

Kenya engineering university students to receive free software

The Kenya section of the global Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) has confirmed continuity a partnership with Microsoft under which a wide selection of software is provided to IEEE student members and graduate student members for free.

IEEE Kenya section chairman, Vincent Kaabunga said the offer by Microsoft for access to free software for student members and another initiative through which Microsoft inspires students into innovation through the IEEE.tv continues this year.

"These programs have inspiring benefits to our student members. They have helped create the fundamental foundation for students in computer science, robotics, nanotechnology and other fields of engineering," said Kaabunga.

Last year, IEEE students' members in Kenya enjoyed access to free Microsoft software worth Sh50Million, according to Kaabunga. The value is expected to rise to Sh100Million worth of software this year following growth in IEEE Kenya student members register.

IEEE and Microsoft signed the partnership in 2011. According to the Kenya Chapter, the partnership with Microsoft and another program with IBM dubbed "Tryengineering.org" have been important incentives to engineering education among students.

"These initiatives have supported the advancement of engineering and computing. They have attracted new students into the engineering field and boosted innovation among students," said Anne Ndugire, convener of the IEEE Women in Engineering at the IEEE Kenya section.

The Kenya section was last year recognised internationally for being among most active IEEE sections in Africa. Indeed, last month, the section activities caught the attention of Dr. Peter Staecker, the global president of the IEEE based in New Jersey who led a high powered delegation to Nairobi on a fact finding mission on how the New York based organisation credited with major global inventions, including electricity, telephony, wireless network among others could better support the achievement of the country's digital vision. Among those who visited the country included immediate past president, Dr. Gordon Day and Matthew Loeb the executive director IEEE Foundation.

A program by the IEEE university student members in Kenya where they visit high schools to inspire students into engineering and another where they carrying out engineering projects together with high schools students in their schools was praised by the visiting delegation. They were in particular were fascinated by a program in Kasiluni, Machakos where the university and high school students had combined to deploy green energy systems for their schools because the area was not served by the national power grid.