The 38th convocation of FAST-NU Karachi Main campus was held on November 22, 2014 in which 253 Bachelors and 37 students of Masters received their degrees.

Bachelor degrees were awarded in three disciplines including Business Administration, Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, while students of Computer Science, Management Science and Software Project Management received their Master degrees.

Dr. Amir Muhammed, Rector, FAST-NU, was the chief guest at the convocation. Dr. Abdul Wahab, Member Board of Governors, FAST-NU, also attended the convocation and gave medals to the graduates. Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the position holders.

Dr. Amir Muhammed congratulated graduates on achieving the landmark and their parents on this memorable event of their lives. He advised the graduates to be sincere to the country as it is facing very hard times and apprised the audience about the latest developments in the field of science and technology and the role played by these technologies in the growth and development of the country. “The youth needs to do the right job with dignity and hard work,” he remarked. Dr. Zubair A. Shaikh, Director Karachi campus, said, “our graduates are serving in renowned organizations like Microsoft, Oracle, IBM and other top notch companies world over.”

More than 50 percent of the total strength of employees hired from Pakistan for these institutions are FASTians, he added.

International Network for Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE) acknowledges the efforts of Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) of FAST-NU by giving maximum coverage to its pertinent quality assurance contribution, made at national and international levels, in its News Bulletin for December 2014. The prominent activities of FAST-NU across all campuses selected for coverage in the INQAAHE bulletin included contribution of QEC as a reviewer in the prestigious membership publication of Chartered Quality Institute UK “Quality World Magazine” for issue of November 2014, presentation of a concept paper on quality management in an international conference conducted by Muhammad Ali Jinnah University on October 16, 2014, presentation of a case study on FAST-NU quality assurance framework in an international workshop on innovation in services sector, attended by more than 50 quality professionals across seven Asian countries and facilitated by Asian Productivity Organization - Japan from September 8 to 11, 2014, participation in an international convention on quality management organized by QPSI and PIQC from November 17 to 18, 2014, and completion of self-assessment cycle of BS Computer Science program as per Higher Education Commission requirements.

Periodic visibility of quality assurance activities of FAST-NU on such global forums is a great pride for the university. Regular high circulating coverage facilitates FAST-NU in getting more recognition for its quality-centered approach in education among over 200 outstanding INQAAHE member organizations across the world. This achievement is credited to the collective work of the management and QEC teams in Islamabad, Karachi, Faisalabad, and Peshawar campuses.
Lahore campus organizes workshop on LaTeX

LaTeX is a document preparation system. It is widely used for the communication and publication of scientific documents in many fields. Keeping in view its importance for academia, NUCES Circuits Society (NCS), FAST-NU, Lahore campus organized a two-day workshop on LaTeX from November 27 to 28, 2014. Students from BS and MS programs attended the workshop. Ms. Farah Nadeem, Faculty Electrical Engineering, Lahore campus, conducted the workshop. A brief lecture was given by Mr. A. D. Raza, Faculty Electrical Engineering, Lahore campus, on the third day of the workshop followed by an interactive session with the students.

The workshop received an overwhelming response. Besides MS and BS final year students of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science departments, a number of faculty members also attended the workshop.

A series of well-crafted tutorials were given on an effective utilization when preparing a document like programmable desktop publishing features and automated typesetting including numbering and cross-referencing of tables and figures, chapter and section headings, the inclusion of graphics, page layout, indexing and bibliographies. After covering the basics, IEEE/Chicago documentation styles were introduced. The students were taught to use this tool for writing the research papers as well as preparing their final year project reports and thesis reports. A number of exercises were provided so the participants can get hands-on experience.

DramaF Team wins contest

DramaF Team at FAST-NU Lahore campus has won accolades for FAST-NU in two major events. In the LUMS Drama Festival, DramaF of FAST-NU performed a play "Final Applause" bearing a unique new concept in terms of idea, story and representation and won two major awards for the Best Actress (Nida Zaidi) and Best Production (make-up and costumes).

Many teams including LSE, IBA, IQRA University, LGS, IOBM, UCL and Punjab University participated in this competition. In second competition, FAST-NU team outperformed all other teams in one of the major drama competitions of Pakistan “Colours & Humors”. This mega event was being participated by 16 institutes including LUMS, LSE, UET, UCP, LGS, UOL, Punjab University, NCA, B. Z. University, SOS village, UCL, ALJT, Beacon House Defence, BNU and SZABIST.

The play of DramaF won all major awards including Best actress (Nida Zaidi), Best actor (Fahad Abdullah Sheikh), Best Director and Best Play. The play was also nominated for the Best Script and the Best technical Support.

Quran Society arranges lecture

FAST Quran Society at Peshawar campus organized a lecture on “The First Flight” – The first step in the journey towards change”. The guest speaker, Raja Zia ul Haq, was invited to deliver a speech on the topic. He is a focal person who regularly arranges talks and conducts workshops on youth related issues. He is currently the President & CEO of “Youth Club” and is also affiliated with Al-Huda International, Pakistan. He is a foreign qualified, having degrees from UK & Australia.

Key theme of his speech was how a youth can become a positive contributor towards society in general and to Islam in specific. His main focus was on discovering innate qualities that play a defining role in one’s purpose of life.

Table Tennis Tournament

FAST-NU Peshawar campus organized a Table Tennis tournament on November 29 in which the team competed with Government College, Hayatabad.

Four of the best FAST-NU players, including champion and runner-up of the Intra-FAST Sports Tournament, and two of the best teams took part in the singles and doubles events, respectively. Government College team won the competition in the doubles tournament. GC Hayatabad students acknowledged and appreciated FAST-NU for hosting a tournament of an otherwise neglected sport. The guest players also thanked FAST-NU for the hospitality shown by the campus.
FYP students’ thrive at Young Innovators Pakistan 2014

The students of final year project at Electrical Engineering department, Lahore campus, have won first and second prizes in the Engineering Project Competition at Young Innovators Pakistan 2014 at METRO Electronics Gala. More than 30 teams from renowned engineering schools took part in the competition. Only nine teams with innovative project ideas made it to the final round.

FAST-NU team competed and won first prize with Rs. 100,000 cash prize for its project titled “Delta 3D Printer: An additive manufacturing machine”. Awais Khan, Asim Yousuf and M. Nasir were the team members of this project.

The 3D printer is a rapid prototyping machine that takes the 3D computer-aided-design model from computer software and makes the plastic replica of the object, using the fused filament fabrication technology. The Delta (parallel-robotics) mechanism efficiently reduces the mechanical complexity as compared to the primitive 3D printer designs that employ Cartesian mechanisms. Delta 3D printer can not only be used in the industries for mass production of objects, but also in every home for printing objects that are needed daily, within few minutes. This method is extremely economical than the existing techniques of injection moulding.

The second team comprising Urwa Arshad, M. Hassan Ahmed and Jawaria Ata bagged second prize with Rs. 50,000 cash for their project titled "Field Assistive Wearable Interfaces for Visually Impaired". The project aims to develop low-cost wearable interfaces to assist the visually impaired (blind & deaf-blind) people in the areas of education, communication, social interaction, information transmission, navigation and mobility guidance. The interfaces use the concept of vibro-tactile haptics effectively integrated with Braille-code to accomplish these tasks. Mr. Omer Saleem Bhatti was the advisor of both the teams.

QEC attends international convention

Mr. Farrukh Idrees, Manager Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) FAST-NU Islamabad campus, and Mr. Qamer Ahmed, Assistant Manager QEC, CFD campus, actively participated in an international convention organized by Quality Productivity Society of Pakistan (QPSP) and PIQC Institute of Quality, from November 17 to 18 in Lahore. More than 40 papers were presented from academia and industry. Efforts for uplifting standards of quality management in higher education by QEC FAST-NU were highly appreciated by the participants. Roland K. Jahnke, an academician of the International Academy for Quality (IAQ) and the keynote speaker at the convention, expressed his keen interest in delivering a lecture in his future visit to Pakistan on quality education to FAST-NU faculty for apprising faculty about the role of quality management philosophy in academic excellence.

Meanwhile, Mr. Farrukh Idrees also presented a research paper on outcome based education in 5th International Conference on Management Research. The convention was jointly organized by IESEG School of Management, France, and Superior University from November 20 to 21, 2014 in Lahore. About five well renowned international academicians participated in the conference as panelists. The research presented by Mr. Farrukh was highly appreciated by the technical panel and participants.

A certificate of appreciation was awarded to Mr. Farrukh for acknowledging the contribution of his research work on outcome based education in improving students’ learning abilities.

OUTLOUD Competition

The batch 2014 of BS Accounts & Finance, Islamabad campus, set a whole new tradition of marketing management. The marketing event OUTLOUD, Ready to Innovate, mentored by their course instructor Mr. Sarfraz Ali Kiyani set an astonishing platform for the students of FAST-NU. Team SMARTIES took the lead and stood victorious for OUTLOUD 2014, the second and third positions were attained by Team GATORADE and YOUNGSTERS’ LOUNGE respectively. The event was a meaningful tool for training students on how to plan and achieve objectives efficiently and effectively.
FAST-NU holds first strategic marketing & sales summit 2014

Taking up the initiative to deliver a platform for a blend of theory and practice, FAST-NU Islamabad campus recently organized its first Strategic Marketing and Sales Summit 2014 (SMSS) at Marriott, Islamabad. Aiming at providing an opportunity for discussion of latest advancements in Sales and Marketing in the 21st century, SMSS explores the dynamic changes in the marketing playing field and prospects that present themselves for research and practice.

The summit lived up to its promise of holding an impressive line-up of valuable guest speaker sessions and interactive panel discussions with engagement of high profile academia and industry specialists with presence of Dr. Amir Muhammed, Rector FAST-NU, as the chief guest, Dr. Ayub Alvi, Dean FAST-NU, Dr. Muhammad Hanif, Head of FAST School of Management, to dynamic professionals and corporate heads like Mr. Muhammad Ali bin Shahid, FFC, Mr. Amer Jahngir, FFC, Mr. Wahaj-us-Siraj, CEO Nayatel, Syed Shaukat Hayat, Executive Director Frontier Platinum, Syed Aamir Raza Shah, Director Business Development SAP Malaysia, Mr. Khurshid Ahmed, Director MIS National Highway Authority, Mr. Moied Javed, Head of Sales Mobilink, Mr. Fazli Sattar, DG Operations Pakistan Post, Mr. Khurram Tesadduq, Regional Head of Sales UBL, Mr. Ahmad Nadeem Syed, Director Mobilink, and many others.

The event has been sufficiently covered by Duniya news, Express tribune, and Fm91 as official media of the event, and backed by noteworthy sponsors FFC, SAP, DWP, Deventions, Sky Enterprises, MIA, and ACSON.

With comprehensive discussions over the topics like sales execution and strategy, branding, strategic marketing, successful selling, relationship management, and strategies for becoming a successful marketer were elaborated and an in-depth view of role of sales and marketing according to the best industry practices was conveyed.

The summit aptly educated its attendees on the advancements in the marketing sector and impressed the audience by showing how technology is being adapted in the industry. It assisted them in refining participants’ interaction with sales, marketing and advertising in the digital age.

Alumni Scholarship Program

The FAST Alumni Association of North America (FAANA) has collected USD 3315 from the North American region, and with the collaboration of FAST Alumni Association Islamabad (FAAI) and the university administration transferred the amount to the Islamabad campus for scholarship program. This amount will cover partial tuition fees for six students for the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters. The selection of the students was done on a need based criteria, which was performed in coordination with alumni association’s executive committee and FAST-NU administration.

Previously, FAANA and FAAI had given USD 2900 as part of the scholarship program to assist the needy students of FAST-NU Islamabad campus. The university administration thanked the representatives of the alumni for the efforts put in by the contributors for this noble cause and urged them to continue this program with zeal and enthusiasm.

Secretary FAAI handed over the fund distribution letter to Director Islamabad campus, Dr. Arshad Ali Shahid.

Student develops mobile APP

‘Space Scrollers’ is a new mobile application developed by a student of FAST-NU Karachi campus, Haseeb Jehangir. It is quite a unique idea for a game. The objective of the game is to swipe the screen to remove the spaceships and debris from the screen, while saving the astronaut from going out of the scope of the screen. Space Scrollers is also a tough game which makes players keen to continue to achieve high scores.

Applications like this encourage other developers to further improve their development skills. Students who are planning to start application development gain inspiration from the work and projects of their fellow students. Space Scrollers can be downloaded from Google’s Play Store.