did not hesitate to ask questions, to go to instructors’ offices when she needed clarification to which, she told us, the instructors were happy to respond and provide support.



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