



# President's update

## William V. S. Tubman University

SPECIAL EDITION – AY 2014/15

### Truncated Academic Year 2014/15 Produces TU's 2nd Graduates



### Special points of interest:

- ◆ Truncated Academic year 2014/15 Produces TU's 2nd Graduates
- ◆ 2nd Graduation Convocation held at TU
- ◆ Graduation 2015 in Pictures
- ◆ Dr. ED-R Highlights the Importance of Children's Education
- ◆ TU President Espoused on the Importance of Research in Universities
- ◆ TU "Founders" Honored
- ◆ TU holds 2nd Series of "Africa in Novel and Film"

Above Left: Dr. Anany Gretchko Prosper, Executive Director of Partners in Health

Above Right: Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell, President of Tubman University

William V.S. Tubman University, Liberia's second publicly-owned four year degree-granting higher education institution finally resumed normal academic activities following a long closure period due to the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). The beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> Academic Year of the University was held on March 2, 2015 with the University's traditional opening convocation at the Harper City Hall with keynote address delivered by Dr. Anany Gretchko Prosper– Executive Director of Partners In Health (PIH). Dr. Proposer delivered the message on behalf of Dr. Paul Farmer who is the Founder of PIH. The keynote address focused on "educating minds towards global equity health". The 5th Academic Year of the Univer-

sity was "abnormal" given that it was condensed. The academic year began in March and ended in July, 2015. Credit hours per week for most courses were increased from 3 to 6. Students were allotted two (2) weeks of vacation between the first and second semesters. Many Saturday classes were opened. The measures were instituted as a truncated package for students' learning so as to cover up for lost academic periods caused by EVD, thus ensuring that course contents and learning objectives were met by faculty. A normal academic year at TU runs from September to June., however, the instituted measures were obvious and necessary as announced by Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell,

President of Tubman University during her remarks at the opening convocation. Students and faculty were pressed to work harder– especially graduating seniors. The instituted measures which formed the truncated academic year worked out as a success; and enabled the University to hold its Second Graduation Convocation on July 18, 2015 with 131 successful graduates from five colleges of the University including the University's first batch of engineering graduates.

Below: Some Faculty at the 5th Opening Convocation



# President's update

## 2nd Graduation Convocation held at TU—Graduates 131

July 18, 2015 marked the second graduation convocation of William V.S. Tubman University. In a formal graduation convocation that included both baccalaureate and commencement exercises held at the St. Theresa Catholic Cathedral, one hundred and thirty one (131) graduates from five colleges of the University were graduated. While the graduation marked TU's 2nd graduation, it included the first batch of engineering graduates comprising thirty (30) graduates from the College of Engineering and Technology. The composition of engineering graduates included fifteen (15) from Civil; eight (8) from Electrical; and seven (7) from Mechanical Engineering. Important to highlight also is that amongst the graduates were Liberia's first home-grown Early Childhood Development graduates. Composition of graduates from other colleges per discipline include: five (5) in Public Health- College of Health Sciences; seventeen (17) in Secondary Education, one (1) in Guidance & Counseling; two (2) in Early Childhood Development- College of Education; thirty-three (33) in General Agriculture- College of Agriculture & Food Science; eleven (11) in



Above: Mr. Matt A. Karinen  
Director, Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL)

Clockwise below: Rev. Mngsr. Gaye, Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell, TU Board Member-Dr. Evelyn S. Kandakai; Superintendent Betsy Kuoh Toe of Maryland County



Accounting, sixteen (16) in Public Administration, four (4) in Business Administration, five (5) in Banking & Finance, seven (7) in Economics- College of Management and Administration. Mr. Patrick Nugba of the College of Education was the class torchbearer (valedictorian), graduating with a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.900 (summa Cum Laude). Rev. Monsignor Melvin Nyanti Gaye of the Cape Palmas Catholic Diocese delivered the baccalaureate address in which, with prayers, he admonished the graduates to be focused and face the World with professional conduct. Whereas, Mr. Matt A. Karinen, Director of Golden Veroleum highlighted agricultural investment as a significant model for economic empowerment and national development. Mr. Karinen made the comments when he delivered the keynote address as Commencement Speaker. For her part, the President of the University, Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell in a special report of the Academic Year highlighted some of the achievements and challenges encountered during the year in review. She congratulated the faculty and students for ensuring that the academic year was successful, despite its truncated nature.

Below left: well wishers at the graduation convocation

Below right: A section of graduates



## Graduation 2015 in Pictures



Above left: Graduates in queue for Academic Procession

Above right: Mr. Patrick Nugba, Torchbearer/Valedictorian

Below left: A section of Faculty with the audience

Below right: Platform guests including TU Board Member-Mr. John Barkemini of CRC



Below left: Senator Gblebo Browne with other platform guests

Below right: Some deans of TU including Dr. Wreh-Wilson, Dr. Adetunde, Mr. Harris, Dr. Lewis



## Dr. ED-R Highlights the Importance of Children's Education



Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell  
President of William V.S. Tubman University

Proffering investment in children's education as the best formula for national development and transformation, Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell sometimes referred to as Dr. ED-R called on Liberians to invest in their children's education so as to help transform the Nation. Dr. Davis-Russell who is President of William V.S. Tubman University made the remarks on March 16, 2015 when she served as keynote speaker at the formal program organized by the Joseph Jenkins Roberts Educational Foundation in commemoration of the 206th birth anniversary of Liberia's first President— Joseph Jenkins Roberts in whose honor the Foundation is named. Touching on the good examples of President Joseph Jenkins Roberts, Dr. Davis-Russell indicated that an emulation of his

good lifestyle is important in driving national development of every sector for a productive and vibrant nation. Recognizing that the family unit as the bedrock on which children can develop their skills and be developed, Dr. Davis-Russell mentioned that such opportunity is missing for scores of Liberian children who are left to bring themselves up without the appropriate needed parental care. Dr. Davis-Russell challenged school administrators to stand in the gap, admonishing them to provide special care and attention to students who lack parental care in the society. Speaking specifically to the Joseph Jenkins Roberts Foundation, she admonished them to be focused and committed to the educational mission of the late President by providing educational opportunities for children across the nation.

## TU President Espoused on the Importance of Research in Universities

Speaking on the topic "Research as a Neglected Part of the Mission of Liberian Universities", Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell cautioned universities to be committed to their mandates which involve research. Dr. Davis-Russell who is President of William V.S. Tubman University made the remarks when she served as the keynote speaker at the third faculty workshop on research at the United Methodist University (UMU), held on February 25, 2015. She emphasized the importance of research as a part of the threefold mission of universities. She indicated that if research form the basis for faculty re-appointment and promotion, and if research results are used for decision-making, it would not be neglected. In advancing steps to make research more relevant at universities in Liberia, Dr. Davis-Russell

emphasized the development of unified policies, guidelines and codes of conduct among universities; and challenged universities to develop more comprehensive standards, codes and policies to promote research integrity. She also challenged universities to focus on their role as producers of knowledge and recognize the value and benefits of research. The workshop was intended to underscore the importance of research as it relates to universities in general. Specifically to UMU, the workshop was meant to examine how research could become more central at the University.



Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell  
President of William V.S. Tubman University

## TU “Founders” Honored



Above: Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell as the biggest honoree, presents her certificate of honor as certified by the President’s Cabinet including Dr. Carbajosa, Dr. Di-oh, Mr. Woods, and Rev. Townsend

Immediate Below: Mr. Henry Thompson– a grounds man being certificated by Dr. Davis-Russell

Far Below: Ms. Gebur of the President’s Office receives her certificate of honor from Dr. Davis-Russell



Above: Ma Annie Collins of the Cleaning Unit receives her certificate of honor from Dr. Davis-Russell

As part of graduation activities, the “TU Founders Recognition and Honoring Program” was held on July 17, 2015 at 10:00 AM in the Academic Gallery of the University. About forty (40) administrators and staff including President Davis-Russell, administrators, administrative support staff, cleaners, grounds men, faculty, and security officers were honored for their enduring selfless service to the University. The honor was befitting to employees of the University who supported William V.S. Tubman University’s founding and continual service, having served exemplary for the first five years of the University’s existence without demerits to the University. It involved recognition to Administrators who contributed to crafting the identity and value statements of William V.S. Tubman University such as the Mission, Vision, Core Values, Principles of Operation, curricula, and

all such management functions required to manage the affairs of the University. The honors recognize all who have contributed to William V.S. Tubman University from 2008 – 2014 with astute performance and service. Delivering the keynote address to the “Founders”, Dr. Alfred O. Lewis– Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Tubman University thanked the “Founders” for selfless service which paved the way for a student-centered community in the quest of providing educational opportunities for the next Liberian generation. For her part, Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell, President of the University who was also honored for envisioning the transformation of the William V.S. Tubman College of Technology to William V.S. Tubman University, commended and congratulated all honorees and encouraged them to be of continual unblemished service to the University to foster quality and excellence at the University.

## TU Holds 2nd Series of “Africa in Novel and Film”



Above: Dr. Sundberg— first from right (seated) in a photo with the class and other university administrators

Below: Dr. Sundberg monitors a group work

“Africa in Novel and Film” is a course, taught through the use of a series of African novels and films to improve students learning at Tubman University. The first course edition was held in 2011 and facilitated by Dr. Christine Sundberg who visited the University as a Visiting Professor. The course is intensely designed for 2 weeks and

facilitated to a set of 30 students per cohort. At the end of the course, the students provide their analysis of novels and films used during the course. At the end of the first course edition the students and Dr. Sundberg jointly developed the book- “When Elephants Fight”. As a result of the success of the first course edition, the University and Dr. Chris-

tine Sundberg introduced and held the second edition of the course with a second cohort of 30 students during the period of June 9 – 19, 2015. Dr. Christine Sundberg is a faculty member of the Department of History at the University of Colorado Denver, USA. As a historian, Dr. Sundberg has extensive experience in working in post conflict environments. Aside being a Visiting Professor at Tubman University, Dr. Christine

Sundberg has been a member of the University’s Foundation Board, based in the USA, for a period over four (4) years. The Foundation Board is composed of a group of philanthropists and academicians with the aim of galvanizing support for the University beyond the borders of Liberia.



# PRESIDENT’S UPDATE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
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