



Dr Nthambeleni Affirms Univen's Preparedness for the Return of Some Students Amid Covid - 19



Vice Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni confirmed the University's preparedness to welcome some students amid COVID - 19 from Monday, 22 June 2020.

Dr Nthambeleni cited this to the Deputy Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Mr Buti Manamela and Limpopo Health MEC, Dr Phophi Ramathuba who visited the University on Thursday, 18 June 2020 to assess the state of readiness for the return of some students during alert level 3 lockdown. The Deputy Minister and MEC were joined by the Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Municipality, Cllr

Dowelani Nenguda. Also present was the SRC President Gift Chauke and Higher Health Regional Manager. In his speech, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Nthambeleni, expressed the University's commitment to the government's directives to control the spread of coronavirus and protecting the lives of staff and students. He made mention of the University's approach to multimodal teaching and learning, and that the University has put in place a programme to ensure that no student is left behind. The next cohort of students who returned to campus on Monday, 22 June 2020, included students living with disabilities.

This is to ensure that these students receive the necessary support to continue with their studies.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal further appreciated the commitment of both staff and students which he considers to be a powerful expression of their obligation to contribute to the government's initiative of saving the academic year whilst saving lives during these extraordinary circumstances.

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Deputy Minister, Mr Buti Manamela and Limpopo Health MEC, Dr Phophi Ramathuba (second from left), Mr Aluwani Magadani (far left) and Dr Bernard Nthambeleni (middle)

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Vuwani Science Resource Centre is one of the finalists for the National Science and Technology Forum- South 32 Awards

Vuwani Science Resource Centre under the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences of the University of Venda, was nominated for the National Science and Technology forum (NSTF) -South 32 Awards. The Centre has been nominated under the category of Communication Award for outreach and creating awareness (by a team or individuals over the last 5 years).

The Nominations for Vuwani Science Resource Centre were received for consideration for a 2019/2020 NSTF-South 32 Award. Vuwani Science Resource Centre nomination was considered along with others by an independent Adjudication Panel in recognition of an outstanding contribution to science, engineering, technology (SET) and Innovation.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the founding of the NSTF, a milestone that the virtual Awards Gala Event will celebrate and in April 2020 South Africans were celebrating

South Africa's democracy, which is now 26 years old.



Coordinator of Vuwani Science Resource Centre- Dr. NE Maluta

The coordinator of Vuwani Science Resource Centre - Dr Eric Maluta is determined that the trophy will come back to the University of Venda this year. He further elaborated that the science engagement (STEM) at Vuwani Science Resource Centre is unique as the centre is right in the middle of rural communities which is in line with its main aim of reaching the remote rural areas. The centre is achieving this through visits to different communities and schools located in rural areas. Dr Maluta said "We participated (2012—2019) in different National Science Fairs, Science Communication, National Science Week, Astro quiz, and Science Shows which are hosted by different organisers around South Africa, like Science Beyond borders hosted by Science Tube, REDFest, Eding! International Science Festival and many more. As the Centre, we also participate in events hosted in different provinces which are organized by different NGO's, to communicate Science".

A virtual Awards Gala Event will be live-streamed on Thursday, 30 July 2020 at 18:45 for 19:00-20:30 to honour the finalists and announce the winners. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, all finalists will be recognised virtually in their respective categories. Everyone is welcomed to join and support the Vuwani Science Resource Centre during the virtual event.

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International Symposium “Informal Market from Pre-Banking to Bitcoins”

Mr Ishmael Iwara, President of the International Student Association of South Africa (ISASA) represented the University of Venda in Sweden. Owing to his academic quest for knowledge in the field of economics, he was invited to participate as a student delegate at the International Symposium “Informal Market from Pre-Banking to Bitcoins” held early this year 2020 at Umea University. He presented (alongside his team) a documentary “Who Runs the World?!” at the opening of the event. The documentary is an output of research activity

in selected rural villages of South Africa about women and informal financial systems. It was conducted in July 2019 by South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF; a network he has been a member since 2018). The essence of the research initiative was to understand the role of informal financial systems on rural livelihoods such that it can be used to mitigate, income inequality, joblessness and poverty. Mr Iwara is grateful to the University of Venda for supporting his research pursuit and dreams beyond the boundaries of Africa.



Ishmael Iwara pose at the Umea University, Sweden



Mr Ishmael Iwara (second left) poses with his senior colleagues during the conference. Prof Unathi Kolanisi (left), Consumer Science, University of Zululand; Prof Yane Svetiev (second right), University of Sydney, Australia; and Prof Elise Dermeineur (right), Economic History, Umea University, Sweden.



Cross session of the research team during community engagement in Zululand. From left, Ishmael Iwara, PhD candidate in Rural Development, University of Venda; Elise Dermeineur, Professor of Economic History, Umea University, Sweden; Unathi Kolanisi, Professor of Consumer Science, University of Zululand; Igor Martins, PhD in Economic History, Lung University, Sweden; and Marie Lise, Journalist from France.

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Iwara noted two key lessons from his short stay at Umea. Firstly, the Umeå Institute of Design (UID), an outlet of the Umeå University structured solely for teaching of industrial design, transportation design, and interaction design. It is a full and short course initiative that prepares students with requisite skills in design entrepreneurship. Holding to the fact that over 90% of the students secure a job before completing their programmes (Heads of UID said), Iwara believed that the initiative could help UNIVEN prepare its students for the labour market and job creation, thereby, cutting down the growing unemployment rate amongst young graduates in the country.



Cross session of UID students designing

The second point relates to practical entrepreneurial activities. Group of female staff at the Umea University involved in local craft such as weaving, crochet and beads making. The group of women adopt students for mentorship. It is an extracurricular activity that makes extra cash for them during their free periods from official duties. Often, students of various disciplines enrol to acquire their skills.



Cross session of UID students designing

UNIVEN student participates in an international exchange programme at DHBW

University of Venda (UNIVEN) student, Mr Promise Nyalungu, an International Relations Honours Student, School of Human and Social Sciences was awarded the Baden-Württemberg-STIPENDIUM scholarship which afforded him an opportunity to be part of the international exchange programme at the Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg (DHBW), Heidenheim, Germany from 7 January to 31 March 2020.

The International Business student exchange programme started in 2018 and is being coordinated by the Directorate of International Relations providing support that includes visa application, local travels and others. Several students have benefitted from the programme at different times. Mr Nyalungu enrolled for International Business Administration and German language for the period of three months during the exchange programme.

He was hosted by Prof Sabine Moebis, International Business Department (DHBW); Ms Brigitte Ilg, Director International Relations and Ms Ingrid Lange, International Relations Officer (DHBW). The International Business programme at the DHBW brought together students from Mexico, India, South Korea and Taiwan for academic and intercultural engagement activities. The student has the following to say concerning his experience in Germany: "The weather was too cold for me, coming from a temperature of almost 38 degree and now experiencing a minus 10 degree for the first time in my life was very much of a challenge for me at first but I got used to it and really loved it

especially when it was snowing. The food was too different as well but delicious. Being able to watch European football match live was so epic for me. The institution is a work of art. there's accessibility and it's easy to travel around Europe. Every country has it's challenges with incorporating International students but I felt safe and I am grateful that I was granted the opportunity. I have grown personally, academically, and culturally, and would recommend this experience to other students. Unfortunately, due to the Corona pandemic, my stay had to be cut short by a week and I will be completing some of my exams online in July 2020."



Promise Nyalungu, during his exchange programme at DHBW, Germany



Promise Nyalungu with some of the participants in the exchange programme at DHBW, Germany

2021 University Of Venda Online Applications for Admission and Hostel Accommodation are Now Open

Students, who intend to enrol for programmes of their choice with the University of Venda in 2021 academic year, are hereby informed that the process of ONLINE applications for admission and hostel accommodation are now open as from 15 June 2020 and the closing date is Monday, 28 September 2020.

Prospective students are encouraged to apply on or before the closing date to avoid frustration in 2021.

Visit UNIVEN Website:
www.univen.ac.za.

For enquiries please contact Mr Seth Ugoda at 015 962 8882/8977/ cell number 079 119 8075 or email him at seth.ugoda@univen.ac.za

UNIVEN's PhD candidate attends the 14th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) Conference

Ishmael Iwara, President of the International Student Association of South Africa

(ISASA) is grateful to the University of Venda for support to attend the 14th African Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) international conference in Botswana recently. The conference, organized by the African Institute of South Africa (AISA), Human Research Council in conjunction with the University of Botswana attracted scholars across countries of Africa to exchange key economic issues grappled with the continent. The principal focus was Innovation for Sustainable Development: The Research-Policy-Practice Nexus. The discourse was centered on four pillars: Innovation for economic development; Science and Technology for Sustainable Development;

Harnessing Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning; and Innovative and Multi-dimensional Approaches to Sustainable Peace, Security and Justice in the 21st Century; a Social Sciences and Humanities for Sustainable Development.

Mr Ishmael Iwara, a PhD candidate in the Institute for Rural Development, University of Venda was honored with a certificate of Excellence having presented an aspect of his research initiative titled "A Prototype for Enterprise Development Centered on Endogenous Attributes of Successful Entrepreneurs in Rural Vhembe Areas, South Africa". The paper was co-authored with Dr Beata Kilonzo and Dr Jethro Zuwarimwe. Iwara highlighted that poor enterprise performance in rural areas of Vhembe



Mr Ishmael Iwara, PhD Candidate (left) receiving a certificate of Excellence; Prof Cheryl Hendricks, Executive Director AISA, HSRC (middle); Dr Gladys Mokhawa, University of Botswana (right).



Mr Ishmael Iwara pose at the conference

is anchored on four key issues. Firstly, grassroots entrepreneurs in rural areas suffer negligence. He argued that "it is extremely difficult to see a well-structured entrepreneurship development agency positioned in a rural area to inform capacity building. It becomes difficult for many entrepreneurs to access requisite support needed for enterprise development due to distance and/or lack of basic information". Secondly, "not all policymakers and entrepreneurship development practitioners have proper arms needed to front decisions that can transform enterprises. This is so because we lack context-specific researches that speak to the realities on the ground; poor community engagement to unpack issues from an insight point of view is another issue. There is a need for change".

His third argument was that "the nature of support being given to a few privileged entrepreneurs in rural areas is much focused on exogenous concerns at the detriment of endogenous factors". Often, people emphasized that access to finance is a major

problem whereas the ability to effectively utilize the finance can be a worse problem to entrepreneurs. Lastly, even the exogenous support being given is informed by foreign models, most of which are incompatible. "South Africa, if not Africa as a whole is yet to roll out a holistic entrepreneurship model informed by its cultural attributes for enterprise development". These are reasons enterprises continued to fail despite numerous investments being put in place by the government. He identified key endogenous pillars that speak to the issues and challenged the university to stimulate enterprise development through its research and community engagement components. It should facilitate the constitution of a multi-stakeholder structure (involving the district government departments responsible for enterprise development; None Governmental Organizations (NGOs); Traditional leaders, political heads, and grassroots entrepreneurs) to front inclusive enterprise development from an informed point of view.



Cross session of the conference presenters

Univen Students Return to Campus in a Staggered Approach

The University of Venda staff and students are anxious to get back to campus to continue with normal operations, but to curb the spread of coronavirus, and for the safety of staff and students, the University Management has decided to adopt a phased approach for the return of both staff and students. Although there is much uncertainty about when all staff and students will return to campus, the University Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni continues to encourage all staff to continue doing their best in performing their respective roles including continuing with remote teaching to ensure that students who are yet to return to campus are not left behind.

The first cohort of students who are in their final year of study in the School of Health Sciences returned to campus from 01 June 2020. The second cohort of students who are in their final year of study in all schools, Post Graduate students and all students with disabilities are returning to campus in a staggered manner effective 22 June 2020. The University will only allow selected final year and Post Graduate students, particularly those in programmes which require access to laboratories, to return to campus during alert level 3. The process of identifying students who are eligible to return to campus is being coordinated at school's level. This implies that respective schools will directly communicate with students and accordingly make arrangements for their permits to travel back to campus. We would like to make it explicit that no student will be allowed access to campus without having produced an authentic invitation from the school. Although the Minister has announced that during alert level 3 of lockdown, institutions of higher learning should allow the return of 33% of student population, UNIVEN will only allow the return of a few students that it can manage and in accordance with available infrastructure. This is also intended to circumvent the spread of coronavirus.

All staff and students returning to campus will be subjected to regular screening process. We urge all those who are returning to campus to adhere to the University of Venda COVID -19 rules and regulations. It is therefore imperative for everyone returning to campus to familiarise themselves with COVID-19 protocols, rules and regulations. The number of students expected to return to campus, approved by the Executive Management is attached herewith.

UNIVEN Phased in Return of Students under Level 3 Lockdown Final Year Students

No.	School Name	No of Students	Date	New Dates
1	AGRICULTURE	163		30 Jun
2	EDUCATION	1240		01 Jul
3	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES	413		03 Jul
4	HEALTH SCIENCES	182		02 Jul
5	HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	648		29 Jun
6	MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	594		01 Jul
7	MATHEMATICAL & NATURAL SCIENCES	323		29 Jun
8	SCHOOL OF LAW	201		30 Jun
9	POSTGRADUATES			
	AGRICULTURE	90		06 Jul
	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES	136		07 Jul
	HEALTH SCIENCES	126		01 Jul
	MATHEMATICAL & NATURAL SCIENCES	211		06 Jul
	Disability Students	146	22 & 23 Jun	22 & 23 Jun
	SRC	30		22 Jun
	Total	4503		

We urge all those who are returning to campus to adhere to the University of Venda COVID -19 rules and regulations.

We would like to hear from you!

Nendila is your communication channel.

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