



NEWSLETTER

Inside Makerere's 2026 Transformative Career Fair

The university's grounds transformed into a vibrant meeting point of ambition and opportunity as students, graduates, and industry leaders converged for the 2026 Careers Fair.

Groundbreaking for AFCON 2027 Mak Sports Complex

On February 19th 2026, the First Lady, Hon. Janet Museveni, Minister of Education and Sports, represented by Hon. Peter Ogwang, State Minister for Sports, presided over the groundbreaking ceremony for the AFCON 2027 training facilities at Mak.

Guild President Churchill Reflects on his Term

In this exclusive quick chat, 91st Guild President, James Churchill, a third-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Social Sciences, reflects on his time in office.



Electric Fast - Charging Station at Mak

In a landmark event symbolising Uganda's stride towards sustainable transportation, Hon. Dr Monica Musenero Masanza, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, commissioned the first Electric Fast-Charging Station at Makerere University on Friday, 13th March 2026. The ceremony, held at the Senate Building Parking, marks a pivotal moment in the nation's e-mobility journey, blending academic innovation with industrial application and governmental support.

Editor's note



Links to College Newsletters

CoNAS: <https://cns.mak.ac.ug/conas-newsletter-january-march-2026/>

CEDAT: <https://cedat.mak.ac.ug/2026/04/29/cedat-newsletter-highlights-makereres-innovation-drive-jan-mar-2026/>

COVAB: <https://covab.mak.ac.ug/covab-newsletter-for-january-to-march/>

SoL: <https://law.mak.ac.ug/sol-newsletter-jan-april-2026/>

CoBAMS: https://bams.mak.ac.ug/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/CoBAMS_Newsletter_2026

CHS: <https://chs.mak.ac.ug/reports/makchs-newsletter-january-march-2026>

CHUSS: <https://chuss.mak.ac.ug/en/the-chuss-newsletters/>

CoCIS: <https://cocis.mak.ac.ug/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/COCIS-Newsletter-2026.pdf>

CEES: <https://cees.mak.ac.ug/cees-newsletter-january-to-march-2026/>

Bridging Possibility and Purpose

The activities of the first quarter of 2026 depict Makerere University not just as a place of learning but as a dynamic space where ideas, ambition, and opportunity shape the future.

This edition highlights a university in motion. The Career Fair 2026 stood out as a powerful moment of reflection and discovery. Under the theme “Machine vs. Man,” students were challenged to rethink their place in a rapidly evolving world shaped by artificial intelligence. What emerged was not fear, but clarity a recognition that the future belongs to those who are adaptable, innovative, and willing to learn continuously. Beyond the discussions, the fair created meaningful connections, opening pathways to careers, further study, and entrepreneurship.

The launch of the Open, Distance and

eLearning (ODEL) initiative is a practical step toward inclusive and accessible education. By embracing digital transformation, Makerere is expanding learning beyond physical classrooms and positioning itself as a leader in flexible, technology-driven education. This shift reflects a broader commitment to ensuring that quality education reaches more learners, within Uganda and beyond.

This issue also celebrates the people behind the progress. From staff committing wholeheartedly to the student community they serve to student leaders navigating complex challenges, the stories this quarter demonstrate the personal resilience, creativity, and purpose that drive the institutional transformation at the Hill.

Eunice Rukundo,
Deputy Chief, Public Relations.



At the 2026 Student Career Fair was marked by panel of discussions.

Highlights

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Makerere University leverages partnerships to drive research, innovation, and development. Here are some of Memoranda of Understanding signed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor so far this year:

1. MoU with Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) to host the Africa office.
2. MoU with Tumusiime Mutebile Foundation to operationalise the Professor Emmanuel Tumusiime Mutebile Centre of Excellence.
3. MoU with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) with MakCHS.
4. MoU with the Embassy of France in Uganda, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), and the Alliance Française de Kampala, to organise the 2026 Kampala Geopolitics Conference.



Incoming MUASA Chairperson, Prof. Jude Ssempebwa

Staff associations, MASA and MUASA get new leadership

Staff associations at Makerere University, the Makerere University Academic Staff Association and the Makerere University Administrative Staff Association, have ushered in new leadership, signalling a fresh phase in staff representation.

In the race for Deputy Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration

The race for the position of Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Finance and Administration gained momentum this quarter. Prof. Eria Hisali, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe, and Dr. Winston Tumps Iireeta, were shortlisted by the Senate Elections Committee and presented to stakeholders during a public engagement session held in the Main Hall on March 30.



Assoc. Prof. Eria Hisali



Prof. Winston Tumps Iireeta



Prof. Henry Alinaitwe

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES >>

Note: To apply for any of these graduate programme Scholarship opportunities, you MUST FIRST apply for Admission to Makerere University. Apply via <https://apply.mak.ac.ug/>

1. To apply for Scholarships for Masters Degree Programmes igitalizat under the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University, please use the link <https://apply.mastercardfoundation.mak.ac.ug/announcements/30>

2. To apply for Scholarships for Masters and PhD Degree Programmes igitalizat under the Africa Climate Collaborative in Partnership with Mastercard Foundation, please use the link... <https://apply.caes.mak.ac.ug>

Vice Chancellor's updates:



The Makerere University Main Sports grounds are undergoing a major upgrade to serve as one of the AFCON 27 training grounds. This is a major development for Makerere University, and our plan is to fully transform the grounds into a stadium.

I send warm greetings to stakeholders and well-wishers of Makerere University. As we continue to strengthen our foundation and position Makerere University for the future, allow me to share a few key developments and highlights from January to April:

THE 76TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

The 76th Graduation Ceremony was characterised by the following:

i. The PhD graduand numbers crossed the 200 mark for the first time.

This is phenomenal, considering that just five years ago, we were graduating fewer than 100 PhDs annually. Our PhD graduation numbers are now in line with our peers and competitors on the Continent. With the extensive supervisory capacity built at Makerere over the years, I believe we can do even better. We have the capacity to enrol 3,000 students, assuming that every PhD holder can supervise 3 PhD students. We are making our humble contribution to the World Bank declaration that Africa needs one million PhDs in ten years, if Africa is to move its people out of poverty. I wish to thank all the colleagues who have excelled at supervising PhD students, and urge all PhD holders to recruit and supervise other PhD students.

ii. Two Honorary Degrees conferred.

At the 76th graduation ceremony held from February 24th to 27th, 2026, Makerere University conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Letters (Letters Causa) upon Mr Japheth Buleetwa Katto. He was digitaliza for his pioneering leadership in corporate governance and his significant role in developing Uganda's capital markets. Mr Japheth Buleetwa Katto was celebrated as a trailblazer in the financial sector, as highlighted.

We also conferred the Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) on Reeta Roy, the first President of the Mastercard Foundation. Reeta Roy deserved this recognition for the tremendous work she has done to empower young people in Africa to transition to gainful employment. Makerere University is one of the key partners of the Mastercard Foundation, and we pride in the achievements we have registered so far, including the training of more than 1000 students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds from several African countries, Makerere's successful digitalization agenda, advances in OdeL, leadership in the climate change research through the Climate Collaborative, and others. We sincerely thank Reeta Roy for her great contribution, and we wish her well in her next endeavours.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE AFCON TRAINING GROUND

The Makerere University Main Sports grounds are undergoing a major upgrade to serve as one of the AFCON 27 training grounds. This is a major development for Makerere University, and our plan is to fully transform the grounds into a stadium. We apologise for the disruptions that have been caused by the ongoing works and arrangements have been made to ensure that students and staff continue engaging in sports activities.

As we Build for the Future.

Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe

At the 76th Mak Graduation, February 2026

Study Level Statistics	Female	Male	Total
Doctorate	87	126	213
Masters	1087	1416	2503
Postgraduate Diploma	80	126	206
Bachelors	2999	3344	6343
Diploma	9	21	30
Grand Total	4262	5033	9295

Staff Awarded

Staff of the university, who graduated with PhDs in the space of 3 years, received the Resilience award.

- Mugisha Arthur
- Ainomugisha Safiki
- Mbabazi Lillian
- Mbabazi Pamela Byakwaga
- Mutuzo Irene Esther
- Tushabomwe Dennis
- Tushemerirwe Abius

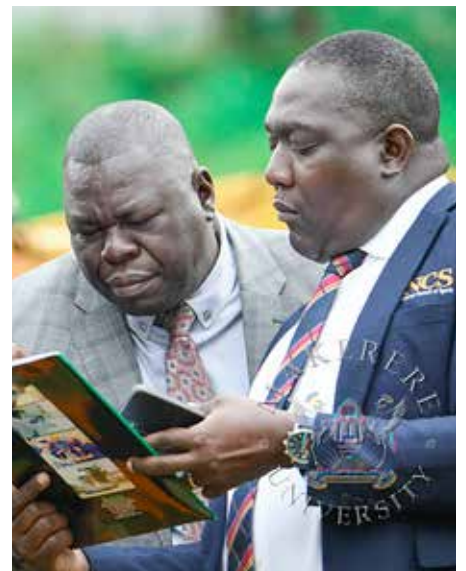




Ground breaking ceremony of Mak Sports Complex

On February 19th 2026, the First Lady, Hon. Janet Museveni, Minister of Education and Sports, represented by Hon. Peter Ogwang, State Minister for Sports, presided over the groundbreaking ceremony for the AFCON 2027 training facilities at Makerere University. The event marked the commissioning of six construction sites in Hoima, Masindi, Kyambogo University, Lira University, and Gulu University.

Under this project, the Makerere University Sports Ground will be transformed into a CAF-standard training facility for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON).





Fatuma Nabulime

At Makerere University, the journey toward inclusive education is steadily gaining ground, thanks in part to the establishment of the Disability Support Centre, which is already reshaping the experiences of students with disabilities.

Fatuma's story

For Fatuma Nabulime, a recent graduate with a Bachelor's Degree

Makerere Disability Centre: Transforming Student Lives

in Social Work, the centre represents more than just a physical space on campus, it is a symbol of dignity, access, and possibility.

"I was very excited when it was launched," she recalls. "I knew it would help bridge the gap between students with disabilities and the university system."

A Journey Marked by Resilience

Fatuma, who uses a wheelchair, joined Makerere University in 2022 under the disability scheme. Like many students with disabilities, her academic journey was defined by both determination and structural barriers.

While she describes her overall university experience as positive, thanks largely to supportive lecturers and peers, she is candid about the challenges that existed before the centre was established.

Accessing study materials, for instance, was often a struggle. "Sometimes we were required to buy printed notes from far places, and I didn't always have the money," she explains. "There was also limited access to assistive devices."

Physical accessibility posed an even greater challenge. Some lecture

rooms were located in buildings without ramps or functioning elevators.

On several occasions, Fatuma had to be carried upstairs to attend lectures, a situation she describes as both inconvenient and humiliating.

"There are lecturers who may not fully understand how to support students with disabilities," Fatuma notes. "The centre helps to mediate and create understanding."

In one instance, when she faced challenges with her research project,

2022
The year
joined
Makerere
University

A Turning Point for Inclusion

The introduction of the Disability Support Centre marked a turning point.

Today, students like Fatuma can access printed notes, use computers for research, and receive academic support tailored to their needs. For students with visual or hearing impairments, the centre provides assistive devices and services that were previously unavailable.

Beyond these practical interventions, the centre is also playing a crucial role as a bridge between students and academic staff.



staff from the centre intervened and engaged her supervisors to ensure she received the support she needed. "That really made a difference," she says.

Changing Attitudes, Building Awareness

Equally important is the centre's role in challenging misconceptions and raising awareness across the university community.

Fatuma points to an incident where a lecturer dismissed a sign language interpreter, unaware of the student's needs. Such experiences, she says, highlight the continued need for sensitization.

"Awareness is improving, but more still needs to be done," she emphasizes.

Despite these gaps, Fatuma acknowledges a growing culture of empathy among students. "Many students are supportive. Someone can offer you a seat or assist when needed," she says, though she adds that occasional bias and misunderstanding still persist.

A Future Inspired by Inclusion

For Fatuma, the impact of the centre goes beyond her academic success. It has shaped her confidence and career aspirations.

"My university experience taught me how to overcome challenges and speak up for myself," she reflects. "It inspired me to pursue social work so I can support others and advocate for inclusion."

As she looks ahead, she hopes to work with communities and organizations that promote access to education and social services for people with disabilities.

The Work Ahead

While the Disability Support Centre has made significant strides, Fatuma believes that true inclusion will require sustained effort.

She calls for improved physical infrastructure, ramps, elevators, and accessible buildings across campus, as well as continued awareness campaigns targeting both staff and students.

"The university needs to become fully accessible," she says. "Not just in policy, but in practice."

FACT FILE:

Inclusivity efforts by Makerere University

The Disability Support Centre was opened in July 2024 with support from the MasterCard Foundation to provide services which include:

- Accessible Computers installed with Screen readers (JAWS AND FUSION)
- Braille Embossing
- Large Printing
- Access to refreshable braille displays
- Audio book reading.

The Centre has received support from the Makerere University Endowment Fund through Mak Run, Kiira Motors, which donated a bus to ease transport on Campus.



A Centre That Changes Lives

The story of Fatuma is just one among many, but it captures the transformative potential of inclusive initiatives within higher education.

The Disability Support Centre at Makerere University is not merely addressing barriers, it is redefining what is possible for students with disabilities. By fostering access, dignity, and opportunity, it is ensuring that no student is left behind.

And for students like Fatuma, that change is already life-changing.

<https://news.mak.ac.ug/2026/05/how-the-disability-centre-is-transforming-student-lives/>



At Makerere University, the future didn't feel distant; it felt urgent, alive, and within reach.

For three days in March, the university's grounds transformed into a vibrant meeting point of ambition and opportunity as students, graduates, and industry leaders converged for the 2026 Careers Fair. Lecture halls were split into exhibition spaces, conversations replaced uncertainty, and for many students, career dreams began to take clearer shape.



From Curiosity to Clarity: Inside Makerere's 2026 Transformative Career Fair

A Question That Defined the Moment: Man or Machine?

The opening day set the tone with a bold theme: "Machine vs Man", placing artificial intelligence at the centre of career conversations. Students listened, questioned, and reflected as leaders challenged them not to fear technology, but to harness it.

The message was clear: the future belongs to those who can adapt.

Speakers emphasised that while AI is reshaping industries, it is also creating new opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation. For many students in attendance, this was more than a discussion—it was a wake-up call to rethink their place in a rapidly evolving world.

Beyond Jobs: Unlocking Global Opportunities

If Day One provoked thought, Day Two opened doors.

The focus shifted to scholarships, fellowships, and international study opportunities, expanding students' horizons beyond the immediate job market. Conversations moved from "What job can I get?" to "What possibilities exist for me globally?"

Students explored pathways into prestigious programmes, exchange opportunities, and further study options, discovering that their ambitions could stretch far beyond borders.

Where Potential Meets Purpose

By the final day, the Careers Fair had evolved into something deeper a platform for connection.

Under the theme "Connecting Potential to Purpose," industry leaders, employers, and development partners engaged directly with students, emphasising collaboration as the key to career success.

Across Freedom Square and exhibition booths, students asked tough questions, shared ideas, and made meaningful connections. Employers, in turn, offered insights into the skills that matter most in today's workplace—adaptability, creativity, and critical thinking.

More than 50 organizations participated, turning the fair into a living ecosystem of mentorship, networking, and opportunity.

By Betty Kyakuwa

<https://news.mak.ac.ug/2026/05/from-curiosity-to-clarity-inside-makereres-transformative-career-fair-2026/>

KOICA Project: Laying the foundation for e-Learning Centre

By Harriet Musinguzi,

Makerere University has taken a major step toward transforming higher education with the launch of its Open, Distance and eLearning (ODEL) Strategic Plan and the groundbreaking of a new ODEL building. The milestone event signals a stronger commitment to digital, inclusive, and accessible learning in Uganda.

Presiding over the ceremony, KOICA Country Director Ms. Jihee Ahn emphasized the power of partnership, noting that the project's success reflects shared effort and vision. She described the new facility as a catalyst that will position Makerere as a leader in open and distance learning across Africa.

Representing the University Council, Dr. Silas Ngabirano highlighted the project as a turning point in modernizing teaching and expanding access to affordable, flexible education. He urged the university community to embrace digital learning as a pathway to innovation and lifelong learning.

On behalf of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sarah Ssali underscored that e-learning is central to Makerere's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan and aligned with Uganda's digital transformation agenda. She noted that ODEL will extend learning opportunities beyond borders and strengthen research and innovation.

The project, supported by a US\$12.2 million grant from KOICA, includes a masterplan, new infrastructure, and capacity building for staff to develop quality digital content.

Construction of the facility is expected to be completed by September 2027.

The Principal Investigator, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe, outlined three core components of the project: the development of the ODEL Masterplan, the enhancement of e learning infrastructure through a state of the art facility and modern equipment, and capacity building to equip staff with the skills needed to create high quality digital content. He explained that the construction, valued at USD 3.7 million, is being undertaken by SMS Construction Ltd, with designs developed by ArchForum Consultants Ltd, and is scheduled for completion by September 29, 2027.

Overall, the initiative marks a significant leap in Makerere's journey to deliver flexible, technology-driven education for the future.



Prof. Sarah Ssali unveils foundation stone at the construction site.



Long before the title “Guild Administrator” became synonymous with her name, Norah Nalubowa was simply a young administrator finding her footing at the university. It was 2006 when she joined the Dean of Students’ Department, unaware that she was beginning a journey that would see her become one of the most beloved figures on campus.

Today, many students do not know her by her official title. To them, she is simply “Guild Mama.”

“I learned very early,” she says, “that when dealing with students, you must listen more and speak less. These students need to be loved.” That philosophy would come to define her work, and her identity.

Guild Mama: Student Support Personified

From ‘Head Girl’ to ‘Mama’

In her early days, students fondly referred to her as “Head Girl,” a nod to her youthful presence and approachable demeanor. As the years passed, the names evolved “Kazende,” a term of respect, then “Mama,” and eventually “Guild Mama.”

Each name told a story. Each reflected a deepening relationship.

“I decided to befriend them,” she recalls. And for nearly two decades, she has lived up to that role, often going far beyond the call of duty.

Carrying More Than a Job Title

Beyond administration, Norah has become counselor, mediator, and, in many cases, a lifeline.

Students come to her with everything, from leadership disputes to deeply personal struggles.

Some come with nothing at all. “There are students who lack basic things,” she explains. “Soap, sanitary towels... sometimes even food.” In such moments, policy gives way to compassion.

“You may have little,” she says, “but you share what you have.”

Her guiding principle is simple yet profound: “If a student comes to my office crying, they should leave with a smile.”

A Legacy Written in Lives Touched

Ask Norah about her proudest moments, and she does not mention titles or milestones.

Instead, she speaks of the students. The messages she receives. The quiet “thank yous.” The moments when a student says her guidance changed their path.

One memory stands out when students with disabilities chose to recognize her among all administrators, presenting her with an accolade. “That meant the world to me,” she says.

As our conversation comes to a close, Norah pauses, not to speak about herself, but to give thanks.

“I am very grateful for the opportunity to share my story,” she says. “But more importantly, I thank the University management. It is not easy to sit in meetings and constantly think about the welfare of students and the institution. Their work should never be taken for granted.”



And finally, she turns to the students themselves, the very reason her journey began. “I thank all the student leaders, past and present. Many of them call to say thank you, and to tell me that something they learned from me has helped them. That feedback means everything.”

<https://news.mak.ac.ug/2026/05/guild-mama-the-woman-behind-the-students/>



Atuha Cohen- CAES



Bulumba Timothy
- COBAMS



Lubango Jackson Jimmy
-SPH



Mbabazi Theresa Tracy
- CEDAT



Nzanga Mark-CHUSS

RACE FOR GUILD 2026



Semanda Ashiraf Senyonjo
- SOL



Serunkuma Timothy
- CHUSS



Tebakor Prince Jimmy
- CHUSS



Tumukunde Hannah
- CHUSS



Mujuzi Mike



Daniel Nyaika



Gracious Kadondi



Kyajja Peter Claver



In this exclusive quick chat, we spoke to the 91st Guild President, James Churchill, a third-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Social Sciences. He shares insights into his leadership journey, key achievements, challenges, and his vision for the student community.



Leading with Purpose: Guild President James Churchill Reflects on His Term

By Carol Kasujja

What inspired you to run for Guild President?

My background and personal leadership journey played a big role. Growing up, I saw my father and uncle actively involved in politics, which shaped my interest in leadership.

I also held leadership roles in high school serving as Sports Minister at O-Level and later as Head Prefect at St. Juliana High School, Gayaza, during my A-Level. These experiences built my confidence and passion for representing others.

Seeing former Guild President Vincent Lubega Nsamba win also motivated me. We come from the same high school, and I succeeded him as Head Prefect. That gave me the belief that I, too, could lead at that level.

What was your vision when you assumed office, and how much of it did you achieve?

My vision was to amplify students' voices and ensure their needs were

prioritized. While it wasn't easy due to bureaucracy, we made progress.

We improved students' social welfare by engaging management, which led to greater flexibility in organizing events like the Bazaar and Freshers' Ball. We also addressed the issue of missing marks. Previously, it could take semesters to resolve, but now, through the Office of the Academic Registrar, such issues can be handled much faster.

What is your biggest achievement?

One of the biggest milestones was allowing students to sit for examinations after paying at least 60% of tuition. This has reduced the number of students dropping out due to financial constraints.

We also saw the lifting of the ban on social events, which has gradually revived campus life. Additionally, leadership roles such as ministers and Guild Representative Councillors (GRCs) have become more functional, with clearer responsibilities and greater impact.

What key lessons have you learned?

One key lesson is the importance of daring to take action. Things may seem impossible, but once you step out and try, you realize they are achievable.

I also learned that leadership begins with influence. For example, when class representatives raised concerns about not being paid, I had to engage and influence them to understand the situation while working toward solutions.

Leadership also requires teamwork. You cannot lead alone—you need a support system. When you delegate, trust people and avoid micromanaging.

Another lesson is the importance of effective communication with management. Building strong relationships increases your chances of influencing decisions.

On a personal level, I have learned discipline—keeping time, improving how I present myself, and becoming more mindful in how I engage with others.

What do you attribute your success to?

First and foremost, God, who gave me the wisdom and understanding to lead.

I also attribute it to the strong working relationships I built with University leadership, especially the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of Students. Without that collaboration, it would have been difficult to achieve much.

How did you balance academics and leadership?

It required intentional planning and prioritization. When meetings clashed with tests, I delegated to the Vice President or Prime Minister. This ensured continuity while giving them an opportunity to grow.

However, I made it a point to attend critical engagements, such

as Council meetings, because I was entrusted with representing students’ voices. I was also selective about external engagements to remain focused on my academics.

What challenges did you encounter?

Managing high expectations from students was a major challenge. Even small delays could attract criticism. For example, when students’ upkeep delayed by a week, some assumed I was not advocating for them.

I learned to remain calm and not react emotionally, instead using feedback as motivation to improve.

Another challenge was handling sensitive cases, such as advocating for students who had been suspended. Even when I did not agree with their actions, it was my duty to seek fair consideration on their behalf.

Was there a difficult decision you had to make?

Yes. Just a month into office, I made the decision to relieve a minister of their duties because they did not align with the cabinet’s vision and values. Leadership requires making tough decisions to maintain unity and integrity.

Is there anything you would have done differently?

I feel I could have engaged more with the administration. At times, I was occupied with activities outside the University, which limited my interaction with management. With more engagement, I believe I could have achieved even more.

What will you miss most?

I will not necessarily miss the office itself. Leadership is about service, and it is now time for others to take on that responsibility as I move on to the next chapter of my life.

<https://news.mak.ac.ug/2026/05/leading-with-purpose-guild-president-sentamu-churchill-james-reflects-on-his-term/>



How would you like to be remembered?

As a selfless leader who went the extra mile to serve others and always put students’ interests first—even when it required personal sacrifice.

For instance, during the Freshers’ Ball, we wanted to host a musician whose fee was UGX 4 million, yet we only had UGX 2 million. I personally covered the balance to make it happen for the students.



MAK THROUGH THE LENS



The Annual Safeguarding Signature Message Contest Award Ceremony engaged students in developing the 2026 key awareness message



The Swearing-in Ceremony for the MUASA Executive Committee 2026-28 held on 23rd March 2026 where Dr. Jude Ssempebwa was elected new Chairperson.



The Office of Dean of Students at the briefing meeting with 92nd Guild Presidential Aspirants to ensure a free and peaceful election.



Makerere University College of Health Sciences (MakCHS), formerly the School of Medicine, celebrated 100 years (1924 - 2024) of health professionals' education and training, with an Alumni Dinner in March