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Visit by the Departmental Committee on Sports and Culture



The visit to KNLS by the Departmental Committee on Sports and Culture marks a significant step towards shaping the future of libraries post-devolution in Kenya. With a strong focus on resource allocation, community engagement, and technological advancements, libraries are poised to become vibrant centers of knowledge, learning, and cultural exchange. As the committee concluded their visit, it left behind a sense of optimism and renewed commitment to supporting libraries at all levels. The future of libraries in Kenya is bright, with the joint efforts of policymakers, librarians, and the community at large ensuring that these invaluable institutions continue to flourish in the years to come.

The Departmental Committee on Sports and Culture recently paid a visit to the Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) to engage in discussions about the future of libraries following the process of devolution. During their visit, the committee members had the opportunity to explore the facility and witness firsthand some of the remarkable initiatives undertaken by the dedicated librarians.

With the advent of devolution, Kenya has experienced a significant shift in governance and decision-making at the local level. As libraries play a vital role in fostering education, knowledge, and cultural enrichment within communities, it has become crucial to address their future in the evolving landscape. The Departmental Committee on Sports and Culture took the initiative to assess the situation and ensure that libraries continue to thrive under the new governance structure. Led by Committee Chairperson the esteemed team engaged in fruitful discussions with the management of KNLS, librarians, and other stakeholders. The talks centered on key aspects such as resource allocation, sustainability, community engagement, and technological advancements.

During the tour of the KNLS facility, committee members were greatly impressed by the innovative initiatives carried out by the dedicated librarians. One such initiative was the establishment of a digital resource center within the library premises. Equipped with computers, internet access, and e-learning platforms, this center caters to the needs of students, researchers, and the general public, fostering digital literacy and expanding access to information. Together, they work together to create an enabling environment for libraries to thrive.



Kenya Society for the Blind and the Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya, partners in the digital access program, donate an Assistive Software for visually impaired individuals at the Kenya National Library Service

In a collaborative effort, the Kenya Society for the Blind and the Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya have joined forces in a digital access program. Yesterday, they made a significant donation of Assistive Software to the Kenya National Library Service, with the objective of bridging the accessibility gap for visually impaired individuals. The software is designed to empower them by enabling independent access and engagement with digital content, information, and services. Ultimately, it aims to enhance educational, professional, and personal opportunities, promoting inclusivity and equality.

Recognizing the challenges faced by visually impaired individuals in accessing digital resources, the Kenya Society for the Blind and the Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya have taken a proactive step towards ensuring equal opportunities for all. By providing Assistive Software, they aim to create a more accessible environment where visually impaired individuals can fully participate in the digital age.

The donated software serves as a valuable tool, enabling visually impaired individuals to navigate digital platforms with ease. It incorporates features such as screen reading, magnification, and voice commands, making it possible for users to independently access and interact with a wide range of digital content, including e-books, websites, and online services.

The Assistive Software not only enhances educational opportunities for visually impaired students but also opens doors for professional development and personal growth. With improved access to digital resources, individuals with visual impairments can pursue higher education, gain employment, and

engage in various online activities, expanding their horizons and empowering them to lead more independent lives.

Speaking about the significance of this donation, a representative from the Kenya Society for the Blind, stated, "We believe that everyone, regardless of their abilities, should have equal access to information and technology. This donation of Assistive Software aims to break down barriers and create a more inclusive society, where visually impaired individuals can thrive and contribute."

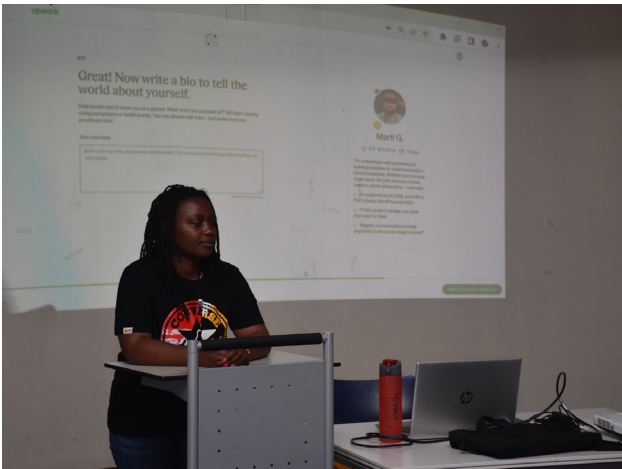
The partnership between the Kenya Society for the Blind, the Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya, and the Kenya National Library Service highlights the commitment of these organizations to promote accessibility and equality. By providing the necessary tools and support, they are working together to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital era.

The Kenya National Library Service is grateful for this generous donation, which aligns with its mission to provide comprehensive services to all members of society. The Assistive Software will be integrated into the library's digital infrastructure, enabling visually impaired individuals to make full use of the resources available and fostering an inclusive learning and reading environment.

As the Assistive Software becomes accessible to visually impaired individuals at the Kenya National Library Service, it represents a significant step towards creating a society where everyone has an equal opportunity to engage with digital content and services. Through such collaborative efforts, barriers are being dismantled, and the path to inclusivity and empowerment is being paved for visually impaired individuals across Kenya.



KNLS holds a transcription training to educate young people on the art and skill of transcribing audio or video content into written form



In a concerted effort to empower young people and equip them with essential skills for the world of work, a transcription training program was recently held. The program aimed to educate participants on the art and skill of transcribing audio or video content into written form. By providing them with the necessary knowledge, techniques, and tools, the training aimed to enable accurate conversion of spoken words into written text. The benefits of this training extend beyond transcription itself, opening doors to diverse career opportunities, enhancing listening skills, and contributing to the accessibility of information.

Recognizing the growing demand for skilled transcriptionists in various industries, the organizers of the training program sought to bridge the gap between the needs of employers and the skills possessed by the youth. Transcription plays a critical role in sectors such as media, entertainment, legal, healthcare, and market research, making it a valuable skill for young individuals seeking employment opportunities.

Over the course of the training, participants learned the intricacies of transcribing audio and video content, including best practices, accuracy, and time management techniques. They were provided with hands-on experience using transcription software and were guided on how to handle different accents, background noises, and challenging audio quality. The program also emphasized the importance of confidentiality, ethical standards, and attention to detail in the transcription process.

Beyond the immediate benefits of transcribing, the training program also contributed to the overall personal and professional development of the participants. By honing their listening skills, individuals gained the ability to capture and comprehend spoken words accurately, a valuable asset in any field requiring effective communication. Furthermore, the program fostered discipline, focus, and critical thinking skills, which are essential qualities sought after by employers across industries.

One of the participants, Everlyn Mumbi, expressed gratitude for the training opportunity, stating, "This program has opened my eyes to a new and exciting career path. Transcription offers flexibility, continuous learning, and the opportunity to work with diverse content. I feel more confident and ready to embark on this journey."



Kenya Library Association (KLA) Conference Reconnects and Revitalizes Library Services for the Virtual Society

The Kenya Library Association (KLA) held its highly anticipated conference, KLA-WORKSHOP, at Sunrise Hotel in Mombasa County. The theme of the conference, “Reconnect and Revitalize Library and Information Services for the Virtual Society,” aimed to address the changing landscape of libraries in the digital era. The conference commenced with a warm welcome from Prof. Peter Gatiti, the KLA President, who emphasized the importance of supporting the association in its mission to provide access to information for the betterment of society. Participants were encouraged to network, share best practices, and exchange ideas to create vibrant libraries across Kenya. The keynote address for the conference focused on Bibliometric and Research Excellence.

Over the three-day event, a wide range of topics were covered, ensuring attendees gained valuable insights into the evolving field of library and information services. On the first day, topics such as the art of scholarly publishing, the role of librarians in enhancing digital literacy, RDA (Resource Description and Access), and e-records management were discussed. Participants were divided into teams, engaging in practical exercises and presenting their findings.

Day two continued the momentum with presentations on digital transformation in libraries and information centers, web metrics and research, e-resources, libraries and sustainable development goals (SDGs), open access leadership, and information quality assurance. In-depth discussions took place, emphasizing the significance of digitization, its challenges, and the comprehensive checklist required for successful implementation.

The conference’s final day began with a recap of day two, guided by Mary Kinyanjui, followed by a presentation on Web 3.0 tools and their impact on libraries. Additional topics covered included plagiarism and copyright, tools for modern information processing and access, teams in organizations, digital librarianship, competitive information centers, and the electronic library. Throughout the conference, participants actively contributed to resolutions and discussions that would drive libraries to the next level. Emphasis was placed on research, webometric ranking, academic and research institutions’ ranking based on their IRs (Institutional Repositories), ICT compliance, information literacy, technology integration, and 24/7 access. The conference concluded with a sense of achievement, as participants recognized the importance of adopting 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, innovation, and information and technology skills. The event provided a valuable platform for sharing experiences and fostering professional growth.

Mary Kinyanjui, the report’s author, expressed gratitude to the knls Board for the opportunity to attend the conference, present papers, and learn from fellow professionals. She emphasized the importance of mentoring future leaders committed to supporting the library profession.

The KLAWORKSHOP conference showcased the dedication and passion of librarians and information professionals in Kenya. By reconnecting and revitalizing library services, they are at the forefront of transforming libraries into vibrant and dynamic hubs of knowledge for the virtual society.



Sigana International Storytelling Extravaganza

Storytelling has been an integral and cherished part of the African culture for centuries, serving as a powerful medium to pass down history, values, and traditions from one generation to another. Deeply rooted in the fabric of African societies, storytelling weaves together the diverse tapestry of the continent's rich heritage. Through the art of storytelling, African communities have preserved their collective memory, ensuring that the wisdom and experiences of their ancestors are not lost. Griots, or oral historians, have been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying forth this tradition, employing their captivating narratives, vivid imagery, and rhythmic expressions to engage listeners and transport them into the realms of imagination. These stories encompass a wide range of themes, from epic tales of heroic figures and mythical creatures to moral lessons, cultural rituals, and spiritual beliefs. They serve as vessels of cultural identity, fostering a sense of belonging and shared understanding within communities. To honor this tradition, KNLS Buruburu branch held the Sigana International Storytelling Extravaganza on Friday 16th June 2023.

The event which attracted over 300 students from various schools, brought together a collection of captivating tales, folklore, and personal narratives, showcasing the rich heritage of African storytelling. It also provided a platform to celebrate the importance of storytelling and importance of embracing culture to the African child. Speaking during the event, the storyteller narrated the Luo folklore on Legend Luanda Magere and urged the students to be courageous. "Students, remember that courage knows no bounds when the spirit of a warrior rises to protect what he holds dear," said the narrator. The event also focused on celebrating the African child and showcasing the importance of storytelling as a cultural tradition. It provided an opportunity for children to learn about their cultural heritage and gain a deeper appreciation for storytelling in their own lives. This event was particularly relevant to the library, as libraries are often seen as a hub for promoting culture and heritage.

Among the key speakers for the day included; Madam Kaltuma Sama, Head Librarian at the Buruburu Library different authors, and actors who performed plays about Africa and its heritage.



Breaking Barriers: Kenyan Sign Language Graduation Ceremony at knls Nyeri



The Kenya National Library Service (knls) Nyeri branch has taken a significant stride towards inclusivity with its recent Kenyan Sign Language graduation ceremony. The library, renowned for its commitment to literacy and community development, partnered with Voice to the Voiceless, a respected sign language interpretation consultant, to provide free sign language training. Under the leadership of Mr. Peter Mbugua, knls Nyeri's librarian, the training program consisted of two levels. The first level, Basic Sign Language training, empowered trainees with effective sign language communication skills. In April, the first cohort of three students, including two recent Form Four graduates and Caroline from the National Council of People Living with Disabilities (NCPWD), embarked on this transformative journey.

Guided by passionate trainers, Ms. Rahab Wairima and Ms. Elizabeth Wanbui, the trainees dedicated themselves to mastering sign language. With three months of hard work and commitment, the trainees faced their final examination and successfully obtained their well-deserved certificates. To celebrate this momentous achievement, knls Nyeri hosted a grand graduation ceremony on June 6th. The conference hall filled with excitement as family, friends, and the library staff gathered to honor the graduates. Mr. Peter Mbugua, with great pride, presented the certificates, beginning with Ms. Stacy, whose radiant smile reflected her accomplishment. Mrs. Anne Mutahi, representing NCPWD, had the honor of presenting the certificate to Caroline, who wore her achievement with pride. The ceremony also marked the beginning of the second cohort, with four new trainees eagerly embarking on their sign language journey. Notably, Nancy Maina, a dedicated knls staff member, joined the class, emphasizing the library's commitment to seamless community services. During his address, Mr. Peter Mbugua emphasized the transformative power of the training program and envisioned knls Nyeri as a library without boundaries. The library aims to serve and uplift the lives of all patrons, irrespective of physical impairments, thus fostering a community where communication and understanding are unhindered.



Nairobi Area Library Hosts Impactful Reading Extravaganza to Celebrate International Day of the African Child



The Hekima Auditorium at Nairobi Area Library came alive with enthusiasm as students, teachers, and library staff gathered to celebrate the International Reading Promotion Extravaganza on June 16th, 2023. This annual event serves as a platform to commemorate the International Day of the African Child, aiming to raise awareness about the critical need to improve education for children across the African continent. Organized by the library, known for its commitment to promoting access to information for transforming livelihoods, this year's festival was designed to be unique and impactful.

The main objectives of the event were:

- Promoting Learning through Blended Library Services and the Competence- Based Curriculum
- Enhancing Oral Literature and Cultural Artwork Learning
- Fostering a Love for Reading and Cultural Awareness

The Extravaganza aimed to showcase how blended library services and the Competence-Based Curriculum can enhance the learning experience for students.

Fostering a deeper appreciation for oral literature, cultural heritage, and various art forms among the younger generation was another key goal of the event.

The Reading Extravaganza aimed to instill a love for reading among students while promoting cultural awareness and understanding.

The event proved to be highly engaging for everyone present. The inclusive mode of presentation featured a diverse range of activities, including interactive reading sessions, engaging plays, lively dancing, friendly competitions, and recognition of outstanding achievements through awards. The event's keynote speaker, Madam Edith, captivated the audience with her inspiring words.

A total of 161 students, along with their teachers, attended the Extravaganza, making it a resounding success in promoting literacy and education in the Nairobi area.

Looking forward, Knls expressed its commitment to organizing more Reading Extravaganzas in the future. The upcoming events will continue to promote learning through blended library services and further cultivate a culture of reading among students. Some of the activities planned for future events include interactive learn-and-play sessions, library games, debates, public speaking opportunities, and reading challenges.

Additionally, Knls intends to follow up with schools to collect success stories from participants, inspiring others to join and benefit from similar initiatives. Moreover, the organization plans to harness the power of social media to create awareness about how libraries are empowering students through such transformative programs.



Kenya Publishers Association pays a courtesy visit to the library to discuss future collaborations and partnerships in relation to the publishing industry.



In a promising move towards fostering growth and development within the publishing sector, the Kenya Publishers Association (KPA) recently paid a courtesy visit to local libraries. During the meeting, both parties engaged in discussions about potential future collaborations and partnerships.

The purpose of the visit was to explore opportunities for mutually beneficial relationships, aiming to enhance access to quality literature and educational resources across the country. As the publishing industry continues to evolve, such alliances between the KPA and libraries hold great potential to boost literacy rates, encourage reading habits, and promote a culture of learning.

The meeting served as a platform for representatives from the KPA and library officials to share ideas, expertise, and resources. By joining forces, they hope to address common challenges, leverage each other's strengths, and develop innovative strategies for the distribution and dissemination of knowledge.

This collaborative effort signifies a renewed commitment from both the KPA and libraries to work hand-in-hand in advancing the literary landscape in Kenya. As the partnership takes shape, it is expected to open up new avenues for local authors, publishers, and readers, ushering in a brighter future for the country's publishing industry.

