



NKUMBA UNIVERSITY'S 25TH GRADUATION CEREMONY-THURSDAY 26TH OCTOBER, 2023

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH

- **Our Chief Guest Rt. Hon. Annita Among - Speaker of Parliament of Uganda**
- **NU Chancellor – Mr. Emmanuel Katongole**
- **Chairperson and Members of the Foundation Body**
- **Chairperson and Members of Board of Trustees**
- **Chairperson and Members of University Council**
- **Members of University Management and Staff**
- **Members of University Senate**
- **The Vice-Chancellors of Sister institutions present**
- **The Guild President and his cabinet**
- **Distinguished Guests**
- **Graduating class of 2023 and Students present**
- **My Dear Wife**
- **All other Protocols Observed**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning!**

It is with immense pleasure and honour that I welcome you to the 25th Graduation Ceremony of Nkumba University.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Chief Guest, Rt. Hon. Annet Anita Among, the Speaker of Parliament of Uganda, for gracing our ceremony with her presence. History will indeed have it that a person of her stature witnessed Nkumba University celebrate its 25th cohort of graduates.

In the same vein, I take pleasure in thanking the University Foundation Body, Board of Trustees, Council, Senate, Management, Staff, and the Alumni. Your dedication and service to this institution have played a crucial role in bringing us to this day. Thank you.

We commend everyone who has been there and walked toe-to-toe with our Graduands through their academic journeys to-date, especially our dear Parents, Guardians, Friends and Family. Thank you for not relenting.

What is happening today is more than just a ceremony. Whether a graduand, a lecturer or family member here to celebrate, graduation is an exciting time for everyone. Turn to your neighbour and say, **'Yes, we made it.** Riley King, an American song writer once said, **"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you"**. All graduands here can attest to the fact that their hard-earned achievements today will forever be attached to their names. Congratulations and well-done. Nkumba University and in no doubt, your family and friends are proud of your achievements.

Graduation Statistics



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Mr. Chancellor Sir, the Graduands that the senate will present to you shortly have been equipped with not only knowledge but also skills in their respective disciplines. They have been trained to become job creators and also to successfully navigate the work space with ease.

For this graduation ceremony, a total of 1857 students will be awarded degrees, diplomas, and certificates of Nkumba University in their respective disciplines. Of these, 53% are females, and males constitute 47%. 15 Graduands will receive Doctorate, 236 Masters, 185 Postgraduate Diplomas, 997 Bachelor's degrees, 247 Diplomas, and 177 certificates.

Teaching and Research

The Chief Guest and Mr. Chancellor Sir, I would like to inform you that Nkumba University (NU) is taking Capacity building for staff at Maser and PhD very seriously. All full-time staff who registers for PhD, their tuition fees is 100% waived off, and 50% for all those admitted for any Master Programme. This has tremendously improved our PhD holders at NU and today we have ... of them graduating with PhDs and ... with Masters. We thank the University Council for their decision to waive fees for staff in order to build adequate capacity at the institution.

In the last one year, NU has signed and renewed multiple MOUs with Universities and organisations from across the world. Some of these include; **AWL and Beagle** from Germany, **Holon Institute of Technology** (HIT) from Israel, **Dreseden University** from Germany, **Vives University** from Belgium, **University of Viena** from Austria, **Johanneum University** from Austria, **Altverde University** from Belgium, **Protestant University of Applied Science** from Germany, **INTI University** Malaysia, **Mildmay Institute of Health Sciences**, **MasterCard Foundation**, **Cyber Schools Technologies**, **Nile One** as Virtual Reality Developing Company, among others. These MOUs are supporting multiple partnerships in form of student and staff exchange, research undertaking and Capacity building.

In fact, for the very first time in the history of Nkumba University, the Mace bearer is Mira Verstraete an International student from our partner institution, **Altverde University in Belgium**.

To add, the partnership between MasterCard Foundation and Cyber School Technologies conveyed a state-of-the-art e-learning studio to Nkumba University. The content digitalization studio is now boasting both teaching and learning.

The Chief Guest and Mr. Chancellor Sir, NU has clearly laid out a very ambitious Master Plan to support it in revamping the teaching, learning and research environment. The master plan has also designated land for the establishment of a teaching and community hospital. Through you Our Chief Guest and on behalf of the University, I earnestly seek partnership with the government to bring this hospital to reality.

This partnership will certainly have far-reaching benefits, impacting the lives of over 100,000 individuals residing within Nkumba, Kasenyi, and the surrounding villages and also serve as a training ground for health practitioners who are very much needed by this region.



In a special way, allow me thank the Chancellor who is working tirelessly with his Rotary WASH Institute taskforce to make sure that NU receives the first WASH Institute in Africa. In a few months, an Endowment Fund will be launched as one vehicle to support NU in realizing the Master Plan.

To Graduands, as you embark on your new journey, I want you to keenly master the following in reference to our graduation theme **“Positioning Oneself for Excellence in the 21st Century.”**

1. Leverage Networking to Unlock Opportunities

Connect with influential alumni and professionals in your field. According to a LinkedIn survey, approximately 85% of jobs are filled through networking. Attend industry events, join relevant online communities, and build meaningful relationships. These connections can provide insights, mentorship, and even job referrals that might not be advertised in the labour market.

2. Develop a Continuous Learning Culture and Skills acquisition

The job market is highly competitive, with technology rapidly changing industries. Statistics show that individuals who invest in continuous learning earn 50% more over their careers. Keep acquiring new skills, certifications, or advanced degrees to stay relevant. Consider online courses, workshops, or further education opportunities to enhance your skill set. Remember, Nkumba University's doors are still wide open.

3. Customize Your Application Approach

Research job market trends in your field. On average, recruiters spend only 7 seconds reviewing a resume. Tailor your applications and resume to match job descriptions and industry-specific keywords. Use data and statistics to quantify your achievements on your resume this will make you stand out. Additionally, consider creating a professional online presence through multiple online tools such as LinkedIn, showcasing your skills and accomplishments. By doing all these, you can increase your chances of success in the competitive labour market and position yourself as a valuable asset to potential employers.

4. Learn to give back

It takes the whole village to raise a man, this means your graduation success has been a communal effort involving your parents, guardians and communities. Never forsake those that have supported you and always find ways to give back or support a cause you are passionate about. Most importantly, always remember your Alma matar as an alumnus.

Conclusion



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Lastly, we have come to the end of this particular academic journey, but allow me to re-echo the words of Dr. Theodor Seusshe an American Author who once said, **“Sometimes, you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory.”**

There will be moments when you will reflect on the challenges you encountered during your academic journey here, time and money invested, and sacrifices made. During those moments, I implore you to remember the words of former US president- Benjamin Franklin, who once said, **“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”** May your achievement today be a replica of the best interest for the successes yet to come!

I Owe You

Prof. Jude T Lubega,

Vice Chancellor - Nkumba University.