

# CHANCELLOR COLLEGE BULLETIN



**Professor Richard Tambulasi**  
1977 – 2021

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## Celebrating lives

At times, some things are difficult to do, such as writing this editorial. As we write this, the wounds are still raw. Every key stroke is like a reminder of the pain that we go through. It is always our wish when writing the *Chanco Bulletin* that we shall publicise the positive news about Chancellor College, so that we can continue to be a beacon of light to the nation, in line with our 'Let our light shine' motto. Alas, that is not always possible.

Since the last issue of the *Chanco Bulletin*, the Chancellor College community has been dealt heavy blows that it continues to reel from. We have since lost several members of staff, including the Principal, Professor Richard Tambulasi. Additionally, as a community, and indeed as a country, we have suffered many other losses, and continue to do so on a daily basis.

And so we find ourselves writing yet again of Covid-19, a narrative that we all sorely wish would come to an end.

Everyone is hurting, in their own way.

It is very difficult, but we must still refocus. There are still lectures to be held, research to be conducted, seminar talks to be given, projects to be conducted, even in the midst of our grief. We owe it to those that have gone before us to continue the good work that they began.

This is a truth that our leadership realizes, hence the decision by the college management to marshal all its staff together, to maintain the spirit of unity that has always held us together, so that we continue to forge ahead. In his statement to the college following the Principal's death, the Acting Principal reminded the college that one way of honouring the late Professor Tambulasi would be to continue the spirit of hard work that he had exemplified.

And so we forge on. Marking of exams is currently underway. Soon, we shall have assessment meetings, and before we know it, the college shall be opened again. Already there is a bustle of activity on the campus, with personnel from MANEB marking MSCE exams. The

college grounds are being cleared of wildly spreading grass, hedges are being trimmed restoring beauty to the campus, and new plants are being systematically planted around. Further, new staff are being hired, a continual infusion of new life into the college. We are slowly breaking out of the paralysis that had gripped us.

We honor those who have gone before us by living our lives today.

Indeed we mourn them but we also celebrate their lives, grateful for the times they shared with us.

### EDITORIAL TEAM:

Associate Prof. Ken Lipenga Jr  
(Chief Editor)

Prof. Samson Sajidu  
(Acting Principal)

Mr Alfred Banda

Mr Gervasio Manyungwa

Mr James Ngwenya

Mr Felix Mwalemba



# Lecturers receive laptops from college

One of the more positive events to occur at Chancellor College at the start of the year was the disbursing of laptops among lecturers to help them with their work. Management decided to disburse the laptops in two phases. The first phase was in January 2021 whereas the second phase was in February 2021.

The laptops are coming at a time when many institutions are offering online

teaching. However, according to the Acting College ICT Director, Ms Bridget Nyirongo, the laptops are meant to assist with both online teaching and learning as well as the face-to-face method. When receiving the laptops, staff had to sign a document stipulating terms and conditions in line with public asset management guidelines.

The laptops were supplied by Globe Computer Systems, which was selected

using a restricted tender procurement process advertised on the PPDA website under Covid-19 issues. There are 300 laptops that have been purchased by the college. According to Nyirongo, there was a particular kind of specification requested by the college. "At a minimum, in our context, we needed a laptop with 8GB RAM and with at least core i7 processor and 1TB storage, which will easily be compatible and easily supported in our setting. This could be brands such as HP and Lenovo," she said. The laptops have been installed with a variety of applications for the users, including Microsoft Windows 10 Operating System, Original Microsoft Office 2019 (with a lifetime license), PDF reader, ESET antivirus, and Google Chrome.

Going forward, the ICT Section will be providing technical care assistance in conjunction with the supplier, since the laptops have a warranty of 1 year.

Most lecturers expressed appreciation and felt motivated upon receiving the laptops, given that this is something that has never happened before at Chancellor College.



*Collecting laptops at the ICT*

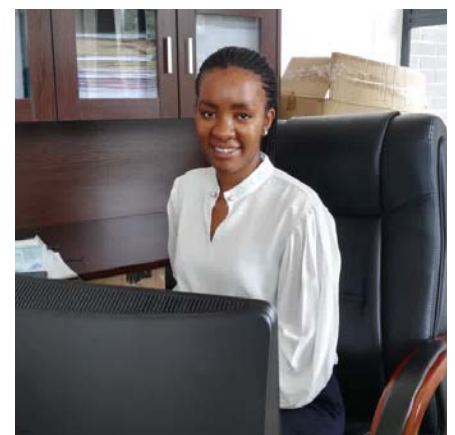
## Chanco migrates to MAREN

In the past few months, the college has been expanding through infrastructure construction around the campus. However, there are some other developments that have been occurring, although they are not immediately visible. One of these is the fact that the campus now has faster internet than before, thanks to the college's decision to join the Malawi Research and Education Network (MAREN).

MAREN was founded in October 2005 to offer a single focus for pursuing excellent Internet connectivity for the Tertiary Education and Research Sectors in Malawi. It builds on the head start offered by the Malawi Library and Information Consortium (MALICO) VSATs network but aims to go further by providing fast fibre connectivity linked to neighbouring countries, to the rest of Africa and to

the EU academic network. MAREN was registered as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee in late 2009. Its core founding institutions are The University of Malawi, Mzuzu University and the Department of Agricultural Research Services. All public universities are currently on the network. Some private higher education institutions have also joined.

Ms Bridget Nyirongo, Acting Director of ICT at Chancellor College, points out that there are certain advantages to joining the network. It offers benefits such as education roaming, cloud storage using XaaS, as well as capacity building. Additionally, MAREN is very stable. This comes as welcome news to most users at the college, who require constant internet access for their research as well as teaching and learning. In fact, according to Nyirongo, the feedback has been very



*Ms Bridget Nyirongo*

positive from the users, who have noted a change in the internet speed. Under this link, Chancellor College will be getting a total bandwidth of 200Mbps. Although the college is now on MAREN, it is still maintaining Simbanet as a backup link.

# Chanco mourns the passing of its Principal



*The late Principal, Professor Richard Tambulasi*

In the past two months, the Chancellor College community has been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. During this period, the college has registered quite a number of infections by members of staff and their families. Some of those infected were advised to self-isolate at home, whereas others unfortunately had to be admitted at the College Isolation Centre and at Zomba Central Hospital, among other places.

The saddest development has been the deaths of several member staff due to the pandemic. These include former Dean of Education, Dr McCloud Salanjira; Head of French Department, Dr Maxwell Chilembwe; the Office Assistant in PAS Department, Mr Wilson Mang'anya, and telephone operator, Mr Mandala. The most recent of the deaths was that of the College Principal, Professor Richard

Tambulasi, who passed away on 7th February, 2021.

Following the Principal's death, many tributes and expressions of condolence emerged from former colleagues, students, staff as well as friends. Speaking in an interview, Registrar of the College, Mrs Mary Wasiri, stressed that the death of the Principal had left the college paralysed, as many did not expect the pandemic to rob the college of its leader.

Many have observed that Professor Tambulasi was the very embodiment of humility. Despite being a professor and the college principal, he did not act superior to others, and expressed camaraderie for colleagues at all levels of the college. The Chancellor College Student Union President, Godfrey Phunyanya, fondly recalls that the Principal always reminded students of his

availability, and would entertain calls from them even at midnight hours.

The shock felt by the college community has emerged not only from the fact that the Principal was a man beloved by all, but even more so due to his quick rise in academic and administrative ranks. In their tributes to the Principal, Professors Lewis Dzimbiri and Blessings Chinsinga both noted that Professor Richard Tambulasi rose to the rank of Professor at a very young age, 38 years.

As a way of honouring his memory and condoling his fellow staff, the Vice Principal, Professor Samson Sajidu, wrote to the college staff, encouraging them to remain united, and to continue implementing late Professor Tambulasi's vision for the college.

Professor Richard Tambulasi was laid to rest at his home village in Ntaja. May his soul rest in peace.



# Faculty of Science sends two on secondment



*Assoc. Prof. Chomora Mikeka,*

The Government of Malawi continues to recognize the expertise that is housed at Chancellor College, this time through requesting the services of two lecturers from the Faculty of Science. The lecturers, Dr Levis Eneya and Associate Professor Chomora Mikeka, have been requested to report to the Ministry of Education to head the Directorate of Higher Education and the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation respectively. For a long time, Chancellor College has been seconding various scholars to various departments, upon request from the government. These scholars serve the required departments for a time, and eventually return to continue their work on campus.

The Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), which Dr Chomora Mikeka is set to head, is a newly established directorate, responding to the suggested reforms in the Ministry of

Education. Specifically, it has been established in order to provide strategic and policy support in the areas of Science, Technology, Research, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STREAM). Dr Mikeka expresses a feeling of appreciation for the appointment and feels geared to deliver, especially in providing direction to the Directorate. He points out that even though his new responsibility may not afford him time to teach, he intends to maintain research, consultancy and community engagement. He will also avail himself for virtual lectures where possible.

On his part, Dr Levis Eneya, who is now the Director of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education, also expressed a sense of honour to have been entrusted with the responsibility. Among his priorities, he highlighted the need to increase access to, and quality of, higher education in Malawi. “Having participated in university selection, it pains to see a lot of qualifying students left out on account of space in the higher education institutions,” he said. This,

he said, may be achieved through increased support for the establishment of more academic institutions, increase in learning and associated spaces, and institutionalization of ODeL programmes.

We wish the two colleagues the best in their new appointments.



*Dr Levis Eneya*

# Disinfectant production goes commercial

Very few people in the country are aware that Chancellor College has gone into the commercial production of disinfectants in the fight against Covid-19. This has been enabled in part by funding which the college acquired from UNDP. When the pandemic broke out the UNDP visited various institutions, assessing them for their ability to respond to the disease. At Chancellor College, the UNDP personnel assessed the technology that the institution had to produce face masks, hand washing machines, sanitizer and disinfectants and virus transportation media.

Dr Dylo Pemba was one of the people centrally involved in the processes of disinfectant production and the producing of virus transportation media. “After the UNDP people visited the campus, they requested us to write technical proposals,” he said. “When we wrote these, they released funding for mass production of the various items. Around MK50 million was released for the production of disinfectants and virus transportation media”.



*Disinfectant bottles on display*

These are currently being produced in a laboratory at the Department of Biological Sciences. The disinfectants are currently being produced on quite a large scale. According to Dr Pemba, around 5000 litres of disinfectant are produced in one day.

Currently, various organizations have shown interest in the disinfectants, and have started purchasing from the college. These include the Zomba District Health

Office, the Zomba Central Hospital, Montfort fathers, LEAD, and YONECO, among others. This alone shows the level of trust that people have in a product produced at the college.

The disinfectant itself is produced from ethanol, which is combined with other chemicals such as hydrogen peroxide. This makes it a more effective disinfectant. The water content is very minimal, according to Pemba.

# A New EDO for Chancellor College

The Maintenance section of the college is responsible for the care of college grounds and infrastructure, which occasionally fall into states of disrepair. For a long time, it has also existed without an Estate Development Officer (EDO) employed to the position. The good news is that the college has employed Mrs. Ethel Chisanthi, a quantity surveyor by training, as the EDO. She joins the college at a time when most of its infrastructure, including institutional houses, hostels, offices, and roads among others are in dire need of maintenance.

With the new EDO at the helm, the college is bound to witness better quality in the maintenance of various facilities on the campus. Among her first priorities, the EDO has observed she will be working with the Central Office in acquiring legal land documents for all college land property before most of the land is lost to encroachers.

She says Chancellor College, being a place of higher learning in Malawi, requires attractive building infrastructure and a good learning environment which could be achieved by appropriate property maintenance. She asserts that, as a specialist in infrastructure development and land management, she expects to make a significant contribution in making appropriate recommendations and proposals for improvement of most of the areas requiring her expertise.

“I am also specialized in infrastructure development and management which among others includes project management, land management and asset management,” the EDO points out. “I will therefore provide technical advice to assist project construction works to be completed within expected budgets, desired timelines and functions that achieve value for money for the client. Therefore, my expertise should be sufficient for the required improvements that the College’s infrastructure needs to undergo”.



*Mrs. Ethel Chisanthi*

Other priorities for Mrs Chisanthi include working on Lecture Theatres 1 and 2, Room A, general improvements for plumbing facilities, electrical, carpentry, wall and ceiling finishes at the hostels. She adds that places like main cafeteria and teaching area facilities will also be given appropriate maintenance attention.



# Clinic gets new staff

The new year has seen Chancellor College boosting its staff profile through the hiring of various personnel. These include people hired at the college clinic.

The Chancellor College Clinic primarily provides medical services to staff and students at the college but extends these services to the entire Zomba community. Like many other medical facilities in the country, it has faced a lot of pressure due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As way of boosting the profile of the clinic, the college has employed a full-time medical doctor, Dr. Hagai Magai (M.D.) and a Laboratory Technologist, Mr. Musende.

Dr. Magai comes with a lot of experience, having worked with MASM Clinic, Kamuzu Central Hospital and LMJ. He also spent some time at the Kamuzu Central Hospital Covid-19 isolation facility. As a result, the college immediately coopted him into the Covid-19 taskforce. While working at the isolation center Dr. Magai says he had already discovered that SARS-COV-19 was not a disease of the lungs as most people might assume. He says Covid-19 affects the whole body and it primarily affects lungs because they have a high concentration of ACE-2 receptors on their cells, which are the primary entry points of the virus.

“At Chancellor College, SARS-COV-19 has not only affected the health of students and staff members, but has also posed a challenge even on the administration of exams. As we try to find ways of living with the virus, we have to find ways even on how examinations are administered”, Dr. Magai advises.

On the future of the clinic, Dr Magai recommends that the College should increase the number of services it provides to reduce the need for referral and improve the quality of care provided to the community. Some of the services that can be implemented are ultrasound and imaging services, dental services, psychological



*Dr. Hagai Magai*

counselling, some gynecological services such as antenatal care services, cervical cancer screening and operating room for spontaneous vaginal and caesarian delivery.

The Medical Laboratory Technologist, Mr. Dennis Musende, previously worked for Malmed Healthcare Services as a laboratory manager for a couple of years before joining Chancellor College Clinic, where part of his work was to train part time laboratory staff in collecting DNA samples. He sees the clinic as having great potential to expand its services and respond according to the rising needs of the College.

“The clinic can be much better if the laboratory’s chemistry department starts

functioning again. This will make it easier to diagnose liver disease, kidney disease, electrolyte imbalances and lipid disorders which are among the great health concerns in our population”, Mr. Musende says.

The new staff have been brought in to increase capacity and quality of service that the college’s clinic offers. The two have come at a time when the College is in the process of strengthening its capacity to positively respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. They both agree that while the clinic offers good standard medical services, an expansion of its services would provide an appropriate alternative medical source to the college, residents of Zomba and the surrounding districts.



*Mr. Dennis Musende*

# UGI Donates K2.5m to Chancellor College for Covid-19 Fight



Professor Samson Sajidu receives the cheque on behalf of the college

On 19th February 2021, Chancellor College received a donation of K2.5m from insurance company United General Insurance (UGI) to help in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

Presenting the donation at Mount Soche Hotel in Blantyre, UGI Chief Executive Officer Bywell Blair Chiwoni said since the first registered case of the novel coronavirus in the country in April 2020, most of the sectors including the education sector have been affected, hence their support to Chancellor College.

“One of the sectors that has been heavily affected is the education sector. Learning is no longer the same as education institutions are being forced to adopt innovative ways of teaching. UGI would like to ensure that learning continues even as we go through these unprecedented times. We are

hopeful that if we play our role, we will be helping in strengthening the different initiatives that learning institutions are implementing to make the institutions safer,” said Chiwoni.

He commended Chancellor College for its leadership and decisive action during this difficult time. “Chancellor College and University of Malawi in general have been our client for over two decades and this means they are no longer a client but part of our family. As such, charity must begin at home. UGI will continue to stand side-by-side with UNIMA as it faces this great challenge,” he said.

Chiwoni further observed that the Covid-19 challenge requires continued cooperation not only between the two institutions, but with the government, the donor community, the business community, civil society, and the entire Malawian population.

Representing Chancellor College during the ceremony, Acting Principal Professor Samson Sajidu thanked UGI for the donation saying it will go a long way in fighting against the pandemic.

“We are so grateful for this donation from UGI,” said Professor Sajidu. “The University must continue to strive for the development of human capital for the nation. The most important thing that we need to look at is how we protect both staff and students from being infected with the virus as we do this noble duty. Universities cannot be closed forever; at the same time, we need to stay safe so that we maintain the high calibre of staff that the University has in healthy condition.”

The ceremony observed a one-minute silence in honour of the departed Principal Professor Richard Tambulasi who was instrumental in securing the donation from UGI.



# College calendar affected by Covid-19

It is no secret that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected many areas of our daily lives. At Chancellor College, even as we wage the battle against the pandemic, our operations have been sorely affected by the trends of infection, leading to several changes in the schedules laid down by the administration.

The academic calendar is one of those areas that have been affected by the pandemic. In March 2020, the college had no choice but to follow the presidential directive that all education institutions would close. It remained closed for closed for six months, during which lecturers started planning for Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT). Eventually, however, the campus physically reopened in September, 2020. When the second wave hit, the college was just completing the second semester, and was therefore not too adversely affected. Some students and staff members were affected, since they were in isolation.

According to the College Registrar, Mrs Mary Wasiri, the main change that was made to the calendar was the increase in the marking period, taking into account that some staff members were unwell. The calendar had to be shifted forward by five weeks, in line with the government recommendation. This was done jointly by the Deans of Faculties, with the administration as the secretariat.



*Mrs Mary Wasiri, College Registrar*

Currently, the academic year is set to commence in May 2021, a change from the originally scheduled April date.

The administering of deferred examinations has also been adversely affected by the pandemic. At the beginning of February, this year, the college again had no choice but to adhere to the government announcement to extend the closure of schools. As a result, the commencement date of the deferred exams (originally 8th February, 2021) was postponed even further. Eventually, government announced that schools would open on 22nd February, 2021. The college quickly took advantage of this, and fortunately exams were administered that week.

In total, since the start of the pandemic, the college has lost close to six months. Because of the pandemic, the calendar of the college is no longer in sync with the calendar used by the Ministry of Education. "It might take three or four years to normalise the calendar again, to synchronise with the calendar of the Ministry of Education," Wasiri said. Additionally, the operations budget has been seriously affected. "It has been quite challenging to manage our budget, in part due to the fact that part of our funding comes from fees, which we could no longer collect" Wasiri said. The intake of new students has also been negatively affected, since the first years were originally supposed to report to campus in August 2020.



**COVID19**

**STAY SAFE, STAY HEALTHY.**

**PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19**

**LET'S ALL DO OUR PART**

- 1  Wash hands frequently with soap
- 2  Wear a mask
- 3  Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing
- 4  See a doctor if you feel unwell

<https://www.cc.ac.mw>

# Prof. Sajidu appointed Acting Principal

On 19th February, 2021, the University of Malawi Council appointed Professor Samson Sajidu as Acting Principal of Chancellor College. This appointment comes in the wake of the passing of the former Principal of the college, Professor Richard Tambulasi. The two of them had a close working relationship.

Professor Sajidu, who is employed in the Department of Chemistry, has been Vice Principal of Chancellor College since 2015. Prior to that, he served as Dean of the Faculty of Science, as well as Head of the Chemistry Department. He also holds a MPhil in Chemistry (2001) from University of Cambridge, and was awarded a PhD in Chemistry (2008) from the University of Malawi and the Swedish University of Agricultural

Sciences. Professor Sajidu is a seasoned academic, specializing in water chemistry. In this field, he has conducted research in a number of areas, including the identification of water fluorid areas in Malawi, use of locally sourced materials such as gypsum, bauxite and clays in water defluoridation, use of *Moringa oleifera*, *Moringa stenopetala* and clays in heavy metal detoxification in water.

Professor Sajidu has authored numerous internationally refereed journal articles. He has also presented a number of papers at international conferences, and is a renowned consultant within the country. He was also the editor of the Malawi Journal of Science and Technology, and is currently on the editorial board of the Chanco Bulletin.

We wish him all the best as he leads Chancellor College.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The last two months have been particularly difficult here at Chancellor College. We have lost members of staff, and some among us have also lost friends and relatives.

We continue to feel the tragic loss of our beloved Principal, Professor Richard Tambulasi, who passed away on 7th February, 2021. He was a beacon of progress for Chancellor College, and indeed for the country. May he rest in peace.

In January, 2021, we also lost Dr Maxwell Chilembwe, previously Head of the French Department. We mourn for our brother and wish him a peaceful rest.

The College Telephone Operator, Mr Charles Mandala, also passed away in January, 2021. May he rest in peace.

Mr Wilson Mang'anya, an Office Assistant in the Political and Administrative Studies Department, also sadly departed from our midst in January, 2021. He will be sadly missed by the entire college.

In February, 2021, we also bid farewell to Dr Mcloud Salanjira, former Dean of the School of Education. May the Lord bring comfort to his family.

We stretch a condoling hand to Dr Meke from CERT, who lost her mother on 31st January, 2021, and Mr R Zatha of the Biology Department, who lost his mother on 1st February, 2021, and. May the departed rest in peace.

Words are not enough to condole Dr Mirriam Kalanda Joshua, who lost three brothers in the past two months. We pray the Good Lord brings you some measure of comfort.