

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



VOLUME X3

JANUARY TO MARCH 2025

ROOTED IN RESILIENCE



AKU Student Affairs Newsletter



“

As we entered the first quarter of 2025, our campuses were filled with renewed purpose, vibrant activity, and moments of deep reflection. This time also marked a profound chapter in our University’s history: the passing of His Late Highness the Aga Khan, our beloved Chancellor. His extraordinary legacy, as a champion of education, dignity, and global progress, continues to shape the mission and spirit of AKU. In response to this great loss, our Counselling & Wellness team worked tirelessly to offer students space and support to grieve, reflect, and find comfort in community.

In the spirit of His Highness’s teachings, students responded with unity and purpose. The Soft Board Tribute, led by the Publications and Literary Society, offered a heartfelt expression of gratitude for his lifelong commitment to service and learning. The UMRA Love in Action Orphanage Visit, organized by our Student Experience team in Dar es Salaam, extended his legacy through acts of compassion and care.

At the same time, January to March saw a surge of student-driven initiatives across all our campuses. From trivia nights and leadership conferences to wellness workshops to Ramadan celebrations and athletic success, our community continued to grow, connect, and lead with heart.

RACHEL BALDWIN
Vice Provost, Students

This quarter was a powerful reminder of the enduring influence of a visionary leader and the strength of the AKU student body to carry that legacy forward.



INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME X3

Welcome to Volume X3 of the Beyond the Classroom Newsletter! We're excited to share highlights from the first quarter of 2025, a season of reflection, renewal, and the unwavering spirit of our students.

This issue’s theme, Rooted in Resilience, reflects the strength our community has shown through change and new beginnings. The year began with vibrant orientations across programs, welcoming new students with information, connection, and community.

From honoring the legacy of His Late Highness the Aga Khan to stepping into leadership and supporting one another’s well-being, our students continue to lead with compassion and purpose.

Inside, you'll find stories of creativity, service, and leadership that capture the heart of student life at AKU.

Happy reading!



New Student Orientation – BScN, APN, APM

KE

The 2025 cohort of BScN, APN, and APM students were welcomed with an orientation session led by university leadership. The event provided them with crucial information about university resources.

Unified Student Orientation 2025

PK

A two-day Unified Orientation was held for incoming students from SONAM, Medical College Graduate Programs, and IED (excluding MBBS). The program featured sessions on student services, SOP guidelines, a student-alumni panel discussion, a society fair, and a campus tour through a scavenger hunt organized by Student Synergy.



MBBS Orientation – Class of 2029

PK

Student Experience hosted a one-day orientation for the MBBS Class of 2029, welcoming 100 new students. The day included sessions on student services, SOP guidelines, a student panel, an alumni panel, a vibrant society fair, and a Falah bake sale.



Student Leadership Oath Ceremony

The Student Leadership Oath Ceremony took place, with elected Class Representatives (CRs), ACC Leads, and Societies Core Members from MBBS, SONAM, FAS, and IED taking an oath to serve with integrity and dedication.



- 6. Dr Alex Makau Muia
- 7. Dr Martin Odhiambo
- 8. Dr Musenya Mwangangi
- 9. Dr Gerald Odong
- 10. Dr A...
- 11. Dr ...
- 12. Ja...
- 13. N...

AKUSA Handover Ceremony

Over 100 students attended the AKUSA leadership handover and AGM. With university officials in attendance, the event highlighted the importance of student governance and ongoing campus engagement.



Honoring the Work of His Late Highness

A Soft Board Decoration Tribute organized by the Publications and Literary Society honored His Highness the Aga Khan, Chancellor of Aga Khan University, for his immense contributions to literature, publishing, and education. The tribute featured key achievements, inspirational quotes, and artistic representations, educating students about his visionary role in advancing global literacy and intellectual growth.



Using the Picture-Story Test

IED Research Team members were trained in the Picture-Story Test for psychological assessments. The session enhanced the team's diagnostic skills and expanded their qualitative research toolkit.



Eating Disorder Awareness

An informative brochure raised awareness about eating disorders, their signs, and available support resources. This initiative improved campus-wide sensitivity toward recognizing and responding to eating-related issues.



Setting Goals and Achieving Targets

Challenge Scholarship Program students participated in a goal-setting workshop designed to improve academic and personal success. Many students reported feeling more motivated and organized in their academic pursuits.

PK

HU Sports Olympiad

AKU athletes excelled in the Habib University Olympiad, with standout performances including 2 Gold Medals in Swimming. Our teams reached the Quarterfinals in Basketball (Girls) and Throwball, and the Semifinals in both Volleyball (Men and Women).



KE

Student Spotlight

Students participated in the Journalism Club's Student Spotlight event, sharing their experiences of balancing academics with extracurricular activities. The session provided inspiration and time management tips for their peers.

PK

Adjusting to University Life

First-year BScN and Post RN nursing students learned strategies for managing the transition to AKU, including coping with academic pressure and social adjustments. The session eased anxieties and strengthened their sense of belonging on campus.



PK

Indoor Rowing Championship

The AKU Rowing team dominated the IBA Indoor Rowing Championship, winning 5 Golds, 7 Silvers, and 5 Bronzes. The team was crowned University Category Champions, showcasing outstanding performance and teamwork.

Happiness Day Celebrations

Held in collaboration with the HR Employee Wellness Office, this event celebrated positivity and community well-being. It featured a wellness booth and activities, uplifting spirits and fostering stronger interpersonal connections across campus.

PK





PK WWF x SOCCH Beach Clean-Up
WWF and the Society of Climate Conservation and Health (SoCCH) led a joint coastal clean-up and mangrove planting activity. The initiative helped reduce waste pollution and supported environmental restoration through hands-on student participation.

TZ International Women's Day
For International Women's Day, the Student Affairs Office and campus partners organized a health and wellness-focused event promoting inclusivity and personal growth. Activities included "Dear Future Me" goal-setting letters, yoga sessions, a healthy snack bar, a wellness-themed keychain sale, and a Graffiti Board where participants shared their health goals.



PK

Falah Bake Sale

In a collaborative effort, Falah MBBS and SONAM hosted a Bake Sale to raise funds, with food and game stalls set up in the quad. The event catered to both regular students and newcomers attending the Unified Orientation, creating a fun and engaging atmosphere while supporting a worthy cause.



PK

Community Iftar Drive

The AKU Explorers Club, in collaboration with a student-run NGO and an external organization, organized a community Iftar Drive to give back during Ramadan. Volunteers assisted in setting up and distributing meals to the less privileged, fostering unity and compassion. This initiative highlighted the club's commitment to service and making a meaningful impact.

Book Drive at St. Charles Lwanga

60+ students and staff from the AKU Book Club and Serein Society visited the St. Charles Lwanga Children's Home. They donated books, hosted educational activities, and shared career advice, reinforcing AKU's commitment to community support.

KE



Debating Championship **PK**

AKU's debating team won the Most Promising Team Trophy at the Ziauddin University Debating Championship, demonstrating significant growth and skill in competitive debating.



East African Student Leaders Conference

AKUSA leaders from Nairobi and Kampala attended the East African Student Leaders Conference in Mombasa. The four-day summit focused on leadership, ethics, and sustainability, providing valuable insights for future student leaders.

KEUG



Alumni-Student Community Iftar

Students and alumni at AKU-ISMC participated in a feedback session to review and discuss the MA programme surveys. Insights gathered will help shape future curriculum planning and student experience. The session concluded with a community Iftar for all.

UK

KBC Rowing Regatta **PK**

The AKU Rowing team excelled at the Karachi Boat Club, securing 6 Golds, 3 Silvers, and the KBC Collegiate Women's Trophy. The Rowing Girls team clinched the Gold Medal, while the Boys team earned Silver.





TZ World Storytelling Day

Students honed their storytelling and public speaking skills in preparation for World Storytelling Day, an experience that sparked the launch of Transforming Tales—a new student-led club dedicated to sharing personal narratives that inspire, challenge, and connect audiences.

PK WWF Digital Eco-Internship Sessions

In partnership with our Office of Student Experience, WWF conducted a series of Digital Eco-Internship sessions on our Karachi campus, focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals. Over 8 sessions spanning 3 months, 10 AKU students were selected to participate, alongside external students.



PK Understanding and Supporting Mental Health

Parents of MBBS Class of 2029 were equipped with knowledge and strategies to support their children's mental health. The session increased parents' confidence in addressing mental health needs and encouraged students to seek counseling support.





Journalism Club Trivia Night

The Journalism Club kicked off the semester with a fast-paced trivia evening, bringing together 30+ students. The event was designed to reconnect members and spark enthusiasm for upcoming activities.



1st Karachi University Literature Festival

Eight AKU students participated in the inaugural Karachi University Literature Festival, competing in categories such as Calligraphy and Essay Writing. Najma Naeem won 1st place in Calligraphy, marking a significant achievement for AKU in the arts.



Love in Action: Giving Back to UMRA Orphanage

Our Student Experience team organized a charity drive for the UMRA Orphanage Centre in Magomeni, Dar es Salaam, collecting food, soap, cooking oil, paper, and charcoal through donations from students, faculty, and staff. The visit aimed to provide essentials and share a message of care with the children.



UG

Environment Club Launch

The launch of the Aga Khan University Environmental Club inspired participants to take action for environmental sustainability. The event, marking the handover to a new committee, emphasized the importance of caring for the environment and included activities like tree planting and the distribution of eco-friendly shopping bags. The event highlighted the collective power of students and staff in driving positive environmental change.

UG

Student Leadership Orientation and Training

Student leaders attended a comprehensive leadership training session, which included interactive activities, team-building exercises, and sessions on communication and management, empowered the leaders to enhance their leadership skills. Certificates were awarded to participants, marking the success of the session in preparing them to lead with impact at AKU and beyond.



TZ

Awareness to Action

Over 80 participants attended the Mental Health Talk: Awareness to Action, highlighting the impact of addiction and the importance of early intervention, professional help, and community support.

PK

Staying Resilient

Year Three MBBS students attended a workshop on resilience, learning coping mechanisms and growth mindsets. Participants felt better equipped to handle academic stress and maintain motivation.



KE

Open Mic: Mental Health & Relationships

The Journalism Club and Serein Society co-hosted an open mic session where students shared personal reflections on mental health, relationships, and emotional boundaries. The event offered a safe space for dialogue and peer support.



PK

Finding Inner Peace

SONAM students participated in mindfulness and emotional regulation exercises. Many reported feeling calmer and more equipped to manage academic stress, benefiting from improved focus and emotional balance.



PK

Personal Well-Being Session: Finding Your Ground

New MBBS students engaged in a session focused on balancing personal identity amidst academic pressures. Students reported increased self-confidence and a greater understanding of the importance of maintaining balance in their lives.



KE

Serein Movie Night

Serein Society's movie night gathered 40 students for a relaxed evening of film and conversation, offering a welcoming space to ease into the semester and strengthen community bonds.



PK

Women's Volleyball Exhibition Match

In celebration of International Women's Day, the AKU Green and White Volleyball teams competed in an exhibition match, emphasizing women's empowerment in sports.



Parliamentary Debating Competition

AKU's Omaima and Muneeb reached the semifinals in the Szabist hosted competition with 20 teams and 40 individual participants. They represented AKU against teams from FAST, NED, Bahria University, and Karachi University. Omaima also earned Runners-Up Best Speaker.

Counselling Workshop

Final-year MBBS students participated in a workshop to develop self-awareness and stress management techniques. The session helped students feel more prepared for clinical responsibilities and challenges post-graduation.



SRF Workshop Series

The Student Research Forum (SRF) hosted a dynamic series of workshops and sessions throughout February and March, designed to equip students with essential research skills and insights into medical school success. Highlights included a Q&A with Dr. Samrah Razi and workshops on Data Cleaning, Descriptive Statistics, and Systematic Reviews.



AKU



Student Affairs

