
ADDRESS BY THE AG. VICE CHANCELLOR ON THE OCCASION OF THE 18TH BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY GRADUATION CEREMONY AT RIVERSIDE GROUNDS ON FRIDAY 24TH MARCH, 2023

- The Guest of Honour; Hon. Minister of Education & Sports; Maama Janet Kataaha Museveni,
 - The Chancellor of Bishop Stuart University, Rt. Rev. Dr. Fred Sheldon Mwesigwa,
 - Emeritus Bishops and Former Chancellors; Board of Trustees,
 - The Chairperson of Bishop Stuart University Council; Prof. Kenneth Kagame,
 - Members of Bishop Stuart University Council,
 - Delegates from National Council for Higher Education
 - Members of the University Senate
 - Distinguished political & Religious leaders,
 - Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of sister Universities and Institutions,
 - Members of Staff of Bishop Stuart University
 - Parents and Guardians
 - Graduands
 - The Media Fraternity □ Distinguished Guests □ Ladies and Gentlemen:
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1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

It is my singular honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 18th Graduation Ceremony of Bishop Stuart University (BSU). In a very special way, I welcome our Guest of Honour; Hon. Minister of Education & Sports; Maama Janet Kataaha Museveni. BSU is proud of you and honored by your presence. We sincerely appreciate you for honoring our invitation. BSU has benefitted from your visionary leadership at the Ministry of Education & Sports and commitment to support infrastructure development, graduate training, research and innovation. The Government of Uganda through your Ministry has tremendously contributed to our strategy to be a research-led university. Thank you!

Brief Background of Bishop Stuart University

BSU is a private, not-for-profit Higher Education institution founded in 2002 by Ankole Diocese of the Province of the Anglican Church of Uganda to provide Christian based higher education, training and research for the expansion of God's Kingdom and for betterment of society.

The university started to operate in 2003 in the premises of former National Teachers' College-Kakoba (NTC-Kakoba). BSU started as an affiliate of Uganda Christian University (UCU) based in Mukono. It received a provisional License from the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) to operate as a private University on 23rd June 2006 and had its first graduation the same year under Uganda Christian University. The first BSU-organised graduation under the Provisional license was held on 6th October, 2010. On the 25th October 2014, the University received a Charter from the Government of the Republic of Uganda, granted and signed by the President; His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburwa.

Graduation Statistics

Dear Guest of Honour, for this 18th BSU graduation ceremony, a total of **1651** students will be awarded degrees diplomas and certificates of BSU in various disciplines. Of these, **02** will receive PhDs; 1 female and a male namely; Ms. Asimire Donath and Mr. Maali Crispo respectively. A total of **43** graduands will receive Masters Degrees. The overall total graduands constitute **46.6%** females and **55.4%** males.

Dear graduands, today we celebrate your achievements, as we mark the successful completion of your studies. This is very much your day, but it is also one that we are delighted to share. Our academic and support staff in the University are both thankful and pleased to have had the opportunity to work alongside you during your time with us. Congratulations!

I am happy to inform this gathering that all our policies to promote access to higher education for all Ugandans and efforts to end historical imbalances in education are bearing fruit, as BSU strives to fulfill her mission "**Producing multi-sectoral leaders/operators who know the way, show the way and go the way**".

BSU Journal of Development, Education and Technology (JODET); We have established a journal **ISSN: 2959-0523** and copies are available on sale. This will not only improve the University web ranking and search engine indexing but also attract researchers from other institutions to publish with us as well as generate income to the University. Articles will be released on a quarterly basis. You are therefore called upon to submit your articles/publications for the second issue anticipate to be out in June this year. The call for submission of publications and articles can be viewed at **jodef.bsu.ac.ug**

2. ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE LAST 20 YEARS OF EXISTENCE

Honourable Minister, The University has made strides and we have excelled in teaching research and community engagement over the past years. We earnestly thank God for the far he has brought us; "Ebenezer....." **1 Samuel 7:12.**

I believe universities have a critical role to play in government efforts to transform our communities through impactful service to humanity. BSU is very committed and ready to soar even higher in the field of academia while working with government.

We have consistently grown in terms of student enrolment from **200** students in 2002 when the university started to currently over **5,000** students.

The University has grown from strength to strength we have **82** accredited academic programs which include; **16** Masters , **09**, Post Graduate Diplomas, **25** Bachelors, **06** Diploma programs accredited by Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB) and **19** Ordinary Diplomas, and a Higher Education Certificate (HEC).

We also currently have **06** Doctoral programs; Doctor of Philosophy in Agriculture & Community Innovations, Doctor of Philosophy in Development Management, Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies, Doctor of Philosophy in Language, Culture and Society, Doctor of Philosophy in Religion and Modernity, Doctor of Philosophy in Economics, and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health.

Bishop Stuart University has five faculties; Faculty of Business, Economics, and Governance, Faculty of Agriculture, Environmental Science & Technology, Faculty of Education, Arts & Media Studies, Faculty of Nursing & Health Sciences and Faculty of Law. We also have Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations which coordinates Post Graduate programs.

Through partnerships and collaborations with sister universities and institutions of higher learning and other development partners, we have realized capacity building for our staff and students. No doubt these partnerships have yielded and BSU is indeed celebrating a bumper harvest in this regard where most of our staff have been awarded scholarships to pursue Masters and PhDs in different universities in and outside Uganda.

I believe we have made tremendous contribution to Uganda's education sector and research over the past years, but we must do more. That is why at BSU, we have deliberately resolved to become research-led in order to produce more Masters and PhDs for Africa. We thank the

Government and our development partners for the support we continue to receive on this journey.

In November last year, we had celebrations to mark 20 years of BSU's excellent service to humanity. The year-long celebrations were held through a series of different activities where we paid tribute to some distinguished persons, who have helped build and shape the University to its current prestigious position as one of the best universities in Uganda, Africa and the globe where thousands of BSU alumni live and work. BSU currently hosts students from all regions and colour, making it a truly international university. I call upon all alumni and friends of BSU to continue to raise the university flag high.

3. TIMELY PROCESSING OF ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS

I am glad to inform our graduands that we have been able to process your academic transcripts and certificates. Therefore, you will all return home with your academic documents.

FUTURE PLANS

- a) We shall soon we will launch the fundraising campaign to raise funds to work on the Road network for the beautification of the University. I implore all our alumni and friends of BSU to be part of this campaign and support the project.
- b) Continue with infrastructural development to grow the University and give it an impressive global architectural outlook.
- c) Promote research and study of science-based courses aimed at churning out enterprising graduates who will be job creators and not job seekers.
- d) The University Management under the mandate of the University Council constituted an E-Campus steering committee that is formulating an E-Campus taskforce to establish and run this E-Campus Project. This is aimed at achieving a goal of offering Technology Intensive, Hybrid and Online Programmes and Courses at Bishop Stuart University to national and international students with ease. This now means that Bishop Stuart University will in the due course start offering fully fledged online programmes on top of the earlier approved Open Distance and eElectronic Learning (ODEL) by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)

4. PRESIDENTIAL PLEDGE TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCIENCE AND RESEARCH LABORATORIES AND LIBRARY EXTENSION

We appreciate the President of the Republic of Uganda; H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburwa through the Ministry of Education and Sports for the support extended to BSU with a pledge worth **Ugx. 7,338Bn** towards the construction of the Science Research and Laboratories inclusive of **Ugx. 375M** for Library in 2011. We have since received **Ugx. 3,140,042,918=** and the construction is steadily going on. We therefore appeal to you to release the outstanding pledge balance amounting to **Ugx. 4,197,957,082=** to enable us complete the projects and put them to use.

5. CONGRATULATIONS TO STAFF

I applaud all members of staff who will be awarded PhDs, Masters Degrees and Post Graduate Diplomas in various disciplines. Your hard work is a demonstration of your determination to be part of our journey to becoming a research university. Congratulations!

6. A WORD TO THE GRADUANDS

Let me turn to you our dear graduands. I congratulate all of you and your parents, guardians and sponsors upon this noble achievement. The time and resources you have invested have paid off and that is the cause for our celebration today. Allow me to specifically thank our dear parents, guardians and sponsors who have selflessly financed your studies to this level. They have sacrificed a lot to give you a good future and deserve to be appreciated. Please join me in expressing our gratitude for their enormous sacrifices.

We have trained you to be critical thinkers, ready to face the job market, but also to be resilient entrepreneurs. Go out and create the jobs the Country is yearning for. Those of you graduating

with PhDs are now certified researchers. You are now truly global citizens. You must help change the situation in Africa.

Whatever your chosen path, we wish you well for the future. We do so in the knowledge that the talents you have developed here at BSU, the skills you have gained and the contacts you have made will put you in a better position to further your careers. You have been given an outstanding educational opportunity and we hope that you will use it wisely going forward. Please remember that although the graduation ceremony may feel like the last step in your BSU journey your connection with the University will last a lifetime. No one ever really leaves BSU! We welcome you warmly to our alumni community, and we look forward to seeing you often in the future.

The task ahead of you is enormous, but it is honourable. Go out there and make the difference the world is yearning for. Love and respect your parents and fear God so that doors will be opened for you. As you go through the gates of Bishop Stuart University, hold your head high but with humility, and always hold your alma mater in high esteem. And as our anthem goes, do not forget the gates of Bishop Stuart University.

VOTE OF THANKS:

- We extend our sincere appreciation to His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda for granting BSU Charter on **25th October 2014**. BSU also receives many scholarships from Statehouse. We also heartily appreciate the support towards the construction of a library and Science & Research Laboratories.
- We wish to express our appreciation to the Ministry of Education and Sports, and Maama Janet Kataaha Museveni for supporting Private Universities.
- We appreciate Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) for supporting vulnerable children to access quality education through the Loan Scheme.
- We are grateful to the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) for providing us with the necessary guidance, supervision and timely accreditation of our programs.
- We are also very grateful to The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM); a consortium of universities in Africa for the support towards our staff capacity building through scholarships for Masters and PhDs (**currently 25 BSU staff sponsored**). We have our staff pursuing Masters and PhDs in Haramaya University, Gulu University, University of Nairobi, Mbarara University of Science Technology, Moi University, Kabale University, Kyambogo University, Uganda Christian University and Makerere University.
- We appreciate Ankole Diocese for starting BSU, for their spiritual guidance and more so for adding us 2 prime acres of land for the construction of the Nursing School and other Medical related programs at Ruharo Campus next to Ruharo Mission Hospital.
- We thank the University Board of Trustees chaired by Rt. Rev. Dr. Fred Sheldon Mwesigwa,
- Appreciation also to the University Council chaired by Prof. Kenneth Kagame,
- We are grateful to the Founders of the University, especially the Founding Chancellor, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Elisha Kyamugambi, Ambassador Francis Butagira, Prof Elly Sabiiti and all of you that worked tirelessly to get this University started and where it is now.
- We acknowledge the support we have always got from our former Chancellors, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Elisha Kyamugambi and the Rt. Rev. Dr. George Tibeessigwa. The firm foundation that they laid is what BSU stands on.
- We are forever indebted to the University governance; Board of Trustees both former and current for the establishment of BSU and continuous guidance,
- On a special note, we recognize all those who pioneered when the University was starting for the great work done and strong foundation laid, especially; Pioneer Deans, HODs, Students (under UCU & those of BSU), Chaplains and the Dean of Students.
- We recognize Mbarara District Local Government for the good cordial relations.
- We particularly wish to acknowledge the support of the Mbarara City, especially; The Resident City Commissioners, the Lord Mayor and previous Mayors, Chief Administrative

Officers, District Chairpersons, the City Clerks and other leaders in your distinguished offices.

- We appreciate and recognise the family of the Late Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru, who offered to give an award every year to the best performing student in Bachelor of Arts in Theology (**Rev. Kamujanduzi Award**) and the best student in Bachelor of Laws (**Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru Award**), the family of the Late Prof. Enoka for the education scholarship Rukare (**Prof. Enoka Rukare Award**), Our Chairperson, University Council for scholarship to the best continuing student from the Department of Nursing (**Prof. Kenneth Kagame Award**) and Foundation of Human Rights Initiative (**FHRI Award**) to the best performing student in Bachelor of Arts in Ethics & Human Rights.
- To all those that worked tirelessly for the success of this occasion especially the organizing committee BSU staff and the student body for the work well done in your various capacities.
- Finally, I would like to thank all the members of staff, who have made this a successful ceremony. I thank the professors and lecturers, the administrative and support staff, the ceremonies committee, the contracts committee, the Security Department, the Estates Department, the Office of the Academic Registrar, Dean of Students, You have all done a wonderful job.
- We also thank BSU Alumni and the Student body and the neighboring community for all the good work they have done for BSU.
- We indeed thank and give praise to the Good Lord, who has enabled us to prepare and successfully conclude this ceremony.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Our God Reigns!

For God and My Country!

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Assoc. Prof. Gershom Atukunda
AG. VICE CHANCELLOR