



Fall Newsletter

October, November and December 2011

From the Office of the President

The office concentrated on preparing for a successful inauguration of the university college understanding that the inauguration was a time to celebrate not only the end of the building phase but also those who contributed financially, technically and in prayer.

The office made sure not to lose the moment. Every effort had to be exercised to complete the various activities before the event. In this regard, with the construction aspect not progressing as fast as planned, Mr. Niek Hoffius, the Manager of the project, had to come from Holland to speed up the pace. The landscaping was remarkably done by our own hired daily labor. The sidewalks and the road work progressed well with some improvements. We received the first batch of text books from India. Considering the accreditation of the institution last July and the plan to start the college after the inauguration, the

advertising about the university college by the media was launched. The office prepared the publicity material like the brochures and the advertisements maintaining a certain theme and image. We thought we needed to communicate our brand well. The ads hit a cord as people saw the high standards. Calls for admission began to be registered through our newly installed wireless phones.



His Excellency, the President of Ethiopia, making the key note speech during the inauguration.

The inauguration occurred on the morning of October 15 in the brand new auditorium with 500 guests attending the ceremony. His Excellency, the President of Ethiopia, Ato Girma Wolde Giorgis, was the guest of honor. Our friends from the Netherlands, the UK and the USA came in large numbers and were full of cheer seeing a work of their goodwill end in such a happy way. Various dignitaries from the federal government, the city and the diplomatic community were present. The children's choir of Hope sang a note of thanks and one that focused on Ethiopia's transformation. Ato Abraham Fisseha, a board member, being the master of ceremony, introduced the various speakers. Mr. Negash Kebede, the chairman of the Board of Hope Enterprises, made the welcoming speech. Then Dr. Minas Hiruy, introduced as one who had the vision of the college and who worked very hard to have the college raised up with the cooperation of many friends from Ethiopia and abroad, gave the opening speech. Mr. Jan Lock, the CEO of Woord & Daad, which was the major donor to the university college, spoke regarding the university college as its largest single project and congratulating Dr. Minas and Hope Enterprises for a job well done. Mr. Tom Borowiecki, the Manager of Ethiopiaid, which is the principal sponsor, made another speech thanking all for the achievement to date.



Mr. Henk de Pagter, the sponsor of the library and a member of the Construction Consortium, gave a detailed speech on the role of the construction consortium and on the contribution of Dr. Minas Hiruy as the central figure in getting the project completed. Given this recognition, the Consortium gave Dr. Minas a trophy. A letter was read from Menlo Park Presbyterian Church of the US, a major donor, congratulating the university college and Dr. Minas for an enviable achievement. Finally, the President of the country made the keynote speech thanking Dr. Minas for what he had done and Hope Enterprises for this recent contribution. Following the speech, the President gave awards of trophies and certificates to all the donors, organizations and individuals who contributed in one way or another. After the award phase, the guests were thanked for coming and requested to visit the campus and enjoy some merriment.

Soon after the inauguration, Dr Minas held a meeting with the Dutch businessmen that came for the inaugural ceremony and had contributed finances for the construction. Being appreciative of the achievements in completing the construction of HUC, the businessmen promised to offer a donation that will be used for the purchase or production of artwork that will be installed in a conspicuous place in the college. Dr Minas was to present the specific plan for the artwork. The businessmen also stressed the importance of a maintenance plan and budget for the facilities of the college. Dr. Minas told them that this plan and imple-



mentation modality was already in place under the facilities management officer. On October 17, Ms. Marike de Kloe, Manager of the Educational Programs of Woord en Daad, Mr. Joop De Jong, a businessman and a member of the Advisory Council, and Mr. Gert Wim Stoffer, a faculty member of Dronen University of Holland, had a meeting with the faculty of Hope University College. The faculty presented their implementation plan of Competency-Based Education (CBE) and discussion was held on the quality and level of support needed in executing CBE in the University College.

The various organs of the university college did their part to prepare for the start of the university college. The inauguration got wide media coverage with a number of interviews involving particularly Dr. Minas. The reactions of the public were great seeing the initiative as a great response to the many gaps in higher education in Ethiopia. Classes started on November 21, 2011, a time when all the other institutions of higher learning in the country also commenced. Enrollment made it to the allowed number of 250 students, who applied in greater numbers as our publicity did its work. With classes running smoothly, the university college began to acquire an image, which led it to be invited to a number of public events. One event that it took part in was in the 6th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day on December 5. This involved 15 of our students who paraded through the exhibition center dressed in various ethnic clothes of the country and waving the sign of HUC.. We then ran an exhibition on the various aspects of the university college for four days after that in the center. Another event that the university college was invited to was a national conference for private colleges arranged by the Ministry of Education. The university college hosted the high brass of the city government of Addis Ababa in its auditorium on December 25 with over 500 people being in attendance. This service introduced the university college to the community as all who came expressed their marvel at what has been invested for many bright minds of Ethiopia.

In a meeting that was attended by four advisory board members on October 17, 2011, issues related to the role and organization of meetings of the advisory board were discussed. It was agreed to change the name from advisory board to advisory council (AC) in order to avoid confusion of names with board of directors of Hope Enterprises. It was also stressed that the AC's role will remain advising the management of HUC in academic matters. Greater Horn of Africa Regional Alliance's spring meeting was held from October 11 to 14 in Debre Zeit. The meeting covered many agendas including developing monitoring and evaluation tools for programs, baseline survey results and others. HUC was represented by Ms. Kumneger Fikre.

Academic Affairs

The recruitment of students for admission was undertaken in Addis Ababa and Dessie following a nationwide TV advertisement. Two teams appointed by the Senate served as recruitment agents in both cities. There were a total of 530 applicants. The admission committee screened these applicants based on admission scores and need and submitted its recommendations to the Senate. In the regular day program though there were 250 students who were initially enrolled, three students withdrew leaving us with 247 students (51% being women, or 125 of the total number).



From the Registrar's office, we learned that of those screened for admission only 84 students could pay their subsidized tuition fees of Birr 1,800 per semester per student despite our assumption that we would get 125 students to come on a fee payment basis. Considering the low enrollment that we were allowed to entertain, our total tuition cost per semester per student was Birr 11,250.00. The remaining 163 students came on a student loan or deferred payment basis considering their inability to pay for their tuition. Woord & Daad covered the tuition cost of 125 needy students. This meant that we would have to raise the funding for tuition for 38 students and the balance of the subsidized tuition payment.



Soon after, demands for the opening of night school were made particularly from our growing and modern village, Lebu. In the light of this demand, the Senate discussed whether or not to open night school. In the discussion, it was pointed out that virtually all of the students wanted to study either accounting or information systems. Considering that opening this would send a good signal for subsequent semesters, it was decided to have night school in the two fields on a fee payment basis. We had 48 students begin, 48% being women. The staff of the faculties of business on one hand and of information sciences on the other prepared the lesson plans for the night school and

faculty was deployed mainly from the existing staff with additional payment on a credit hour basis. All students were assigned a faculty advisor.

The chairpersons of the departments were appointed with their names being Ms. Yordanos Legesse for the Department of Accounting and Finance; Mr. Temesgen G/Igziabher for the Department of Marketing Management; Mr. Arega Teferi for the Department of Business Management and Entrepreneurship; Mr. Bililign Teferi for the Department Information Technology; and Mr. Asrate Mulat for the Department of Information Systems. Mr. Nigatu Legesse was appointed as the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Business replacing the previous dean who resigned for personal reasons.



Partial view of the Senate in action

Dr. Adinew Alemayehu continued as the Dean of Information Sciences. Ms. Kumneger Fikre was assigned to serve as the Acting Dean of Student Life. Ms. Meron Eshetu became the Assistant Registrar and Mr. Sileshi Worku became the acting Chief Librarian. The Senate, which was instituted with the election of the electable members, became active in planning for the commencement of the university college. Each department was organized and proposed its department chair, which were endorsed by the management. Each department also designated a team to implement the competency based education strategy.



The first day of school was a time of excitement for all of us seeing so many students and reading their readiness to learn. A number of orientations were given on general issues of being a college student and on specific issues like how to use the library, the computers and the internet.

The big challenge during the quarter was the capacity of the students to take on the disciplines in their major areas considering the absence of a freshman program. In this regard deficiencies in English and mathematics made learning hard and in the light of this problem the Senate is in discus-

sion on what to do by ways of remedial intervention.

Given contractual stipulations, the university college underscored the need for the faculty to be on campus full-time. An understanding was made to such effect and business proceeded with what we considered to be a successful start. The sound and sight of young people everywhere on campus and their motivation to learn was very encouraging. Dr. Doug and Betty Holland, who joined the university college full-time, made enormous contribution in the academic area. Both were also instrumental in recruiting additional expatriate staff. The ICT policy was revised and adopted using ICT infrastructure for strictly learning and teaching. It was great to see our students use this opportunity. We learned that most of them have not had access to computers and the internet. Running the best of digital connectivity in the country, a number of leaders from institutions of higher learning visited us and marveled at what was invested.

Student Life



Students were provided with general information regarding the various student development programs and services available at the college. The neediest of students were introduced to work study to help them with their finances. Work study is a program envisioned by Dr. Minas Hiruy with the objective of developing a positive attitude towards earning one's way out of need. There was hesitation about this program initially. After Dr. Minas underscored that there is no free lunch and that he himself went to school by working his way through, attitudes changed.

Assuming to pay an average per hour daily wage, Dr. Minas raised Birr 207,000.00 from Woord and Daad to cover the expenses of this fund for two academic years and the program started targeting those students who were strapped for cash to meet their basic needs. The various offices of the college were approached to submit their need for student help and then the matching was done based on interest, ability and experience. Students were allowed to work up to 15 hours per week on campus depending on the gravity of their poverty and many signed up. It was great to see a total of 48 students involved in cleaning, gardening, and clerical work in the library, the computer room, the various offices and campus security. Some students were involved in giving tutorials. Considering the high standard of the university college, many students showed hardship in catching up. This triggered some anxiety among the students and counseling was given by both the faculty advisors and the Dean of Student life. Many of the students admitted on a student loan basis began to express difficulty in making ends meet despite our provisions of work study. This led us to have a lunch program for 40 students during school day using funding that the staff and some of the rest of the students contributed. The Ladders of Hope cooperated by selling to us the lunch for the cited number of students at cost. This intervention has helped.

Based on the guidelines stated in the charter, the Student Parliament was formed with five male and five female students. The first meeting of the parliament was held on December 16, 2011 at the Office of Student Life. During this meeting, the parliament representatives elected their officers, who were Fisseha Kassaye, Helen Arega and Wondimu W/Michael as Speaker, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.



Construction, Equipping and Furnishing



The contractor, China Jiangsu, has been quite lax in its performance unable to take care of the faults noted during the provisional handover of the buildings in phase one, dragging its feet in finishing the auditorium and the technical services building. In view of this indifference, we threatened to charge for penalty and call for arbitration. The consultant advised us not to take such action suggesting instead the serving of a note for things to be completed before the end of September. For the sake of an amicable end, we took the advice of the consultant only to find out that the delays continued. In the meantime, the water pump came from China early in December and the contractor did not install it despite our agreement for it to do so before the end of the year. By the end of December, it was clear that the work on the technical services building was almost done while the improvements that needed



to be addressed were not attended to. Late in November, our bus finally made it to campus. It was checked by our facilities management manager, Mr. Adamu Assefa, who did some repair work. By the end of the year, most of the remaining IT and IP telephony hardware were brought in from Customs. The remaining items were in the airport being processed for release. Most of the furnishing was also received thanks to the efforts of Ethio-Dutch Furniture.

The university college's bus in front of the guest house for international staff

Administration and Finance

As the quarter started, the university college had a total of 54 staff members. Dr. Doug and Betty Holland came on October 20, 2011 to serve as directors of quality assurance and coordinator of cross-cutting courses, respectively. They also brought donations of seven laptops, a bar code reader and other materials from their church in Arizona, USA.

In order to run the operation of the university for the 2011/12 academic year, a budget for Birr 8,349,567.00 was submitted. Of this amount it was expected to get Birr 4,250,000.00 from Woord & Daad for the sponsorship of tuition and room and board for 125 needy students and Birr 2,879,567.00 from Ethiopiaid as Seed grant. Woord and Daad was willing to fund only the tuition for the amount birr 3,258,100.00. Ethiopiaid responded with a provision of 150,000 Pounds for both the university college and the Ladders of Hope with the decision of who gets what having to be made by the Board of Hope. Assuming an even split, it is expected that the university college's share will be about Birr 1,900,000.00. With rising expenses following particularly the hefty raise in staff salary on one hand and lessened income from what was expected by ways of donations and tuition fees, the university college had a deficit of about Birr 1,770,000.00.

In the light of continuing inflation which hovered around 40%, demands for salary increase were made by the staff at different times. The management studied what other university colleges were paying. The faculty pointed to the income it lost for being required to be on campus during the eight hours of work. Moonlighting while at work has been a big challenge. The management studied what the income loss was from the avoidance of job hopping during the work day and came up with an average figure of monthly earning. Considering the need to retain staff, it then recommended a 25% across the board increase and an additional 15% increase for the faculty to compensate for the lost income in being on campus full time. This proposal was approved by the Board effective from October 1.

Respectfully Submitted,

Minas Hiruy
President

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How you can help

The vision of HUC is to provide quality education that produces graduates who combine knowledge, skills and values to contribute to the renewal and transformation of Ethiopia. HUC believes all students should be in a setting where they develop a love of learning driven by creativity and curiosity, and also a desire to make their communities a place of hope, justice, peace and progress.

We value each student and desire to involve them in an educational process that develops them to their full potential. In this initiative, we believe that no student who has the thirst for learning should be left behind. For students of financial need, we are currently looking for student sponsorships for the 2012-2013 academic year.

For more information or to make a donation, please visit our website or contact us in our office. Thank you for your support!