SPEECH BY THE PRINCIPAL,

THE KERIO VALLEY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,

PROF. PAUL K. TARUS,

DURING THE ORIENTATION DAY FOR THE INAUGURAL STUDENTS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/2027

Friday, 18th September 2026

- **The Vice-Chancellor, University of Eldoret,**
- **Representatives of the Government of Elgeyo Marakwet County,**
- **The Chief Principal, Tambach Teachers Training College,**
- **Members of Staff,**
- **And, most importantly, our 457 pioneer students,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

Today, I stand before you with immense pride, gratitude and a profound sense of history.

This is not just another orientation day.

This is a day that will be remembered.

Today, we are witnessing the birth of a new chapter in higher education in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Today, the dream of establishing **The Kerio Valley University College** moves from paper to people, from plans to purpose and from vision to reality.

And at the centre of this historic moment are **457 young men and women**.

You.

Our pioneer students.

I therefore welcome you, not merely as students, but as the **first custodians of the legacy of The Kerio Valley University College.**

Ladies and gentlemen, history has opened its doors—and our students are walking through them today.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW INSTITUTION

Distinguished guests,

The establishment of KVUC has been a journey of vision, partnership, sacrifice and determination.

We acknowledge with deep gratitude the support of the **Government of Elgeyo Marakwet County**, the **University of Eldoret**, our mentor institution, the **Commission for University Education**, the **Ministry of Education**, **Tambach Teachers Training College**, the local community and all our partners and stakeholders.

The formal establishment of KVUC through **Legal Notice No. 105, published in the Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 148 on 18th June 2026**, marked a defining milestone.

But a university college is not built by gazette notices alone.

It is built by **people.**

It is built by students who dream.

By lecturers who teach.

By researchers who discover.

By staff who serve.

By leaders who provide direction.

And by communities that believe.

Today, therefore, we begin building.

And our first building blocks are **you—the pioneer students.**

TO OUR 457 PIONEER STUDENTS

Dear students,

You are **457**, comprising **298 female students and 159 male students**.

You have come to KVUC to pursue Bachelor of Education (Arts), Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Tourism Management.

You have arrived from different parts of the country, carrying different dreams and different stories.

But from this day forward, you share something special.

You are the **pioneer generation of Kerio Valley University College.**

Years from now, when this institution has grown, when its lecture halls are full, when its laboratories and libraries have expanded, when thousands of students walk through these grounds, people will ask:

"Who were the first students?" The answer will be:

"The Class of 2026/2027."

That is why I want you to understand the responsibility that comes with being first (First borns).

You are not simply entering KVUC; you are helping to define it.

Your conduct will shape our culture.

Your achievements will shape our reputation.

Your discipline will shape our standards.

And your dreams will help shape our future.

OUR MOTTO: SPRING OF KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION

Our motto is:

“Spring of Knowledge and Innovation.”

There is a reason we chose the word **Spring**.

A spring is a source.

It gives life.

It flows.

It nourishes.

It does not exist only for itself.

In the same spirit, KVUC must become a source of **knowledge, innovation, opportunity and transformation** for our students, our communities and our nation.

And I want each of you to become a spring in your own right.

Let your mind be a spring of ideas.

Let your hands be instruments of innovation.

Let your education become a source of transformation.

And let your knowledge serve humanity.

You are not expected as students come to university merely to seek a certificate after four years study but you are expected to acquire the capacity to change the world.

YOUR UNIVERSITY JOURNEY

Dear students,

University is a new beginning.

- For many of you, this is the first time you are making major decisions about your own lives.
- With that freedom comes responsibility.
- Nobody will follow you to class.
- Nobody will remind you every evening to read.
- Nobody will force you to submit your assignments.

The responsibility is now yours.

Your future will be shaped by the choices you make when nobody is watching.

- Attend your lectures.
- Read widely.
- Ask questions.
- Respect your lecturers.
- Use the library.
- Make good friends.
- Manage your time.
- And never be afraid to seek help when you need it.

Remember:

“A university gives you opportunities; what you do with those opportunities is your responsibility.”

EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY

At KVUC, we want excellence.

But we want **excellence with integrity.**

We shall encourage you to compete, but not to cheat.

We shall encourage ambition, but not at the expense of others.

We shall encourage innovation with honesty.

Academic fraud, examination cheating, plagiarism, violence, harassment and indiscipline have no place in this institution.

Let me say this very clearly:

A student of The KVUC must not only show what you know; but also show who you become in the four years at this institution.

- We want students who are knowledgeable.
- We also want students who are honest.
- We want students who are not only competent but also compassionate.
- We want students who are ambitious and responsible.
- We want students who can lead and understand that true leadership begins with service.

BUILDING THE KVUC WE WANT

Dear pioneer students,

Because you are first, you have a unique opportunity.

You will help establish traditions.

You will establish the tone of student life.

You will create the culture that future generations will inherit.

So I challenge you:

Build a culture of excellence.

Build a culture of respect.

Build a culture of innovation.

Build a culture of discipline.

Build a culture where students support one another.

Build a culture where every student feels that they belong.

Let the first footprints on this campus be footprints worth emulating.

That is your responsibility.

TO OUR STAFF

To our members of staff, we have been given a rare privilege.

We are the first generation entrusted with building the foundations of this institution.

Future generations will inherit what we build today.

- We will serve with commitment, professionalism, integrity and humility.
- We will remember that every student who walks through our doors carries a dream.
- **We will never be reason that any dream is diminished at KVUC, i**nstead, we will be part of the reason it becomes reality.

TO OUR PIONEER STUDENTS—A FINAL CHALLENGE

My dear students,

In the years ahead, you will face challenges.

There will be difficult examinations.

There will be demanding assignments.

There will be moments when you feel discouraged.

When those moments come, remember today.

Remember that you were the first.

Remember that you were entrusted with something bigger than yourselves.

And remember why you came here.

I want you to leave this orientation with five commitments:

Commit yourself to excellence.

Commit yourself to integrity.

Commit yourself to discipline.

Commit yourself to innovation.

Commit yourself to service.

If you hold firmly to these five principles, you will not only graduate with a degree.

You will graduate with **character, competence and purpose.**

CONCLUSION

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we are planting a seed.

It is a small seed.

But within it lies the possibility of a great tree.

A tree that will provide knowledge.

A tree that will provide opportunity.

A tree that will provide leadership.

A tree whose branches will reach far beyond Elgeyo Marakwet.

And our pioneer students are the first leaves on that tree.

To our 457 students:

Dream big.

Work hard.

Stand tall.

Remain humble.

Serve others.

And never forget where your journey began.

You were here when the Spring began to flow.

And when future generations ask what the pioneer students of 2026/2027 did for KVUC, let the answer be:

They set the standard.

They built the culture.

They defended the name.

They pursued excellence.

And they left the institution better than they found it.

Dear pioneer students,

Your journey starts today.

Your opportunity is now.

Your legacy is yours to build.

Welcome to **The Kerio Valley University College**.

Welcome to the **Spring of Knowledge and Innovation**.

Welcome, **Pioneer Students of 2026/2027**.

Welcome to history.

May God bless you.

May God bless The Kerio Valley University College.

May God bless Elgeyo Marakwet County.

And may God bless our great nation, Kenya.

Thank you, and welcome to KVUC.