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# Network Update

## Year in Review

At just over two years old, we have a lot to make us beam with pride. This July, we held a very successful workshop in Juja, Kenya in partnership with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). The brainchild of Clare Muhoro, this workshop provided students interested in post-graduate careers with the information and tools they needed to apply for, and be successful in, post-graduate programs, equipped participants with skills aimed at enhancing their professional development, and offered students opportunities for networking with scholars, professionals and peers. Out of this workshop stemmed a chapter of MTAWA, led by Elizabeth Wamicha and Rufina King’ori, and catering for members in the East African region. We also have a very active peer mentoring group led by our Student Representative Pauline Welikhe. Two of our mentees (Mercy Ngunjiri and Esther Mosase) have recently received their PhDs and are now working in postdoctoral appointments, while one has recently started on a PhD program. One of our early career mentors (Nomali Ngobese) has recently joined the faculty at the University of Johannesburg. More recently, one of our mentors (Margaret Okomo-Adhiambo) was inducted as Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences. We have had a great year and I have a lot of you to thank for that success. Thank you again for your efforts and continued support. I look forward to working with you in 2019.

## MTAWA-JKUAT Workshop

MTAWA Panel Discussion and Graduate Career Workshop: This July, we held a very successful workshop in Juja, Kenya in partnership with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). The workshop included panel discussions, a Keynote address, interactive workshops, presentations, one-on-one consultations, and plenty of informal networking opportunities. Our target audience for the workshop comprised women students and professionals with Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees interested in pursuing graduate degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields where women are traditionally underrepresented. The workshop was attended by over 70 participants including participants from eight public and private universities (Aga Khan University, Dedan Kimathi University, Egerton University, Kenyatta University, Maseno University, Strathmore University, University of Nairobi, and JKUAT). Six nationalities (Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Cameroon and USA) were also represented. A report from the workshop is available [here](https://mtawainc.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/Workshop-Report.pdf) (https://mtawainc.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/Workshop-Report.pdf).



Dr. Nomali Ngobese



Dr. Mercy Ngunjiri



Ms. Pamela Mugisha



MTAWA-JKUAT Workshop Snapshot

## Member Spotlight



On Dec 11, 2018, Dr. Margaret Okomo-Adhiambo was inducted as Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences, in Pretoria, SA. Fellows are elected based on achievements including their publication record, innovations, leadership roles and contribution to policy and to the development of science on the continent, and globally. Dr. Okomo-Adhiambo says “[I am] very humbled and honored to be part of this prestigious group of scientists.”

Dr. Margaret Okomo Adhiambo is a Health Scientist and Bioinformatics Lead at the Office of Informatics, NCIRD, CDC. She holds a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from the University of Nairobi, a PhD in Cell and Molecular Biology from the University of Nevada-Reno, and a Master of Public Health (Applied Epidemiology) from Emory University.

## Our Members on the Move

### Mentees

*Mercy Ngunjiri* graduated with a PhD in Soil Science and Agronomy from Purdue University in August 2018. Dr. Ngunjiri is now a Postdoctoral Research Associate with USDA-ARS.

*Esther Mosase* graduated with a PhD in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering from South Dakota State University in December 2018. Dr. Mosase is now a Staff Research Associate at UC Davis (UC Cooperative Extension).

*Pamela Mugisha* recently joined Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi to pursue a PhD in Geospatial Computing Sciences.

### Mentors

*Dr. Margaret Okomo-Adhiambo* was inducted as Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences in December 2018.

*Dr. Nomali Ngobese* was recently appointed to the faculty at the University of Johannesburg, Department of Botany and Plant Biotechnology.

*Prof. Margaret Gitau* received the Seeds for Success (Excellence in Research) Award from Purdue University in October 2018

*Prof. Clare Muhoro* received the 2018 University System of Maryland’s Board of Regents’ Award for Public Service.

***Congratulations to all!***

### Board Member Partings

*Prof. Elimelda Moige Onger* (former Treasurer and Board Member). Many thanks for your service.

## Welcome New Treasurer

**Dr. Margaret Okomo-Adhiambo**

*Many thanks for taking on this role!*

## Into the Future

We recently rolled out our strategic plan for the period 2019-2023.

Our goals are to:

- 1) Expand MTAWA's reach across Africa by recruiting and engaging mentors, mentees, and partners from around the continent and globally
- 2) Deepen relationships among members and partners to ensure sustainability of the organization
- 3) Raise funds for the Network to ensure sustainability and continued success
- 4) Offer financial support to students and early career mentees to increase their opportunities and chances of success
- 5) Develop and/or support regional groups to ensure access to networks and mentoring
- 6) Provide a variety of mentoring opportunities through diverse mentoring models.

*"Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family." Kofi Annan*

## Our 2018 Volunteers

Dr. Anastasia Njoroge (Purdue University)

Ms. Elizabeth Kabeu (Safaricom Limited)

Dr. Jacqueline Kariithi (Princeton University)

Dr. Mercy Ngunjiri (USDA-ARS)

Ms. Rosetta Ngugi (Towson University and MTAWA)

Ms. Wairimu Wambua (University of Nairobi graduate 2017)

Ms. Elizabeth Wamicha and Ms. Rufina King'ori (Strathmore Univ.)

MTAWA Board Members

MTAWA-JKUAT Workshop Volunteers

*Many thanks to you all for all your efforts!*

We have adopted four mentoring models:

1. One-on-One mentoring which is the model we have typically used
2. Peer Mentoring, which we have had going for a while
3. Speed Mentoring, which we first used at the MTAWA-JKUAT Workshop (then termed one-on-one consultations)
4. Group Mentoring, which is our newest initiative.

This latter model holds great promise for more frequent interactions with larger groups and feedback from a panel of mentors, but it will take some time for us to get it functioning effectively. We will also be rolling out a new system to help track mentee-mentor engagement and progress (all models). This information will be made available in the near future.

## Get Involved

**Provide mentee support** for regional, national, or international travel (professional); GRE and TOEFL Exams; Application fees. Donate now through PayPal (<https://www.PayPal.Me/mtawainc> or search for mtawainc@gmail.com) or via GoFundMe (<https://www.gofundme.com/mtawa-scholarship-fund>), or send us a check payable to MTAWA (send to: 4315 Commerce Dr. Ste 440-250, Lafayette, IN. 47905). If you would like your donations to be designated for a particular item, please let us know and we will ensure it is used as such. All donations are tax-deductible. In-kind donations are also accepted.

## Not Yet a Member?

**Join Today** at <https://mtawainc.org/page/> or send us an email at [mtawainc@gmail.com](mailto:mtawainc@gmail.com).

## About MTAWA

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The Mentoring neTwork for African Women in Academia (MTAWA) is an organization that establishes and builds networks for African women in academia in support of their academic and professional growth and success. By convening groups of African women professionals, scholars, and students we provide much needed information, mentoring, and support.

**For more information:**

Visit: <https://mtawainc.org/>

Contact Us: [mtawainc@gmail.com](mailto:mtawainc@gmail.com)

*Happy New Year!*

MTAWA, Inc. 4315 Commerce Dr. Ste 440-250, Lafayette, IN. 47905

