

Newsflash!

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SMU Celebrates

Africa Day



The month of May is traditionally called Africa Month across most African countries. This month, higher education institutions and other civic entities commemorate Africa Day in one way or another. Most of the time, Africa Day is celebrated through song and dance and honouring and sharing of language, culture, and traditions.

However, the celebrations are always commemorative at heart as we remember the visionary leaders who, 61 years ago, came together with a dream of a united Africa, an Africa free from the chains of colonialism and



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full of hope for a brighter future. The formation of the Organization of African Unity (now known as the African Union) on May 25, 1963, marked a pivotal moment in Africa's history when Africa's nations stood together to forge a path towards independence, prosperity, and reconciliation.

Africa Day is thus not only a cultural celebration but also a celebration of the continent's progress in education, economic development, and healthcare. The Africa Day theme for 2024, published by the African Union was "Educate an African Fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa." As an educational institution, this theme spoke to the heart of our beloved SMU, which celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year.

SMU thus celebrated Africa Day on the 31st of May 2024 with a joyous cultural celebration. Hosted by the Internationalisation Directorate and Advocacy and Diversity Unit of the Student Affairs Directorate, students and staff came together to commemorate and celebrate as proud Africans and an SMU family. The day commenced at the newly refurbished Amphitheatre with a rousing performance by the SMU Choir and words of support from the SMU Vice-Chancellor, Prof Peter Mbaty, as well as representatives from the Interim Student Governance Structure and the President of the SMU International Student Organisation. SMU also welcomed representatives from various High Commissions and Embassies, including the Japanese Embassy, the Kenyan High Commission and the Cameroon High Commission.

After the formal part of the programme, the SMU Residence hosted cultural stalls and entertained the crowd with cultural performances.

The residences competed for 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes and this year the following residences walked away with the titles:

- **1st Place:** Residence 1 A who represented the culture of Botswana.
- **2nd Place:** Residence 5 B who represented the culture of Tanzania.
- **3rd Place:** Maderia Isles who represented the culture of Nigeria.

Thank you to each staff member and student who participated and assisted in making Africa Day a true celebration on campus.



