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## **Celebrating 10 Years of Service to Society**

On 17 September, the Strathmore fraternity gathered to celebrate 10 years of the Macheo Achievement Program and the Financial Aid office. It was a celebration to mark a decade of life-changing financial support, character formation and service to society.

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The event was graced by H.E. Hubertus van Megen, the Apostolic

Nuncio to Kenya and South Sudan. As the Nuncio, he is the Vatican representative accredited as an ambassador to a civil government that maintains official diplomatic relations with the Holy See. He presided over a celebratory Mass held in the Strathmore University's main chapel. During the Mass, His Excellency gave a special blessing to the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) candidates present gearing up for their national exam.

## **"Character formation will steer you to great heights"**

*Macheo* ("sunrise" in Swahili) is an after-school educational support programme that runs from January to December every year. The programme began in February 2012 with the aim of helping students from troubled neighborhoods navigate school life and emerge stronger and better equipped for life.

It provides academic tutoring, personal mentoring and character development for students from secondary schools in Kibera. Simultaneously, the programme provides a platform for Strathmore students to connect and give back to their communities as mentors and tutors of the youth.

The Macheo Achievement Program is housed under the Community Service Centre. Their aim from the beginning was to support the underprivileged students from informal settlements through their high school education and possibly beyond, breaking the poverty cycle in their families. Beneficiaries from the Macheo program have joined the university over the years and thrived, graduating with honours and going on to start their careers.

Speaking during the anniversary celebration, Vice Chancellor

Designate, Dr. Vincent Ogutu, reiterated the importance of character formation in the journey of education and life, saying, “Character formation is what will steer you to greater heights in life.” By bringing in mentors, the Macheo program strives to provide well-rounded support to nurture the students to excellence.

## **Supporting all students**

Similarly, the Financial Aid Office has been supporting aspiring undergraduate students through financial aid schemes. Through merit-based and sports scholarships, awards to top high school students, loans, work study programs, rebates, bursaries and more, the Financial Aid office has been committed to supporting the University’s mission of providing all round quality education to deserving students, regardless of their financial

capabilities. Their doors remain open to undergraduate students through each year of their studies and even beyond. The office supports Strathmore University students applying for Masters' programs. A recent graduate, when applying to be a Rhodes Scholar, said, "The Financial Aid office at Strathmore University even footed the application costs. I never needed to worry about the number of schools I would apply to. Through them, I got an exemption from the TOEFL exam." For the Financial Aid Office, charity truly does begin at home.

### **The next 10 years**

A celebration without cake is simply a meeting. Cake, food and great company were in abundance during the Saturday festivities. Those gathered at the Maasai Mara restaurant got to hear from some of the Macheo beneficiaries, some of

whom are now mentors in the program. H.E. Hubertus van Megen gave an address to those in attendance. He spoke on the lifelong nature of learning, urging us all to work hard and squeeze ourselves in order to be the cornerstones for the society around us. "Going through university is the start of a long journey that matures you. The learning never ends..."

We commend the Community Service Centre, Financial Aid Office and all their partners for their continued commitment to bettering society through quality, well-rounded education. We also celebrate the beneficiaries of the programs and financial services for dedicating themselves to the journey of lifelong learning. We look forward now to the next ten years of service.

**Celia Kinuthia**

# Strathmore University

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