



# KUSAT DIAC 2026

DIASPORA INNOVATION & AI CONFERENCE

## PROGRAM

Connecting Global Talent to Driving Innovation, Shape the Future of AI and Strengthening Diaspora Engagement

📅 June 24–25, 2026

📍 Marymount University, Washington D.C.



# DAY 1 — WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2026 | AI, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

**Time** 8:00 – 9:00

**Format** REGISTRATION

**Session Title** Delegate Registration & Networking Breakfast

**Moderator** Facilitator, Dr. Ouma Otieno

**Time** 9:00 – 9:15

**Format** CEREMONY

**Session Title** Official Welcome — Setting the Stage

**Speaker(s)** Fr. Gabriel (Prayer and Welcome)

**Moderator** (emcee, Liz Njuguna, Esq.)

**Theme Pillar** Cross-cutting

**Time** 9:15 – 10:00

**Format** KEYNOTE

**Session Title** Africa in the Age of AI: Why Sovereignty Starts Here

**Speaker(s)** Amb. David Kerich

**Moderator** Cleophas Oluoch

**Theme Pillar** AI & Emerging Technologies

**Time** 10:00 – 10:50

**Format** DEBATE

**Session Title** Who Controls Africa's AI Future?

**Speaker(s)**

- Humphrey Muchuma
- John Paul Okwiri
  
- Karani Namunyu
- Deborah Kariuki

**Moderator** Dr. Jean-Leah Njoroge

**Theme Pillar** AI & Emerging Technologies

**Time** 10:50 – 11:05

**Format** BREAK

**Session Title** Morning Break & Exhibition

**Time** 11:05 – 11:45

**Format** FIRESIDE

**Session Title** We Tried. We Failed. We Built Again.

**Speaker(s)**

Isaac Rashid Agina  
Joanne Marime

**Moderator** Brian George

**Theme Pillar** Innovation Ecosystems & Entrepreneurship

**Time** 11:45 – 12:30

**Format** KEYNOTE

**Session Title** Digital Transformation in Africa

**Speaker(s)** Dana L. Banks  
Celina Lee

**Moderator** (Facilitator, Cleophas Oluoch)

**Theme Pillar** AI & Emerging Technologies

**Time** 12:30 – 1:30

**Format** BREAK

**Session Title** Lunch Break & Sponsor Exhibition

**Time** 1:30 – 2:15

**Format** PANEL

**Session Title** Can AI Save African Healthcare — or Break It?

**Speaker(s)** Dr. Pauline Otieno  
Dr. Vane Gichana  
Dr. John Gachogo

**Moderator** Dr. James Muruthi

**Theme Pillar** AI & Emerging Technologies

**Time** 2:15 – 3:00

**Format** PANEL

**Session Title** The AI Infrastructure Imperative: Data Centers, Power, Cooling & Networks in Africa

**Speaker(s)** Dr. Ichatha Kamanu  
Mr. Paul Mbugua  
Dr. Lawrence Nderu

**Moderator** Dr. Jean-Leah Njoroge

**Theme Pillar** AI Infrastructure

**Time** 3:00 – 3:15

**Format** BREAK

**Session Title** Afternoon Networking Break

**Time** 3:15 – 4:00

**Format** LIGHTNING

**Session Title** Four Big Ideas in 45 Minutes

**Speaker(s)** Titus (Carerra) Kariuki  
Dr. Gordon Ogutu  
Prof. Jonathan K. Ngugi  
John Paul Okwiri

**Moderator** Emmanuel Kieti

**Theme Pillar** Innovation Ecosystems & Entrepreneurship

**Time** 4:00 – 4:45

**Format** WORKSHOP

**Session Title** Build an AI Startup in 45 Minutes – Live Design Sprint

**Speaker(s)** Humphrey Muchuma  
Owen Sakawa

**Moderator** (Facilitator, Jude Kikuyu)

**Theme Pillar** Innovation Ecosystems & Entrepreneurship

**Time** 4:45 – 5:25

**Format** FIRESIDE

**Session Title** VC Fireside: Africa's Universities as the AI Innovation Engine

**Speaker(s)** Prof. Mwenda Ntarangwi  
Prof. Charles O. Ochola

**Moderator** Dr. James Muruthi

**Theme Pillar** STEM Talent & Future of Work

**Time** 5:25 – 5:35

**Format** CEREMONY

**Session Title** Day 1 Wrap-Up & Preview of Day 2

**Facilitator** Brian George (Emcee)

**Time**

**5:35 – 6:30**

**Format**

NETWORKING

**Session Title**

Evening Networking

# DAY 2 — THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2026 | Talent, Diaspora & Opportunity

**Time** 8:30 – 9:00

**Format** REGISTRATION

**Session Title** Day 2 Check-In & Morning Networking

**Moderator** Facilitator, Tiberias Okang'a

**Time** 9:00 – 9:10

**Format** CEREMONY

**Session Title** Day 2 Welcome & Day 1 Highlights Reel

**Speaker(s)** Mercy Maseki (Emcee)

**Time** 9:10 – 9:50

**Format** KEYNOTE

**Session Title** Diaspora in Power: What Representation Really Means

**Speaker(s)** Rep. Huldah N. Hiltzley

**Moderator** (Facilitator, Liz Njuguna, Esq.)

**Time** 9:50 – 10:40

**Format** DEBATE

**Session Title** DIASPORA DEBATE: Are We Helping or Hurting?

**Speaker(s)** Prof. Jonathan K. Ngugi  
Dr. Fidelis Ndombera

Owen Sakawa  
Deborah Kariuki

**Moderator** Naomi Thiru

**Theme Pillar** Diaspora Engagement & Global Collaboration

**Time** 10:40 – 10:55

**Format** BREAK

**Session Title** Morning Break & Exhibition

**Time** 10:55 – 11:40

**Format** PANEL

**Session Title** Breaking Into AI When You Didn't Study Computer Science

**Speaker(s)** Dr. Jane Waithera  
Dr. Vane Gichana  
Ms. Naomi Thiru

**Moderator** Dr. James Muruthi

**Theme Pillar** STEM Talent & Future of Work

**Time** 11:40 – 12:20

**Format** FIRESIDE

**Session Title** Diaspora Investment: What Actually Works

**Speaker(s)** Dr. Gordon Ogutu  
Dr. Robert Chiuri  
Hon. Martin Moshisho Martine

**Moderator** Brian George

**Theme Pillar** Diaspora Engagement & Global Collaboration

**Time** 11:20 – 1:20

**Format** BREAK

**Session Title** Lunch Break & Sponsor Showcase

**Time** 1:20 – 1:30

**Format** SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

**Session Title** Sustainable Economic Impact: Diaspora Investment Opportunities

**Speaker(s)** Nawaz Juneja, Paul Mbugua and Nancy Masila

**Moderator** Karimi Igeria

**Theme Pillar** Diaspora Engagement & Global Collaboration

**Time** 1:30 – 3:00

**Format** SHOWCASE

**Session Title** DIAC Innovation Showcase: Startup & Project Pitches  
"Participating startups & project teams"

**Speaker(s)** Morris Mbetsa , Lance Kinyanjui, Lorna Sempele,  
Virginiah Onyara and Silper Pesa  
Judges: Joan Mbesya & Dr. Verrah Otiende

**Moderator** Facilitator, Mercy Maseki

**Theme Pillar** Innovation Ecosystems & Entrepreneurship

**Time** 3:00 – 3:45

**Format** LAB

**Session Title** Partnership Lab: Structured Deal-Making &  
Collaboration

**Speaker(s)** Julius Kemei  
Terry Irungu  
Karimi Igeria  
Danish Rayola

**Moderator** Edwin Makini

**Theme Pillar** Diaspora Engagement & Global Collaboration

**Time** 3:45 – 4:20

**Format** PANEL

**Session Title** Closing Roundtable: One Commitment Each — Building the Kenya-USA Tech Bridge

**Speaker(s)** Prof. Mwenda Ntarangwi  
Prof. Charles O. Ochola  
Dr. Lawrence Nderu

**Moderator** Cleophas Oluoch

**Theme Pillar** Cross-cutting

**Time** 4:20 – 4:40

**Format** CALL TO ACTION

**Session Title** Conference Recommendations

**Moderator** Facilitator, Dr. Verrah Otiende

**Theme Pillar** Cross-cutting

**Time** 4:40 – 5:30

**Format** CEREMONY

**Session Title** Awards, Acknowledgements & Official Conference Close

**Speaker(s)** Rep. Huldah N. Hiltzley  
Amb. David Kerich  
Hon. Martin Moshisho

**Facilitator** Dr. Ouma Mak'Ouma

**Time** 5:30 – 6:30

**Format** NETWORKING

**Session Title** Closing Networking

# SPEAKERS



**AMB. DAVID KERICH**  
Embassy of Kenya, Washington  
DC



**CELINA LEE**  
Co-founder and the CEO of  
Zindi



**PROF MWENDA  
NTARANGWI**  
Vice Chancellor, USIU-Africa



**PROF. CHARLES O.  
OCHOLA**  
Vice Chancellor



**DR. VANE GICHANA**  
Professor University of St. Thomas



**HULDAH N. HILTSLEY, MBA,  
CIPP/E, CHPSE**  
Minnesota House of Representative



**MORRIS MBETSA**  
Founder Numeral IOT USA



**DR. PAULINE OTIENO-  
KIBISU**  
Healthcare provider



**GORDON OGUTU, PhD**  
Postdoctoral Researcher,  
Dublin City University



**DR. LAWRENCE NDERU**  
Senior Lecturer, and Researcher in  
AI/ML | Founder JHUB Africa



**FIDELIS NDOMBERA BSC.**  
Study Lead QC Scientist III at  
Labcorp



**JOAN MBESYA**  
Founder/C.E.O - Tech  
Mindset Africa



**DANA L. BANKS**  
Nonresident Senior Fellow  
Atlantic Council's Africa Center.



**HON. MARTIN MOSHISHO  
MARTINE**  
Deputy Governor, Kajiado County



**PROF. JONATHAN K. NGUGI**  
Associate professor, University of  
Lay Adventists of Kigali



**DR. JOHN  
GACHAGO**  
VP Digital Innovation,  
Parrish Medical Center.



**MR. PAUL MBUGUA**  
Founder and CEO Eclectics



**DR. ROBERT CHIURI**  
President & CEO, One  
Voice Consortium and  
Food Security



**DR. JANE WAITERA**  
HR Leader  
IT Firm in Northern Virginia



**JOHN PAUL OKWIRI**  
CEO, Konza Technopolis



**DEBORAH KARIUKI**  
Assistant Teaching Professor  
University of Maryland, Baltimore  
County



**OWEN SAKAWA**  
Founder, CEO & Global AI  
Safety & Governance Leader



**ISAAC RASHID AGINA**  
Social Entrepreneur and  
Experienced Educator



**HUMPHREY MUCHUMA**  
Founder & Group CEO, INUA AI  
Group



**TITUS (CARRERA)  
KARIUKI**  
AI Use Case Strategist



**JOANNE MARIME**  
Professional Speaker | Sr.  
Technical Program Manager at  
Microsoft



**DANISH RAYOLA**  
AI Governance, Data Privacy &  
Cybersecurity Law Expert



**KARANI NAMUNYU, MBA**  
Sr. Advisor Global market  
operations, Dell Technologies



**NAWAZ JUNEJA**  
Senior Sales Partner  
Unity Homes



**NAOMI THIRU**  
Dept. Administrator  
Kaiser Permanente



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