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Grad Sch. Takes in New Entrants

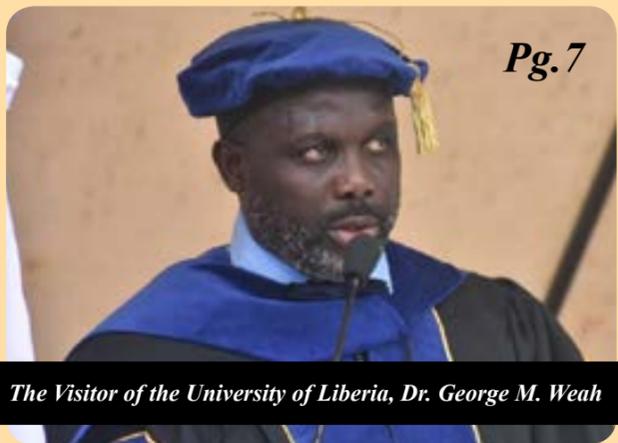
Dozens of incoming and transferred students at the University of Liberia today ended a day long orientation on the policies, rules and regulations at the as they set to commence classes on March 1, 2021, consistent with the the 2021 Academic calendar.

The students admission into the UL follows the administering of the Graduate School Aptitude Test (GSAT) and a rigorous interview

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Incoming Graduate & Professional School students during orientation in the auditorium on Capitol Hill Campus



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The Visitor of the University of Liberia, Dr. George M. Weah

Visitor of UL Graces Third Convocation



Some members of the 2020 "Meni Nina" Class during convocation at the SKD Sports Complex

UL Boosts Workforce With 3,312 Graduates

The University of Liberia today conferred degrees on more than 3,000 students from the 'Meni Nina' class of 2020, at a Joint-Commencement Convocation to climax the combined-college graduation that began on February 22, 2021, held at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville.

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101st "Meni Nina" Commencement Convocation

Day 1

Commencement Speaker Seeks Competitive Academic Environment At UL



Madam Kula Fofana,
Assistant Dean of the David A. Straz-Sinje Technical and Vocational College

As part of efforts to put the University of Liberia (UL) on par with other universities in the region and beyond, Madam Kula Fofana, Assistant Dean of the David A. Straz-Sinje Technical and Vocational College, wants UL to encourage research among its faculty members and students alike, and to build a competitive academic environment.

"We must encourage research among our faculty members and students alike. We must build a competitive academic environment where students will see the need and value quality, competitive academic achievement and education," she said in a commencement speech Monday, February 22, 2021 at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville.

Last week the University of Liberia commenced its 101st graduation exercises for the academic year 2019/2020, graduating the first batch of 697 candidates from three colleges in Paynesville.

The ceremony began with a joint program involving Liberia College of Social Sciences and Humanities, William V.S. Tubman College of Education and the David A. Straz-Sinje Technical and Vocational School.

Delivering the commencement speech, Madam Fofana said the University of Liberia has come a very long way, stating that if it must be on par with other universities in the region and beyond, it must do things differently

and be encouraged to contribute to the production of knowledge to better Liberia and the world at large.

"We must be encouraged to contribute to the production of knowledge to better our world and our country," she said.

She suggested that UL must encourage research among its faculty members and students alike while building a competitive academic environment which values quality competitive academic achievement and education.

Additionally, in moving to the future, Ms. Fofana noted that UL students must be encouraged to reduce the militant chants and slogans and focus on building more interest in being knowledge-producing intellectuals who are well prepared to be job creators and not job seekers.

"Take your career very seriously. At this stage, do not settle for mediocrity level; do not be complacent, save money, invest your resources and work hard to earn rightly," she said.

Addressing the graduates, Madam Fofana said the backbone of success is service, hard work, and sleepless nights.

"You must work very hard to achieve that," said Madam Fofana, during the first of three college-based convocations that witnessed the graduation of 697 students.

The youthful commencement speaker urged the graduates-many of whom seemed to be of the same age as her - to take their careers very seriously, cautioning them

noted from the classrooms. Speaking directly to the graduates from the three colleges, Madam Fofana told those from the William V.S. Tubman College of Education to be the agents of change when they are called to serve, cautioning them against all forms of abuse of their position in the discharge of their duties, including sex for grade.

"...And some of you are already in the classroom, you must be the ones to inspire your students," she said, adding that the teachers should be the ones to ensure that their students are happy to go to school.

Ms. Fofana reminded graduates of Liberia College that they are from UL's foundational college, challenging them to be the agents of change. She urged them to

up the pieces to transform to where it ought to be and play its role among the comity of nations."

Dr. Nelson stressed the need to invest and develop the nation's human resources and capacity in tackling the daunting task of transforming the nation.

He assured the nation that the university is proud and confident of its products from the Liberia College of Social Sciences and Humanities, the William V.S. Tubman's College of Education and the David A. Straz Sinje Technical and Vocational School.

He said all the 697 graduates from the three colleges have been tried and tested and have come out successfully.

The UL President congratulated members of the graduating class for their hard work over the years that have made

College of Education and Mr. John M. Seilue, Dean of David A. Straz Sinje Technical and Vocational College for their dedication and service.

He also expressed gratitude to faculty members and staff of the various colleges for a job well done in bringing the graduates to the "finishing line."

Dr. Nelson also appreciated the family members and friends of the graduates who supported them in preparation for the future of Liberia and the world at large.

The UL President assured them that their investments are highly appreciated and will certainly pay off as they go into the future.

He appreciated the entire University of Liberia family for brightening the light to lead the institution to where it is.

Speaking on behalf of the graduates, the Valedictorian, Mr. Sekou Sidiki Konneh, from the Department of So-



UL Chorus performing on the first day of the 101st Commencement Convocation

against being complacent at all times.

Ms. Fofana reminded the graduates to understand that failure is part of success, explaining that the more they fail, it is an opportunity for them to learn from their mistakes and correct their past.

Regarding the university's infrastructural development going to the next 100 years, Ms. Fofana suggested that the classrooms at UL need to be on par with universities in the region, thereby recommending the use of technology that will connect classes to the internet, among others.

As it relates to UL Faculty, Ms. Fofana noted that the university has some of the best faculty in the country, but recommends that UL must by all means, take care of its faculty members to ensure that corruption is elimi-

uphold integrity in their respective areas of work and in their communities.

Also speaking to the graduates of Straz-Sinje Technical College, the Commencement Speaker said the dreams of the late Amb. David A. Straz, a philanthropist after whom the college is named, will continue to live with them.

She urged the graduates to help transform their country and their county, Grand Cape Mount where the college is based. She emphasized that they must help the people of Grand Cape Mount to develop and enliven the dream of Amb. Straz.

Earlier in his message, the President of the University of Liberia, Rev. Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson, Jr., said Liberia is faced with numerous challenges as it continues to "pick

them to be where they are.

"I know the road has been rough, the journey has been tough, but through the special grace of God Almighty you have made it through," said Dr. Nelson, amidst cheers from the audience.

He indicated that the graduates have survived and sustained themselves through the challenges and obstacles and have now come to a successful end of their pursuit of academic excellence at the bachelor's level at the nation's premier institution of higher learning- the University of Liberia.

He expressed gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Josephus Gray, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University of Liberia, Dr. Cecelia Cassell, Dean of the William V.S. Tubman

biology, who graduated with Magna Cum Laude, said his class was so honored and grateful to the university administration and faculty for all the support in ensuring the success of their academic journey.

Konneh thanked families and friends who stood by their relatives to achieve their academic dreams. He recounted the struggles endured during their time at the University of Liberia but admired the courage of members of the "MENI NINA" Class in overcoming them.

The ceremony was the first of four commencement convocations of the 101st Class of 2020 called "MENI NINA" - an expression from the Kpelleh language which is translated in English as "new beginning."



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Message From the President

Your Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia, and Visitor of the University of Liberia;

Honorable Dr. Jewel Howard Taylor, Vice President of the Republic of Liberia;
His Honor, Francis Korpoh the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;
Members of the Legislature here present.

Hon. Matthew G. Zarzar, Chairman and Members of the UL Board of Trustees.

Honorable, Prof. Ansu Sonii, Minister of Education and Member Ex-Officio of the Board of Trustees.

The 101st Commencement Speaker, Dr. Alvin Nah Doe, Neurosurgeon.

Dr. Albert Coleman, Acting President of the Association of Liberian Universities.

Colleague Presidents and Special Representatives of the Association of Liberian Universities and Colleges.

Rev. James Lablah, Acting Director General, National Commission on Higher Education.

Your Excellency, the Doyen and Members of the Diplomatic Corps.

Distinguished Officials of Government Present.

The Acting President, Mr. Martin Pennie, Officers and Members of the University of Liberia Alumni Association,

My distinguished Bishop of the United Methodist Church in Liberia, Bishop Samuel J. Quire, Jr, and Madam Richlain Quire, other Prelates and the Clergy,

Dr. Muriel Victoria Nelson, my partner, spouse and friend and members of the Julukon Sarwolo Nelson Family.

The President and members of the UL Faculty Association and the President and members of the UL Staff Association

Mr. J Benedict S. Paye, Chairman of The Students Transitional Council,

The Valedictorian of the University's Undergraduate Colleges and Valedictorian of our Graduate and Professional Schools, and Valedictorians of our individual colleges and schools.

Graduate Abraham Fokoe, Officers and members of the 101st Graduating Class "Meni Nina".

Faculty, Administrators, Staff and Students of the University of Liberia.

The Backbone of the Graduating Class, Parents, Relatives, Friends and Well-Wishers.

Members of the Fourth Estate,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Allow me at this time to welcome each and every one of you to this extraordinary 101st Commencement Convocation, the Meni Nina - an expression from the Kpelle vernacular meaning "New Beginning" of this Flagship State University, THE UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA, the birthplace of multidisciplinary leaders.

This Commencement is extraordinary because it is the new beginning class 101 after the Centennial celebration. The graduands represent my first product of some major curricula transformation and some faculty development. It is also my first cohort of graduands from our celebrated college-based commencement.

Let me extend sincerest thanks and my profound gratitude to the 101st Commencement Convocation Planning and Implementation Committee for the great job they have done over the last six months. Thanks also to the UL Chorus, The UL Marching Band; The UL Police; and the Liberia National Police for the continual cooperation with the University of Liberia.

On behalf of the UL Administration, we are expressing our thanks to the Transitional Student Council headed by Mr. J. Benedict S. Paye, for steering the affairs of the student populace over the past academic year. Also, to the leaders and members of the Progressive Student Alliance (PROSA), Student Democratic Alliance (STUDA), Student Integration Movement (SIM), and the Student Unification Party (SUP). My personal thanks to you for the level of engagements we have had over the last year, and the results that have come out of it as well. We believe that when we continue to dialogue over every single issue and intellectualize the debates, we will succeed in fostering a peaceful co-existence as we together work for the forward march of our "Lux in Tenebris".

Let me extend profound appreciation to the UL Board of Trustees for successfully working along with the UL Administration in the governance of our Flagship University. I thank you ever so much.

Finally, my appreciation goes to our Alumni Association and its diaspora groups that have steered the affairs of the Association both at home and abroad. However, we are celebrating with mixed feelings today because one of our own, our former National President of AAUL, the late Mr. James S. Davis, II, who was also an active and well-organized member of the UL Board of Trustees. Mr. Davis departed this world on January 3, 2021. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? We can only say thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. Visitor, Mr. Chair, Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would now like to pay homage to some members of the University of Liberia family who departed including three past presidents, during the course of the year. May their souls rest in perfect peace. They are:

Dr. James N. Kollie, Acting President -2004

Dr. Patrick L. N. Seyon - 1991 - 1996

Dr. Ben A. Roberts - 1999 - 2003

Other members of our family who passed are:

(1) Neikata J. Jackson, Instructor, Medical College,

(2) Johnson T. Flomo, Instructor, Management,

(3) Mohammed M. Kiawu, Instructor, Management,

(4) James Moses Lincoln, Director, Academics/Bookstore,

(5) Ruth D. Ballayan, College Coordinator, College of Education,

(6) Deddeh Baysah-Antione, Executive Assistant, to the Vice President for Health Sciences,

(7) Balasiah Gbowee, Expeditor, Institutional Development and Planning

(8) Joseph J. Telewoyan, Secretary, Procurement Unit,

(9) Dr. Thomas K. Jaye, Executive Director, Liberia Institute for Policy Studies and Research,

(10) Samuel K. Duworko, Instructor, English Dept/Liberia College,

(11) Melvina S. Okech, Instructor, Home Science & Community Development/College of Agriculture & Forestry,

(12) Marcus S. Sokpah, Chairperson, English Dept/Liberia College, (13) George Popei, Teaching Assistant, Agriculture College,

(14) Christiana Kpao, Administrative Secretary, Dept. of Economics,

(15) John M. Beyan, Instructor, Geography Department,

(16) Charles Saygbeh, Instructor, Economics Department,

(17) Johnny Ward, Maintenance Officer, Plant Operations,

(18) S. Matthew P. Smith, Instructor, College of General Studies,

(19) Samuel Monger, Instructor, Management

(20) Obi Samuels, Instructor, Home Science & Community Development/College of Agriculture & Forestry.

(21) Our recent graduate Nancy W. Miller, of the A. Romeo Horton College of Business and Public Administration. She died along with seven family members the night after her graduation on Wednesday, February 24, 2021. (UL Chorus- All is well)

Mr. Visitor, Mr. Chair, Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On Thursday, 18th February 2021, we celebrated with fourteen (14) of our long servicing, dedicated and committed faculty and staff members who were retired. Their services range from nine (9) to forty-six (46) years. The longest serving honor went to Associate Professor Thomas A. Peters, of the A. Romeo Horton College of Business and Public Administration. We also celebrated the exceptional Alumni Homecoming Day of 19th February 2021. College-based Graduation were held from 22nd to 24th February 2021. An outstanding LUX -IN-TENEBRIS Honors Scholars Research Symposium was held on 25th February 2021. We also celebrated a total of thirty-two (32) faculty members who published peer-reviewed books, book chapters, journal and conference proceeding articles in the past two academic years (2018/2019 and 2019/2020). This is the first of its kind and will be implemented annually as a means of encouraging and motivating research and scholastic publications by members of the University family.

Today, we are producing 3,312 graduands at this 101st Commencement Convocation.

Just a few months ago, we made history by conducting UL's first E-Learning program that ended the second semester of Academic 2019/2020, which has allowed us to gather here today under normal circumstances. But normal has become a rare commodity since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We thank the many professionals whose expertise and hard work made this possible.

Making the sudden transition to E-learning for the last mile of our academic year 2019/2020 was a significant -and I know throbbing - adjustment. While I'm gratified at how well you've handled this challenge, I am not surprised. When UL is confronted with big challenges, we don't throw up our hands. We roll up our sleeves to look for solutions. Your appetite for challenges as students - and now, as graduates-to-be - will be a priceless asset in the years ahead.

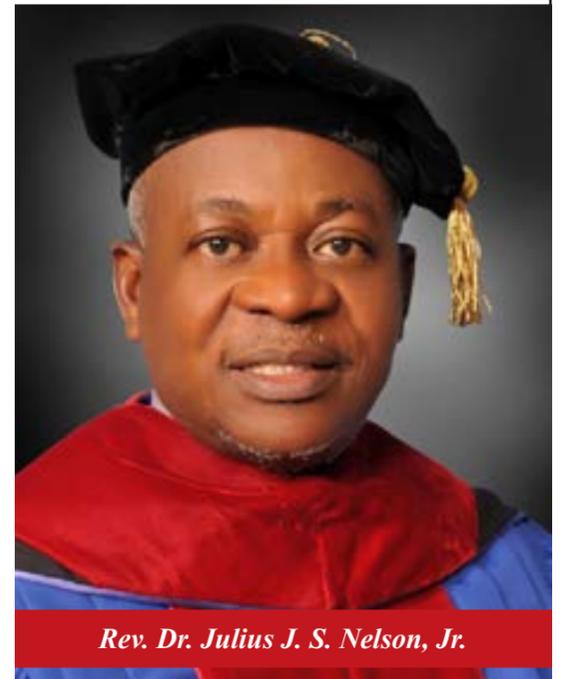
This 101st class is proud to be associated with the following:

- The first class to experience our E-Learning program when we were constrained to fast-track our digital approach due to the pandemic in 2020-Mini-Nina
- 59.57% of our graduands are males, while 40.43% are females-Mini-Nina!!!
- We have majority female than male graduates in the Liberia College with 235 females and 203 males.
- The first convocation with predominantly youthful guest speakers, signifying the 'New beginning' of another century in academia-Mini-Nina!!!

Mr. Visitor, Mr. Chair, Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees

We are pleased to report to you some of our major developments for the past academic year. They include:

- Restructuring of the Senior Management Team to conform to our vision and



Rev. Dr. Julius J. S. Nelson, Jr.

101st "Meni Nina" Commencement Convocation *Day 2*



Mr. Mahmud Johnson, Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of J-Palm Liberia

"Create A Solution"

Convocation Speaker Tells Graduates

The commencement speaker at the second of four convocations of the University of Liberia (UL) 101st Class of 2020, Mr. Mahmud Johnson has told the graduating class to identify a need, and find like-minded folks to work

with to begin to create a solution, noting that Liberia has many difficult challenges.

"Anyone, anywhere, can be of service in one way or another. Start where you are. Identify a need, and find like-minded folks to work along with you to begin to create

a solution," Mr. Johnson admonished the graduates on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville.

Mr. Johnson, a young Liberian entrepreneur, founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of J-Palm Liberia, said he intended sharing his experience with the graduating class because as a young man, he found himself to be in the same age group as many of the graduates.

J-Palm Liberia is a Liberian

- owned company that manufactures skin and hair care products from Palm Kernels, based in Liberia.

He said that their being on earth is to serve a bigger purpose, which includes service to their community, country, and the planet.

"Yes, it's nice to have money, a nice car, a big house, Mr. Johnson said. "But that isn't the goal. That isn't why we are here. We are here to be of service; Service to our country; service to our community, and service to our

fellow human beings."

Recounting some of his personal experiences, Mr. Johnson said, along the way he had some huge failures, but he also had some pretty amazing successes. According to him, there will never be such a time when you have all the money, all the knowledge, all the connections, and all the resources to start to make a difference.

Further, he said one does not have to wait until a vacancy is announced because they probably never will an-

nounce it. "And when they do, there will be way too much competition, that will make it harder for you," he said.

Tuesday's convocation at SKD Sports Complex in Paynesville was the second of four commencement convocations of the 101st Class of 2020 called "MENI NINA," - an expression from the Kpelleh language which is translated in English as "new beginning."

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UL Boosts Workforce

The graduates are representation of five undergraduate colleges, including Liberia College of Social Sciences and Humanities, A. Romeo Horton College of Business and Public Administration, Thomas J.R. Faulkner College of Science and Technology, William R. Tolbert College of Agriculture and Forestry, William V.S. Tubman College of Education and College of Engineering.

As always, thousands of family members and well-wishers trooped unto the SKD Sports Complex to celebrate the achievement of the graduates in different styles and stardom to the amazement of many who stood by to watch ceremony.

Statistics gathered from the Office of Academic Affairs at the University of Liberia revealed that 3,312 students graduated this year as compared to the 100th Centennial class that recorded a slight increase of 3,627 graduates in 2019.

Details of the statistics indicate that of the total number, 438 graduated from Liberia College of Social Sciences and Humanities, constituting 13.2 percent with a ratio of 203 males to 235 females.

Also, the statistics indicates that of the total number of graduates of 3,312, the College of Education graduated 208 students with a ratio of 135 males and 73 males, representing 6.2 percent of the total number.

Similarly, the statistics also shows that 51 students graduated from the Straz-Sinje Technical and Vocational College in Grand Cape Mount County with a ratio

of 38 males and 13 females representing 2 percent of the total number of graduates.

At the same time, 255 students graduated from the College of Science and Technology, according to the statistics with a ratio of 144 males and 111 females accounting for 8 percent of the total number of 3,565.

Additionally, the statistics further indicate that 460 students graduated from the college of Agriculture and Forestry with 322 males and 138 females accounting for 14 percent of the total number

of students graduated.

The A. Romeo Horton College of Business and Public Administration, on the other hand graduated the largest number of students with a total of 1,356 with a ratio of 773 males and 583 females representing 41 percent of the total number of 3,565 students who graduated with the 'Meni Nina' class of 2020.

In a related development, graduates from the professional schools, including the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, the A.M. Dogliotti College of Health Sciences,

and School of

Pharmacy and the five graduate schools including the Ibrahim Badamasi Babagida School of International Relations (IBB), Graduate program in Regional Planning, Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation, Graduate program in Business and Public Administration (MBA/MPA) were presented by their respective programs for conferral of degrees.

Meanwhile, the head of the 101st Commencement Convocation, Prof. Dr. Moses Zinnah says he is impressed with the conduct of the commencement, noting that the UL got the corporation of the

students and the faculty in ensuing that the commencement was successfully conducted.

Dr. Zinnah however recognized infrastructure as a major challenge in accommodating students at the university.

"The university is making tremendous progress in building the human capacity of this country. Our challenge is how we accommodate all the students we have with limited infrastructure. As a state-run university, we are delivering on our mandate, but the challenge is infrastructure".

Dr. Zinnah further ex-

pressed satisfaction over the ratio of women graduating from the sciences, adding, "We are hovering around the same 40 percent. We are completely happy about that. We are making progress that is why every time we attract more women into going into the sciences. Biology, chemistry students are coming, but with math and engineering, we still have some challenges, he recognized.

Commenting on the gap between the population of male and female graduates, Dr. Zinnah said "In terms of parity, we are around 35 to 40 percent. We are not there yet but we are happy that we are making progress."

Also commenting on the UL plan for supporting research, Dr. Zinnah said, "The **Pg. 7**

"Meni Nina," The Class Of New Beginning

female population.

The name Meni Nina was voted upon and accepted by the majority of the 93 students who represented the class during the first general meeting called by the elected class officials on August 21, 2020 in preparation for the 101st commencement convocation.

The Meni Nina class leadership came to existence as a result of an election organized by the Office of Students Affairs to have a transitional body to steer the affairs of the graduating class.

The elections were organized on August 14, 2020, and Prof. Sekou Konneh, UL Vice President for Student Affairs served as the Elections Commissioner.

42 electorate consisting of 7 delegates were invited. However, 39 delegates participated in the voting process. The three students elected were Thomas N. Gmawlue, Jr., from the College of Engineering, Lloyd G. Mafela from the William R. Tolbert, Jr., College of Agriculture and For-

estry, and Abraham F. J. Fokoe from the Thomas J. R. Faulkner College of Science and Technology.

The three elected officials were inducted on September 18, 2020 in the Theater, Academic Complex of Fendall Campus, Louisiana.

Following the induction, two additional executive members were appointed by the president to help steer the affairs of the class.

Chris S. Suah from the Thomas J. R. Faulkner College of Science and Technology was appointed as Comptroller General while Brisbane S. Mehn from the College of Engineering was appointed as Financial Secretary.

Additionally, the president appointed nine committees to help carry on the work of the class. Those committees include Secretariat Relations, Photo, Yearbook, Souvenir, Ways, Means, and Finance, Socio-cultural, Project, Matriculation, and Ring Committees.

On the class logo, "UL" represents the University of Liberia; the rising

sun represents the New Generation and the white shield represents the new path of the new generation.

Through collective work and support to the leadership, the class headed by five (5) executives partnered with administration to achieve several things.

Among the Meni Nina class' achievements are maintaining consistent peace and unity on all campuses of the university; decentralization of the souvenir package on all four (4) campuses and distribution process in three weeks to the graduation.

Additionally, a jeans jacket with the graduating class name written on it, was introduced for the first time this year.

As a result of the level of coordination and teamwork, students did not disturb public peace this year.

"The class has succeeded in branding the name Meni Nina, in our minds that will never be forgotten like other classes. Thanks to Shadrach Gaye, Rancy M. Sahn, and two

others for producing four (4) Meni Nina Class Songs, making our class the first to put out a song at the University of Liberia," the Meni Nina class leadership has said.

"We succeeded in breaking information barrier through our show, Meni Nina Info Hub of Lux 106.5 FM, our media tours and public service announcements on major radio stations, our Official Facebook Page, general and departmental chat rooms and other conventional means to make sure that students are well informed of the affairs of the class," the class added.

Further, the class succeeded in maintaining the modern tradition of producing class rings with the inscription of the class logo.

In addition to these accomplishments, the class has few items enlisted in its vision that are still ongoing. These include the documentary project, a 30 minute video highlighting the activities and success story of the class.

Upon completion, the Meni Nina class said it will also be the first of its kind at the University of Liberia. The Yearbook which has been launched and the Class Project, construction of a Welcome Arc at the entrance of the Fendall Campus will begin soon.

101st "Meni Nina" Commencement Convocation *Day 3*

In continuation of the University of Liberia (UL) 101st commencement convocation, the commencement speaker Mr. Del - Francis Wreh has challenged graduates to use their unde

standing of various concepts in their courses to the maximum for the society, while also ensuring that the private sector grows.

Addressing graduates at the S.K.D. Sports Complex Wednesday, February 24, 2021, Mr. Wreh, the Executive Director of Liberia Macroeconomic Policy Analysis

LIMPAC Boss Dissects Liberia's Economic Woes

-Challenges Class to Champion Policy



Mr. Del - Francis Wreh, Executive Director of Liberia Macroeconomic Policy Analysis Center ((LIMPAC))

Center ((LIMPAC)), said he believed that once given the opportunity, the graduates can do more by championing more policies and programs that reduce poverty in Liberia.

"To our graduates, [given] the growing need for policy implementation champions and your desire to improve the livelihood of your people and communities, let me once again rally and challenge you to become the next generation of pro - poor policies champions," said Mr. Wreh.

"You will face opposition from unexpected sources -- friends, families, immediate workmates-- like I and my team experienced during the harmonization of the central [government's] payroll and the on-going national payroll [cleaning] exercise," he added.

The commencement speaker reminded them that as they take on the role of championing the implementation of pro - poor policies, they must triangulate the ideas from the team members instead of strangulating their ideas and perspectives.

"Commit your conscience and time until the task is achieved. Yes, you have

overcome greater challenges before reaching today's graduation, so I strongly believe you can do it," Mr. Wreh admonished and encouraged.

Addressing the shocking incongruity between Liberia's natural endowment and its appalling poverty statistics the young economist blamed the lack of policy champions who are crucial to implementation and to ensuring programs and projects designed are rolled out

according to specifications. "This collective failure to champion change, especially for the implementation of pro - poor policies, keeps sliding more and more of our citizens into poverty as our population grows." He lamented and suggested that Liberians must "stand together" and champion pro - poor policies to remedy the ills that continue to hold Liberia back.

"It is the educated class

of which you now belong, that can be positive agents of change by embracing policies that can increase our communities' livelihood, and in so doing utilize your education for the common good," he admonished the graduates.

Mr. Wreh explained some historical backgrounds on previous governments' policies, recalling that former President William V.S. Tubman had two policies that

were very pro - poor in nature and stood successfully--the Open-Door Economic Policy and the National Unification Policy. He asserted that these two policies had the most positive impact on the welfare of Liberians and the growth of the economy.

Talking about former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's administration, the commencement speaker reflected that "after inheriting a broken country in 2006, she championed the implementation of developmental and governance policies that transformed Liberia from a failed state to a functioning democratic state.

He indicated that during the Sirleaf era, revenue generation increased from US\$80m in 2006, to US\$488m in 2010 through the automation of tax administration.

For his part, the President of the University of Liberia, Rev. Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson, in his greetings earlier to the graduates, said he was excited to confer degrees on the graduates from the A. Romeo Horton College of Business and Public Administration.

"Indeed it has to be the

Lord's doing, and it is PLEASING IN OUR EYES!," Dr. Nelson said.

"We know it has not been easy, but we also know that you have not made the journey lazy, you made it very busy, in preparing yourselves to form part of the black gown aristocratic society," the UL President said to the thunderous cheers of gleeful graduates.

On behalf of the university, Dr. Nelson presented to the nation a workforce of young men and women who, according to him, have gone through the ranks and files of their various departments and are now prepared and ready to fill in those gaps within Liberia and the world at large.

"Corporate Liberia is in dying need for professionals like you to fill in the gaps both in the private and public sectors," he added.

At Wednesday's convocation, 472 candidates graduated from the Accounting Department, 156 from the Economics Department, 388 from the Management Department and 340 from the Public Administration Department.

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Grad Sch. Takes in New Entrants

process in the last quarter of 2020 from which successful candidates were selected to enroll.

UL President, Dr. J. Sarwolo Nelson, Jr. in remarks thanked the students for their decision to enroll at the UL, but emphasized the University position for Graduate students to be critical and analytical in finding solutions to the numerous challenges facing the country.

"Here at the University we emphasize topnotch critical and analytical thinking in finding solutions to the problems we face as a people and

institution through graduate studies and research".

Dr. Nelson challenged the new entrants to foster academic excellence and research for the realization of the University's goal of obtaining the rank of being among the best twenty universities in West Africa in seven years as agendered by his immediate predecessor, Dr. Ophelia I. Weeks two years ago.

"As Graduate students we require you to help us find solutions to the many problems we have. We are tire of finding excuses. Our country is in

need of people like you who will utilize the knowledge they acquired from Graduate education and research to develop their country". Earlier, UL Vice President for Graduate Education and Research, Prof. Dr. Jonathan C.Taylor stressed the urgent need for more people to pursue graduate education and research as a surest way to national development.

"Bachelor degree is not adequate for the advancement of any country like Liberia with most of the sectors devastated by almost two decades of civil conflict. More students

need to take up graduate studies and research to foster the development of Liberia".

Dr. Taylor stressed that for any country to develop, it would need specialized professionals to assume the role of development, adding that graduate studies and research provides that opportunity.

"For any country to develop we need public health specialists, qualified and competent technicians, agriculture experts, environmental and climate change specialists, experts on banking and finance, diplomats and conflict

resolution specialists to drive the development agenda of any nation".

"So your country and iits people depend on you significantly to enhance the development it yearns for after your following your studies at this University", Dr. Taylor urged.

Graduate Education at the University of Liberia began in 1983 with Masters in Regional Planning the first to be offered followed by MBA/MPA IBB, KAICT, and recently iMasters degree in Public Health, Environmental Science and Climate Change

Message From the President

Pg.3 developmental agenda for the University. Areas affected include Academic Affairs, Administration, Student Affairs, and Institutional Development and Planning.

2. Curriculum Review: wherein several reviews were implemented, and the curricula of various academic programs were done including the following:

- a. Revised BSc Junior High Secondary Teachers Education in Science, Math, English, and Social Studies
- b. Revised BSc program in Forestry
- c. Separation of Mining Engineering and Geology
- d. Revised Associate Primary Education and Associate Agriculture Science (Sinje)
- e. Revised BBA, BSc, and BPA programs in Accounting, Economics, Management, and Public Administration

3. The initiation of New Academic Programs that led to the establishment of the following degree granting programs:

- a. BSc in Organic Chemistry
- b. BSc in Analytic Chemistry
- c. Department of Computer and Information Sciences (DCIS)
- d. BSc in Statistics to be supported by the World Bank and the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)
- e. BSc in Biomedical Science, Biochemistry, Microbiology
- f. Department of Architectural Science

4. The completion of the development of the Fendall Land Strategic/Master Plan and a five-year roadmap, to be used for the development of the new University City situated on the 5,800 acres of land in the Fendall Louisiana Township, Montserrado County. We are working with the Liberia Land Authority and our people in Fendall to find a common ground to live together in peace.

5. We have planned and implemented for the first time a Special E-Learning Semester which became significant and imperative due to the lockdown resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Impressively, more than 14,000 of our students registered and participated in this initial undertaking. Going forward, we will continue our programs using the blended learning approach including E-Learning and Face to face at the University of Liberia

6. The establishment and renewal of Partnerships with two local institutions, two regional Universities, and six International Academic Institutions. All intended to foster collaboration through mutual support, faculty, staff, and students exchange programs, amongst others.

7. We have implemented the Re-structuring and staffing of Liberia Institute for Policy Studies and Research (LIPSR), to guide and support the kind of research and proffer policies intended to ignite quality research, resource generation, consultancy, and direct the actions and performances of the university of Liberia to our national pro poor agenda for prosperity and development(PAPD).

8. The Reopening of LUX Radio with a new frequency of 106.5, and a license to operate issued by the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA), so that the general public can have the requisite information and awareness of the dynamic programs and activities of the Flagship State University, as we continue to transform and impact the larger society.

9. The Reassessment and Realignment of the Graduate Programs to undergraduate colleges in conformity to best practices in the world.

10. The Reconstitution of University of Liberia Institutional Review Board (UL-IRB), which is the ethical board responsible to approve, monitor and review biomedical, sociological and behavior research in which humans are used as subjects with the aim of promoting the rights and welfare of research subjects.

11. First in the history of the University of Liberia, Our School of Pharmacy produced hand sanitizers for public consumption. Some of these sanitizers were given to institutions like the Office of the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia upon request, the Ministry of Health, the UL family and others.

12. UL, for the first time, made a Committal on the Decade of Action on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at the observance of the 5th Anniversary of this global development agenda. We are mainstreaming the SDGs in our various activities and events.

Mr. Visitor, Mr. Chair, Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The University FY2020/ 2021 Budget amounts to US\$18,851,375. The Government of Liberia's contribution of US\$16,300,000 or 86.47% of the budget represents the largest contributor to the University's budget and comprises of salaries & allowance to faculty and staff, stipend to medical and pharmacy students and the free- tuition subsidy for Undergraduate Students.

Tuition & fees is the second major contributor to the budget and is quoted at US\$2,325,225 or 12.33% of the budget. Other internal income was projected at US\$226,150 constituting 1.2% of the budget and is a combination of other internal sources including the interest on the UL Endowment Fund, meager fees from transportation of students and income generated from auditorium and cafeteria usage.

Our over dependence on the Government's subsidy during times when we are continuously creating new academic programs, increasing the number of our faculty studying regionally and abroad, couple with the pervasive need to continuously improve our existing facilities, is worrisome. This concern has prompted our drive to expedite the commencement of investment/business activities at the University. The contemporary module of financing



Honor students at the symposium

“See Our Achievement As A Challenge”

Graduating scholars from the University of Liberia (UL) have shared their experiences at a one - day symposium held in Fendall, Louisiana, using the forum to encourage other students to see their achievement as a challenge to persevere, be dedicated and committed in their pursuit of academic excellence.

During the Honors College of Research and Gender Studies symposium on Thursday, February 25, 2021, the first female valedictorian of the Department of Geology since its establishment in the 1970s, J. Venesa Dukuly said her achievement would not have become possible without making efforts towards it.

“This Honors Scholar [program] has taught me a lot of things that I cannot explain here today. Key among them is dedication and commitment,” said Ms. Dukuly, a graduate of the College of Engineering.

She she recalled joining the Honors College in 2017 as sophomore student, saying the expectation that her colleagues had about her was so high until she became nervous on her on test.

“Things that I knew I could easily do, I was like, what if this is not the answer; I am an honors scholar, I need to answer to the best of my ability,” she added.

She thanked the Dean of the Honors College Madam Mamawah Freeman Moore for all she has done for the college, assuring the university authorities that giving back to society is one of the most important things that they have to do, adding “I am one person that is hundred percent willing to always give back.”

Also speaking, scholar Sekou S. Konneh, valedictorian of the Liberia College of Social Sciences and Humanities said they put in time and persevered to achieve academic excellence.

“We want to also encourage our other colleagues who are still out there to see this as a challenge. We did not do this

by miracle. We put in time, perseverance and today we are here,” Konneh said.

He expressed thanks to Madam Moore, Dean of the Honors College for all the work that she has done in making the program a success.

However, Konneh urged faculties of Liberia College to step up a little bit more “because we as Liberia College are little bit lacking,” adding that most of UL’s scholars that sent video messages to scholars back home from foreign universities are from the Science College or the Engineering College.

For his part, scholar Doorbor Blama, expressed gratitude to God and the university administration for bringing them this far.

“And I am also grateful to the President of this great university, the Rev. Dr. Julius S. Nelson, Jr., for all of what he’s doing to take us from nowhere to somewhere,” Doorbor Blama said.

The one - day symposium of the University of Liberia Honors College of Research and Gender Studies ended with a call on scholars to use their acquired gender knowledge to identify institutional problems and recommend solutions.

Delivering the symposium address virtually to an audience in Fendall, Louisiana on Thursday, February 25, 2021, Liberia Chambers of Commerce Secretary General Madam Salamartu Stephanie Duncan described the work of the scholars as a great way to contribute to society by using science and research for a sustainable human future.

“I want to thank you all for what you do and I hope you will use your knowledge to help forge [a] gender - equal world by choosing the challenge and calling out discrimination,” she urged the honors scholars, relating her statement to the theme of this year’s International Women’s Day celebration -- “Choose The Challenge.”

She noted that throughout the entire month of March, there will be celebration of International Women’s Day in recognition of their contri-

butions to society.

“This is the time of the year that you will hear the word ‘gender’ used more than any other time,” said Madam Duncan, as she emphasized that the goal is to help forge a gender - equal world by celebrating women’s achievements and increasing their visibility.

According to Madam Duncan, the one - day Honors College symposium showcased the graduating scholars’ research skills and ability, adding that it is also another reminder that they are now cleared to achieve their life purpose.

Giving reference to the Capstone Bachelors’ Studies, Madam Duncan noted that since the 1990s, there has been a 300 percent increase in the number of gender studies graduates, describing that as very exciting.

The symposium speaker told the audience that throughout her journey for gender equality and her time in Liberia as a girl, she didn’t know that the Honors College of Gender and Research existed. But she thanked the university for the work being done.

Making remarks as special guest during the Honors College of Research and Gender Studies’ 5th symposium in Fendall, Liberia Macroeconomic Policy Analysis Center (LIMPAC) Executive Director, Mr. Del Francis Wreh, pledged a fully equipped research lab for Honors College of Research and Gender Studies at the University of Liberia on behalf of his institution.

Mr. Wreh said the research lab will help scholars, who may not have the necessary working tools, do their projects.

“If that person is also challenged that he doesn’t understand how to run a simple linear regression model, but in the lab [it] will bring together everybody that has the knowledge, and that person can utilize that knowledge of his friend that is ahead of him,” he added.

Please visit www.ul.edu.lr for on this story.

Several Faculty Authors Honored

Pg. 8 M. Zinnah, Ph.D., Professor and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Josephus M. Gray, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Dean of Liberia College; Associate Professor Eva Mappy Morgan, LL.M.; Dr. Eugene Shannon, Ph.D.; Dr. Lester Z. Tenny, Associate Professor of UL Graduate Studies Program in MBA. The list also includes Dr. James McClain, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Dean of Science College; Assistant Professor Thomas Kaydor, M.Sc. (Ph.D. candidate) and Academic Coordinator of UL Graduate School; Mamadou L. Bah, Ph.D., Assistant

Professor of the IBB Graduate Studies Program and Assistant Professor Johnson J. Gely, Ph.D., among other distinguished professors and instructors.

The 31 faculty members were all recipients of cash and prestigious Certificate of Scholastic Recognition having acquired honor in academic excellence through peer-reviewed publications at their respective colleges, graduate studies and professional schools.

Three of the 31 honorees hold the rank of full professorship while five hold the rank of associate professor. Also, the honorees included

13 assistant professors and nine holders of instructor rank.

Further, the list of the distinguished honorees included 15 Ph.D holders, one LL.M Degree holder and 15 holders of M.Sc. Degree. The university has more than 800 faculty members, who are full-time and adjunct faculty.

The inaugural recognition ceremony recognized the outstanding accomplishments of University of Liberia professors and instructors, as part of activities marking the 101st commencement.

Please visit www.ul.edu.lr for for on this story.

Message From the President

Pg. 6 tertiary education globally calls for the University to actively pursue profitable ventures with the aim of supplementing Government's subvention. For this purpose, the University has identified various investment initiatives that have the potential of generating revenue to augment Government's subsidy under the Lux Investment Corporation. Three of those projects are: The LUX Printing Press, the LUX Fountain (a water bottling company) and the LUX Insurance Company. Feasibility studies including business plans for each of these projects are completed and the Corporation has been duly registered. We are currently sourcing funding for these projects and have estimated the start-up cost at US\$3 Million.

A startup of these investment initiatives will reduce the university's over reliance on government's subvention.

We wish to express our thanks and appreciation to the Government of Liberia led by the Visitor of the University, His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah, for the continuous support to the sustenance of the University, particularly with the timely and regular payment of salaries including during the heat of the covid-19 pandemic when we were all lockdown, as well as the continued budgetary support to the existing free tuition policy. Mr. President, we salute you, and want you to know that we remain forever grateful for your leadership.

Mr. President, members of the graduating class, ladies and gentlemen.

We are proud to announce that through various partnerships/scholarships, we have a total of eleven (11) faculty members who have returned from studies with ten masters' degrees and one doctorate degree, this year in various disciplines. Two are females and nine are males. We also have a total of twelve (12) faculty members who left this past year for studies including seven (7) Ph.Ds. and five (5) Masters. To date, we have a total of forty-six (46) faculty members perusing studies abroad from 2015 - present, including twenty-three (23) doing Ph.Ds., twenty-one (21) doing Masters, and two (2) doing Bachelors.

Today, we wish to appreciate and congratulate all of our graduates. We are aware that the challenges have ranged far and wide for all including faculty, staff, administrators, students, and all. But we remain grateful to the Almighty God for the perseverance and discipline to remain focused until we reach this landmark of the 101st Commencement Convocation.

Members of this 101st graduating class - Meni-Nina,

It has been said, wisely, that the success of

our society and our democracy rests upon our willingness to think of each other, and not only ourselves. My hope and expectation is that you will embrace this principle ... That you will step up in your communities ... That you will take on the solemn responsibility of leadership.

You are uniquely qualified to take on this special role. Your academic achievements have been combined with the tradition of civic engagement that goes to the heart of UL's identity - a tradition so many of you has embraced directly.

Mark Twain advised that the secret to getting ahead is getting started. Your years at the University of Liberia have already gotten you started - with experience in your chosen professional fields and experience in being active citizens of Liberia and the world.

These are uncertain times in many ways. But I feel so much more confident about our future - simply by knowing that you, our graduates, will be part of it.

There is no script or manual for life's journey. Wherever you go, go with all your heart. Stand up to your fear. Keep the focus for your dream. If opportunity doesn't knock, create an opportunity for yourself and keep moving on.

Continue to play your role as you transition into the Alumni Association and give back to your alma mater as the years go by. Let your light so shine in Liberia, in Africa, yea, in the World.

Congratulation and God's blessings

Long live our students!

Long live our 101st graduating class (Meni-Nina)!

Long live our faculty members!

Long live our Administrative Directors!

Long live our Chairpersons and Coordinators!

Long live our Deans and Academic Coordinators!

Long live our Senior Management Team!

Long live the Alumni Association!

Long live our Nation's premier Institution of Higher Learning!

Long live the Board of Trustees!

Long live the Visitor and President of the Republic of Liberia!

Long live our Sweet Land of Liberty, the Republic of Liberia!

Thank you!

Prof. Dr. Julius Julukon Sarwolo Nelson, Jr.
15th President, University of Liberia
3rd March 2021

AAUL Admits New Members

ing Day following the holding of a series of activities in honor of its late president Mr. James S. Davis, II, to commemorate the day.

The late AAUL President Mr. James S. Davis in whose honor this year's alumni celebration was held died on January 3, 2021 while he was still serving his term following his election in 2013.

During the indoor program on Capitol Hill, panelists and other speakers suggested innovative ways that Alumni members can serve as ambassadors of the university and contribute to institutional development processes underway at their alma mater and in the country at large.

The AAUL officially presented to the President of the University of Liberia (UL) Rev. Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson a trophy that it won from the sporting activities it held in the previous week leading to the association's Homecoming Day.

Members of the AAUL including graduands attired in UL alumni T-shirts and caps of different colors, paraded through the principal streets of Monrovia with the University's Band, and marched on to the main campus.

The indoor program included a panel discussion on the Role of the Alumni in the Development of the University, featuring UL Vice President for Institutional Development Prof. Weade Kobbah - Boley, veteran Liberian journalist and publisher Atty. Philip N. Wesseh of the privately run Inquirer Newspaper and Assistant

Professor Thomas Kaydor, Academic Coordinator, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB) Graduate School, University of Liberia.

To kick off the alumni activities ahead of UL's 101st commencement celebration, the AAUL earlier on Saturday, February 13, 2021, held a sporting tournament in memory of the alumni's late president, Mr. James S. Davis, II.

As part of the celebration of the alumni homecoming, a beach retreat was held on Sunday, February 14, 2021 at the Afro Beach in Paynesville where topics including "Building on the Legacy of the late James S. Davis, II, and Moving the AAUL Forward to Another Level" were discussed.

In a special statement during the Homecoming Day celebration, the President of the University of Liberia Rev. Dr. Julius Julukon Sarwolo Nelson thanked members of the AAUL for their contributions to their alma mater.

On behalf of the administration, Dr. Nelson expressed appreciation and gratitude to the alumni homecoming day keynote speaker Cllr. Tiawon S. Gongloe, President of the Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA) and the three panelists for their various suggestions on the role that the AAUL should play in the life of the University of Liberia.

He said he took notes of their suggestions and recommendations to move the university forward as the leadership strives in its development enterprises.

The UL President announced at the program that the AAUL in North America, the Americas and other chapters are shipping additional educational materials for the university which are expected to be received in March this year.

In a special way, Dr. Nelson remembered the late president of the AAUL, Mr. James S. Davis, II. and the UL Board of Trustees.

Additionally, Dr. Nelson disclosed to the audience that the William R. Tolbert, Jr., College of Agriculture and Forestry has already given to the UL Administration a very strategic direction and a quick impact project that will respond very soon right after the commencement celebration.

Dr. Nelson said they will engage the World Bank which has challenged the university

to invest in the agriculture sector with the College of Agriculture and Forestry at the nation's premier university.

As members of the AAUL celebrated the Centennial Homecoming Day, Dr. Nelson also urged those who are not actively involved in alumni activities to come and join the association and give their support, saying the university needs their commitment and dedication as they develop themselves to develop the university city in Fendall, Louisiana, Montserrat County. *Please visit www.ul.edu.lr for for on this story.*

UL Boosts Workforce

University of Liberia is placing premium on research both for faculty and students. You will recall last week we honored over 33 faculty members that have done well over the last two years for publishing their work in international peer review and journals.

"We are also encouraging students to take up the challenge because by next year every student coming out of the university will do a project to expose them to how to do research."

"No matter how elementary it is, how you decide on the research

topic, the literature review, we will expose students in doing research so that when they leave the university for another institution they wouldn't catch difficulty," Dr. Zinnah stated.

Dr. Zinnah has meanwhile, commended the Government of Liberia for supporting the UL especially during the height of the coronavirus, stating, "Government has been nice to us through its support to train qualified men and women but you know we are doing eLearning, blending the eLearning with face-to-face it means we need good internet services, good computer labs.

Those are some of the challenges we have for which we will continue to seek more support for the university."

He disclosed that classes will resume on Monday, February 8, 2021, attributing the delay to the ongoing commencement activities.

"We agreed that we will start on the 8th of February. We going to have a blended face to face class of eLearning based on our experience last semester with new have new programs coming on board," Dr. Zinnah revealed.

Visitor Graces Convocation

The Visitor of the University of Liberia, His Excellency, Dr. George Manneh

Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia, along with senior government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, will today, March 3, 2021, attend the 101st Commencement Convocation at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports bringing to three commencement visits since he became president.

Sources close to the Executive mansion revealed that President Weah is

expected to deliver a speech focusing on the overarching theme of the class of 'Meni Nina' (new beginning) and the role of university graduates in

contributing positively to the actualization of the national development plan, the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development.

The sources further hint that the president will seize the opportunity to further

expand on the government's agenda for the University of Liberia for an improved environment for teaching and learning.

"See Our Achievement As A Challenge" Pg.6

Val of Liberia College Urges Colleagues at Honors College Symposium



Campus Review

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For more information, visit our website at www.ul.edu.lr



UL faculty authors with President Nelson (back row, middle, in gold-colored suit), Dr. Zinnah (left of Dr. Nelson) and Dr. Taylor (left of Dr. Nelson) at the end of the honoring program

Several Faculty Authors Honored For Peer-reviewed Publications

In recognition of academic excellence through peer-reviewed publications at their respective col-

leges, the University of Liberia (UL) has certificated 31 of its faculty authors for their scholarly works, with a call on others who have devel-

oped the thought, but have been hesitant to now put their thoughts into words and actions.

Their publications covered

the period from academic years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.

Those honored were Dr. Moses **Pg.7**

"Meni Nina," The Class Of New Beginning



(L-R) Comptroller General, Secretary General, President, Financial Secretary, and Vice President

The name "Meni Nina," chosen by the 101st graduating class of the University of Liberia (UL) is a language from the Kpelle dialect in Liberia that means "New Beginning."

The graduating class of 2020 has a total membership of 3,312, with about 35 to 40 percent **Pg.4**

Rest on, Nancy



The University of Liberia expresses heartfelt sympathies to the family, loved ones and friends of the late Nancy Miller who died on February 25, 2021 along with seven other family members in Paynesville. She was a member of the "Meni Nina" Class of 2020 who graduated on Wednesday, February, 24, 2021. May her soul and those of all faithfully departed rest in peace.

AAUL Celebrates 100th Homecoming

Honors Fallen President

The Alumni Association of the University of Liberia (AAUL) on Friday, February 19, 2021 celebrated in grand style, its 100th Homecoming Day during which it received 3,312 new members presented by UL Vice President for Students Affairs Prof. Sekou Konneh for their admission into the Alumni Association of the University of Liberia (UL).

The AAUL said it graded very highly, its 100th Homecom- **Pg.7**



AAUL members parade the streets of Monrovia (ending on Capitol Hill Campus) in commemoration of its centennial homecoming which was dedicated to fallen President James Davis