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University of Venda
Creating future leaders

University of Venda Chancellor, Advocate Gumbi honours 2600 graduates for their academic excellence

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted a successful virtual graduation ceremony on Wednesday, 23 June 2021 for students who have completed their studies at the end of the 2020 academic year. Due to Alert Level 3 Regulations announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 15 June 2021, as in 2020, this graduation ceremony took place under conditions imposed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

This graduation ceremony took place when South Africa is celebrating Youth Month and UNIVEN is proud to announce the story of a 31-year-old, Dr Frank Moffat who is the first student who studied his first undergraduate degree until Doctoral degree at UNIVEN since the University's Department of Urban and Regional Planning was established.

Mr Murendwa Success Munarini from the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences scooped the Best Overall and Senate Medallion award because of his excellent performance as an undergraduate student.



In the University's 39th year of existence, UNIVEN's Chancellor Adv Mojankunyane Gumbi conferred degrees, diplomas and certificates to 2578 graduates.

The University awarded 2265 undergraduate degrees, 224 Honours Degrees, 56 Master's Degrees and 33 Doctoral degrees. 58% of the class of 2020 graduates were female while male graduates constitute 42%.

When speaking to the graduates, Chancellor Adv Gumbi mentioned that, "among other things, you should at all times strive to be civic-spirited professionals, community members and citizens who make history and not mere objects of history devoid of agency". In her congratulatory message she said "None of us needs any education about the fact that poverty, inequality and underdevelopment on the one hand; and poor leadership on the other, are some of our country's and the continent's primary problems and challenges. They define the destiny of many Africans, now and in the future. Their fusion produces a cocktail of other horror stories such as socio-political instability, conflict, corruption, illicit financial outflows from our countries and a parasitical rent-seeking elite which is, for all intents and purposes, more foreign in its thinking and loyalty than it is local".

"Having understood the principal contradiction and all its aspects, the challenge before us is to evolve a practical remedial programme that finds resonance with the broadest sections of society, much as it is implementable. Such a programme should outlive five-year government administrations and hopefully party politics. It is not enough merely to repeat that we are poor, underdeveloped and marginalised even as we are rich with highly sought-after raw materials which have kept the factories of the developed north going since the advent of colonialism. It is time to do something about it. The high unemployment rate should not scare us. We should see it, together with the advent of new technologies, as an opportunity to create new areas of work".

Adv Gumbi indicated that as the University marks 40 years of existence next year, we should continue to strengthen the good work that the University does, much as we should consider new programmes and approaches which respond to the plethora of local and national challenges.



In his welcoming message, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni said "We are so proud of your accomplishments. We are also proud of your unique experiences, and life stories that you brought to this University. "Over the past few years, we have seen you grow and flourish despite many challenges and obstacles you have encountered. Together with your families, you have made great sacrifices to achieve this goal", added Dr Nthambeleni.

Dr Nthambeleni indicated as he continued with his address that the 2021 academic year marks the first year of the implementation of UNIVEN new Strategic Plan (2021-2025), which is essentially a blueprint that presents the University's new vision and also identifies the institutional strategic focus areas together with strategic objectives that as the University we aspire to achieve by 2025. He further said "this Strategic Plan has been developed to help us steer the University towards realisation of its full potential. It will also help us in our endeavour to position the University for impact and relevance".

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University of Venda Chancellor, Advocate Gumbi honours 2600 graduates for their academic excellence continued...

"To achieve greater institutional efficiency in implementing the strategic plan and optimising resource allocation and utilisation, the new academic structure as underpinned by a shift from former School to current Faculty configuration has been established, which culminated into current four Faculties to be headed by the Executive Deans (some of whom have already joined the University). The four faculties include the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law; Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture; and Faculty of Health Sciences.

Dr Nthambeleni also informed the graduates about the new positions that were created to strengthen the University's focus which are the Deputy ViceChancellor Research Innovation and Postgraduate Studies, as well as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and all these

positions were created as part of executive management.

Driven by the University motto which is 'Creating Future Leaders', the ViceChancellor and Principal advised UNIVEN graduates to go and make impact in their communities. He further told them to equip themselves to be life-long learners and keep abreast of changes and become active and valuable members of their communities.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal expressed that it was not possible for UNIVEN to hold and celebrate the 2021 graduation in a traditional way. Due to the COVID-19 protocols, like many other universities here in South Africa and elsewhere, the University SENATE took a decision to continue hosting this year graduation ceremony virtually. "However, we have made a provision for our graduates, to celebrate this special day

by hosting a two-week long celebratory sessions on campus under strict Covid-19 UNIVEN guidelines after the formal virtual graduation ceremony.

Graduates were informed that the Office of the University Registrar will be inviting graduates in small groups to come to campus on different days to collect their certificates. Graduates will be allowed to bring along a maximum of three family members for family photographs that will be taken by the University's professional photographers, Gordon Harris.

In his conclusion, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal acknowledged parents, guardians, lecturers and University support staff as well as sponsors and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme for their profound care and support during the time that graduates spent at the University.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Prof Jan Crafford

UNIVEN SRC hosts 2021 Youth Day celebration

On Tuesday, 05 June 2021, The University of Venda (UNIVEN) held Youth Day celebration on Microsoft teams and other University's social media platforms including on Univen Fm. Commemoration of Youth Day this year marks the 37th anniversary of the 16 June Soweto uprising and was celebrated under the theme 'Working together for youth development and drug free South Africa'.



As the Guest Speaker, Mcebo Dlamini, FeesMustFall activist highlighted that history is important because it guides us not to repeat what has happened in the past but we need to move on and continue to fight for the brighter future. He said there is a lot that South African youth still need to achieve. Even today, post-apartheid days, the youth is fed up with the cruel system that continues to take the future of this country down the drain.

"Politics is becoming unfashionable, and the youth is becoming impatient because of the challenges that they are faced with today. The people we believe are our leaders do not have future for this country. They are in those positions to enrich themselves. Indeed, the youth of today can access any school that they want but the sad reality is that they do not have money to fund studies, especially those at tertiary institutions."

He said the youth of today must stand for what they believe in and that will assist them to save their future and the future of this country. Dlamini continued to express that the government must aggressively respond to the high number of unemployment in this country. "Our people are languishing

in poverty; they need young people to fight for the better future. If leaders were looting money to build schools for black people, we would understand but they steal it and we don't know what they are doing with it because they all die poor."



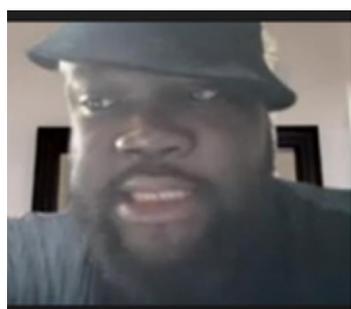
SRC Minister of Finance, Afrika Somthi said the youth of today need to introspect whether they value what the 1976 youth fought for. She expressed that most of the opportunities that young people have today is because of the victories of the youth of 1976. She assertively challenged the youth to fulfil the dreams of the youth of 1976. "We need to be realistic with the challenges of youth of today, be it Gender Based Violence, challenges of unemployment and the issues faced by LGBTI community. We have the power in our hands to change the situation that we find ourselves in."



The UNIVEN Youth League representative, Ndivhuho Muniyai said young people should stand firm for any injustices against them. He told attendees to fight for their rights. "Young

people of Soweto in 1976 stood firm for what they believe was injustice to themselves. No one is going to fight for us, it is only us who can change the situation."

Representing EFF Student Command, Gudani Tshamano said the youth of 1976 fought for what they believe in, knowing very well that there will be consequences, but the ultimate goal was to be free as we are today. "They fought for the black child who today can attend any school without being rejected because of the colour of their skin. We thank and salute the youth of 1976 for fighting for us during those years to make sure that today we are free."



SRC President, Mr Gift Chauke said this freedom didn't come on a silver platter, there are people who fought for it. He continued to say that the youth of 1976 had a direction. "They had a goal to achieve in mind. They have played a big role that today every student is reaping the rewards." Mr Chauke said students of today should also fight for the youth of tomorrow. He saluted Mcebo Dlamini for standing the ground and fight for fees to fall. "Let us be united like the youth of 1976 and fight for the youth of tomorrow. He spoke about issues of unemployment, graduates sitting at home with qualifications without jobs. "Let us stand and unite, take our youth to the brighter future. We need to fight with a vision in mind because there is no way you can win a fight without unity and a vision."



Dr Raymond Raselekoane, Head of Institute for Gender and Youth Studies said that the harvest of the political freedom left our youth in hunger and unemployed. He said the youth of today are faced with a lot of challenges that need to be addressed. "The youth of today is faced with more challenges than before. Instead of addressing these challenges, most of them lost an appetite for education, there is more love for material things with dependence and entitlement syndrome." He mentioned that there is a dire need for self-introspection in order to prepare brighter future for the youth of tomorrow.

"Let us stand and unite, take our youth to the brighter future. We need to fight with a vision in mind because there is no way you can win a fight without unity and a vision."

UNIVEN-led study sheds light on prehistoric migration events

Professor Yoshan Moodley from UNIVEN's Department of Zoology leads an international team of researchers

How did the first humans arrive in America?

Originally, all modern humans came from Africa. About 60,000 years ago small groups of hunter-gatherers left Africa on foot and made their way into Eurasia where they settled. These were the world's first human immigrants. Astonishingly, by the end of the ice age some 50,000 years later, modern humans had already reached the American continent which, if travelling over land, is almost as far away from Africa as it is possible to get.

These ancient human migrations took place during the last glacial period, or ice age, which lasted from 115,000 to 11,700 years ago. At that time, most of northern Eurasia, also known as Siberia, would have been a frozen wasteland, and presumably inhospitable to long-term human settlement. So how then, did humans manage to migrate across this vast region and find their way to North America? This is one of the most important, and as yet unanswered, questions in human prehistory, because it would explain how humans were able to colonise the whole world from an African origin, in such a short space of time.

Professor Yoshan Moodley from the University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Department of Zoology has led an international team of researchers from Italy, Russia, Mexico, Germany and the United Kingdom to find an answer to this question. The team took the unusual approach of using the DNA of a human stomach bacterium named *Helicobacter pylori* as a biomarker for ancient human migrations. They successfully collected, sequenced and analysed bacterial strains from indigenous people across

Siberia and the Americas. The bacterial DNA database they generated suggested that, remarkably, some groups of humans, known as ancient northern Eurasians, did manage to reside in Siberia throughout the bitter ice age. Yet, other human groups who originally inhabited warmer latitudes in Asia, colonised Siberia after the end of the ice age, leading to the complex mix of human populations we see in that region today.

The team also used their bacterial data set to model human migration into the Americas. It is important to remember that during the ice age, much more water was frozen at the earth's poles, making the sea level at that time over 100 metres lower than the present-day sea level, thus exposing a land bridge between Eurasia and North America and allowing human migration. Moodley and his team showed that one small group of ancient northern Eurasians managed to successfully cross this land bridge about 12,000 years ago, and this population subsequently expanded to give rise to the indigenous Americans we see today.

This important UNIVEN-led study entitled '*Helicobacter pylori*'s historical journey through Siberia and the Americas' was published on Monday, 14 June 2021 in the prestigious international journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA (PNAS)* and it is freely available for you to read or download at the journal website.

UNIVEN management congratulates Professor Moodley and his international team on this ground-breaking achievement.

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Prof. Yoshan Moodley on 015 962 8453 / 078 586 5739 or email to yoshan.moodley@univen.ac.za



Today, the land bridge used by the first American immigrants lies over 100 metres under the Bering Sea. However, during the last ice age, low sea levels exposed the land bridge, allowing humans to walk from Eurasia into North America and populate the New World.
Picture credit: GretaarsonBase map © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC BY SA 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Protection Services Department embarks on Safety and Security Awareness Campaign

During the week of 07-11 June 2021, the University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Protection Services Department embarked on Safety and Security Awareness Campaign to educate students about their safety both on and off campus. Safety tips flyers were distributed to students as a reminder and they were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the safety tips by frequently reading them. Students were advised to put or place these flyers where they would frequently see them.

Director Protection Services, Mr Azwidowi Mukheli, said this campaign week will assist students to be aware of some of the safety measures that they were not aware of and that might compromise their safety. He advised students to always walk in large groups at night and to also inform their roommates or friends about where they are going and at what time they would come back to their rooms.



Protection Services staff members during the Safety and Security Awareness Campaign Week

In case of emergency, Staff and students should call:

Thohoyandou SAPS: 015 960 1054 / 079 889 0758

Main Gate: 015 962 8120

Control Room: 015 962 8193

Ambulance: 079 901 9305 / 081 463 0343

Fire Brigade: 015 962 4155

Tshilidzini Hospital: 015 964 1061

University of Venda attracts talent to effectively implement new strategic plan

The University of Venda this year embarked on the implementation of a bold new Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which aims to position the University for impact both locally and internationally. Four strategic thrusts form the basis of the plan: Student centeredness and engaged scholarship; Entrepreneurial University; Governance for outstanding scholarship; Linkages, partnerships and internationalisation.

With the success and wellbeing of students placed at the Centre of its operations, and through the emphasis on engagement in the scholarship it undertakes, the University will fulfil its mission of producing graduates that are both locally relevant and internationally competitive. Through an encultured entrepreneurial orientation, the University will increase the mobilisation of external resources and achieve greater internal efficiencies in resource allocation and use. The graduateness of our students will simultaneously be enhanced by inculcating entrepreneurial thinking, and exposure to entrepreneurship training and incubation during their studies.

The new vision of the University, to become an institution leading in engaged scholarship, is predicated on its unique geographical location and rural context. Its location within the UNESCO-designated Vhembe Biosphere Reserve confers a unique advantage that will be leveraged to establish itself as an anchor institution for local and regional

development in a district development model. Its status as an anchor institution will be cemented through the Univen Integrated Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Biodiversity Plan (UIEIBP) that underlies its strategy and directs its engagement focus to innovation and entrepreneurship in the green economy.

The vehicle for the achievement of its new vision and mission, and the operationalisation of its new strategy, is a reconfigured Academic structure that emerged from the merger of eight former Academic Schools into four new Faculties. The number of Academic Departments was significantly reduced through rationalisation, better disciplinary alignment and a new emphasis on the academic programmes we offer as the basic business units of the university. This new approach will ensure that, through a thorough review of current programmes, a responsive, viable and relevant Programme Qualification Mix emerges that improves the quality of graduates and their contribution to local, regional and national development.

Driving the rejuvenation and repositioning of the University of Venda is a reconfigured Executive and Senior Management. A new executive portfolio for research and postgraduate studies has been established, with newly appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. Nellie Feza as the custodian of this crucial strategic function. Three new Faculty Executive Deans have been appointed to

head respectively the Faculty of Humanities, Social Science and Education (Prof. Bongani Bantwini), Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture (Prof. Ntebogeng Mokgalaka) and Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law (Prof. Modimowabarwa Kanyane).



Professor Nosisi Nellie Feza

Professor Nosisi Nellie Feza joined the University of Venda as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Post Graduate Studies on 01 July 2021, bringing with her more than 25 years of wealth of experience in higher education. Prior to joining the University of Venda, Professor Feza was the Campus Rector and a Full Professor at Walter Sisulu University. Her Walter Sisulu University experience was preceded by a position she held as Dean of Humanities at Central University of Technology from 2017 to 2020. She has also been the Head of the Institute of Science and Technology Education at the University of South Africa where she started as an Associate Professor and later promoted to a Full Professor. Professor Feza is an NRF C-RATED researcher.

Professor Feza will provide intellectual leadership and vision for the University of Venda in the area of research, innovation, knowledge exchange and post graduate studies. She will further lead the development and implementation of the University's overall

strategy to meet its goal of pre-eminence in research, innovation and technology transfer. This entails building a research ethos that fosters excellence, encourages novel ideas, supports young researchers, and nurtures postgraduate students in order to be a pre-eminent producer of new knowledge both locally and globally.

Some of her qualifications include Ph.D in Mathematics Education from State University of New York at Buffalo in the United States of America (USA) and M.Ed, Mathematics Education from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. She is the Recipient of Fulbright Scholarship for a PhD programme in the US, recipient of the inaugural Leroy and Margaret H. Callahan Scholarship and a recipient of a Leeds Bursar UK. She has published Twenty-four (24) articles in peer reviewed journals, three (03) Published Reports, six (06) Published Book Chapters, one (01) Published Book and Nine (09) Published Proceedings papers.



Professor Bongani D Bantwini

Professor Bongani D Bantwini has been appointed as the new Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education at the University of Venda (UNIVEN) with effect from 01 May 2021. He is a C2 NRF Rated Researcher. Prof Bantwini has

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Univen attracts talent to effectively implement new strategic plan continued...

received his Ph.D in Elementary Education with a focus in Elementary Science Education and Master's degree in Secondary Science Education both from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the United States of America, where he was a Fulbright Scholar.

Prof Bantwini has over 20 years of working experience in the education field and higher Education and has taught for various universities both in the USA and SA. Before joining UNIVEN, Prof Bantwini, occupied several strategic positions locally and internationally. His employment history among others include: Research Manager at Walter Sisulu University; Visiting Professor at Walter Sisulu University; Research Professor of Schooling (Primary and Secondary Education) at North West University in Potchefstroom; Senior Research Specialist at the Human Sciences Research Council in Pretoria, Head of Department (Acting): Science Communication and Senior Research Specialist at Research Use and Impact Assessment Unit, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria; Assistant Professor at Kennesaw State University Atlanta Georgia, USA; Science Education Research Fellow at University of Northern Iowa, USA; Senior Research Specialist (Post-Doctoral Fellow) at HSRC, Pretoria; Teaching and Research Assistant at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign USA; Science Education Lecturer at the University of Port Elizabeth (now Nelson Mandela University). He has had a number of research and teacher training consulting positions in South Africa and USA.

In terms of research, Prof Bantwini is committed to interdisciplinary approach to scholarships and his research experiences have provided him an opportunity to make connections between theory and classroom practice. Over the years his research agenda has evolved in the pursuit of finding solutions to some of the educational challenges that daily confronts humankind. Prof Bantwini's research agenda continues focusing on curriculum matters, teaching and learning, teacher development, school districts, and other areas he finds of interest or requiring research intervention. He has extensively published in refereed local and international accredited journals, solo and co-authored articles, and book chapters. He has also produced client research and evaluation reports for some government departments and international organisations. Furthermore, he has a successful record in obtaining external research funding.

As part of his ongoing scholarship, he currently serves in three (3) editorial advisory journal boards: University of Swaziland Journal of Education, Journal of Progressive Education and Journal of Popular Education in Africa. He continues to serve in various committees and review for many local and international journals. He also plays a role at the National Research Foundation, as he reviews and moderate in their various programmes and constantly provide feedback on how to better their funding instruments.

Amongst others, Prof Bantwini is currently a Member of Board of Director at the Sci-Bono Science Discovery Centre NPC since 2016. He is also a Board Member for the Centre for Democracy, Research and Development based in Nairobi, Kenya. This Centre for Democracy, Research and Development, (CEDRED) contribute towards sustainable development in Eastern Africa by promoting positive, innovative, and accommodating approaches to addressing challenges of development through capacity building, advocacy, research and policy development, effective dissemination, and partnership building.



Professor Ntebogeng Sharon Mokgalaka-Fleischmann

Professor Ntebogeng Sharon Mokgalaka-Fleischmann joined the University of Venda as the Executive Dean: Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture with effect from 01 June 2021.

Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann holds a DTech degree in Chemistry from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and an MBA in Education Management from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Finland. She is a Full Professor of Chemistry and a C2-NRF rated researcher with more than 20 years' experience in higher education as a lecturer, researcher and academic leader. She is a member of the South African Chemical Society (SACI) and a South African Council of Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) registered professional scientist.

Her research interests include phyto-remediation, a green technology that uses plants to extract, transfer, stabilise or decompose elemental pollutants from soil and ground water; profiling plant secondary metabolites, studying the impact of climate change on the phytochemistry and activity of plant extracts, removal of pollutants from water using low cost renewable natural and waste materials biosorbents, as well as analysis of trace elements in environmental samples. Professor Mokgalaka-Fleischmann has published extensively in local and international peer-reviewed accredited journals, co-authored several book chapters and graduated more than 20 Doctorate and Master's students. She has worked on various collaborative projects nationally, with AngloGold Ashanti, WITS University, CSIR, ARC, regionally with Botswana Institute of Technology, Research and Innovation and international bilaterals with the University of Bayreuth, Brandenburg University of Technology, Umeå University, Uppsala University and Lund University. Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann is one of the founding members of the Synchrotron Radiation Research Roadmap Implementation Committee (SRRIC) and is currently the South African chairperson for the South Africa Swedish University Forum (SASUF) Academic Advisory Committee for Climate Change, Natural Resources and Sustainability. In 2010, she was awarded the Young Researcher of the Year in the Faculty of Science followed by a merit award in 2013 for Woman Researcher of the Year. Before joining UNIVEN, Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann was the acting Assistant Dean for Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science at TUT, the Head of the Department of Chemistry, Full Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer.

Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann has served on numerous panels including the CHE national review of doctoral programmes in 2020, scientific review panels at NRF, WRC, DST, L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Regional Fellowships for Sub-Saharan Africa and Commonwealth Scholarships. She is passionate about gender inclusivity and has contributed in various panels including

the Science Forum-South Africa Influencing Science in Africa through a gendered lens: A decade of progress of stagnation panel held on 10 December 2020 and the Women in STEM Howard University ADVANCE-IT (HU ADVANCE-IT)-Howard University Republic of South Africa Project (HURSAP) panel on Career pathways for Women in STEM held on 24 October 2017 in Washington, DC, USA. She is an advocate for science and has been a convener for the National Science Week (2016 to 2019) and the Faculty of Science Women in Science (WiS) project (2015 to 2020) at Tshwane University of Technology. In 2012, she organised the ENVIRONMIN international conference held in Loskop Dam, Middleburg and in 2013, she was a member of the organising committee for the 12th International Chemistry Conference Africa (ICCA), jointly organised by TUT, UNISA and UP.



Professor Modimowabarwa Kanyane

The University of Venda has appointed Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane as the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law with effect from 01 August 2021.

Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane is bringing his extensive experience in research, local government, and public administration in general in South Africa for more than twenty years with an added outstanding analytic skill adapted to 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Prof Kanyane is a recipient of the two Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) Senior Research Excellence Awards in 2015 and 2018 and has been with the HSRC for over a decade. In his previous appointment at the University of Fort Hare, he led the designing of the Doctor of Public Administration programme which was accredited by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE). The output has since grown through his involvement and leadership support informed by his experiences in graduate programme and supervision of master's dissertations and PhD theses to successful completion. Prof Kanyane has already supervised 68 theses (61 Masters Dissertations and 7 PhD theses) to date.

He participated in over 100 local and international activities (presented papers and keynote addresses, chaired sessions and facilitated training/capacity building workshops, led research projects) mostly culminated into outstanding publications in peer reviewed and accredited journals. To date, Prof Kanyane has produced over 100 research outputs which include peer reviewed articles in accredited journals, peer reviewed book chapters, books, peer reviewed policy briefs, non-peer reviewed material and clients research reports. He currently provides mentorship support to the post graduate students in African universities under the auspices of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) College of senior academic mentors.

Prof Kanyane is actively involved in BRICS activities as Chair of the Political and Economic Cluster of the BRICS Think Tank South Africa at the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS). He was identified and participated in the review of 77 BRICSologists essays for the 2020 BRICS International School in conjunction with the Contest for BRICS Young Leaders organised within the framework of the Russian BRICS Chairmanship to identify the most promising projects and papers to enhance practical cooperation among youth from BRICS countries and beyond. Authors of the best projects and papers were awarded prizes and invited to take part in the BRICS International School courses. Contest nominations focused on three thematic thrusts: "Towards a Brighter Future" – original research/article/project that can make a real contribution to the development of the BRICS, "BRICS in the Changing World Order" – original research/article/project devoted to the development of a new strategy for BRICS to promote its role in global governance and "Digital BRICS" – original research/article/project on BRICS cooperation in the digital era.

At the HSRC, he fundraised with colleagues over twenty million Rands and provided leadership of the funded cutting-edge research projects to successful completion among which are a study on State Owned Entities, Impact of the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court of Appeal on socio-economic transformation and the National Treasury study on governance and citizen engagement as well as BRICS, LGSETA and SALGA studies on Local Government, among others. Prof Kanyane was appointed by Dr Blade B Nzimande, MP, Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation to serve on the Council of the University of Mpumalanga as a Ministerial Appointee (2020-2024). He is currently a volume editor of more than five manuscripts and one published recently in 2021.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni said "These dynamic executive managers, bring vast experience and expertise to their new positions, adding impetus to the University's strategic intent and improved female representation to management. Their remarkable skills and talent will be highly valuable to our university."

UNIVEN is the first Limpopo institution of higher learning to host SAUS Conference

The South African Union of Students (SAUS) held its 8th National Elective Conference from Friday, 25 June until Monday, 28 June 2021. It was unprecedented that SAUS National Elective Conference was held at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), in Limpopo province. The elective conference, which was due in June 2020, follows a 12-month extension of the term of office of the current National Executive Committee (NEC). The extension was in accordance with section 9(4) of the SAUS constitution invoked because of the global COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown level 5 Regulations issued in June last year.

After careful consideration of the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, its health implications and alert level 3 (three) lockdown Regulations, the National Executive Committee convened a Hybrid Elective Conference. The number of Student Representative Council (SRCs) delegates who physically attended the conference was reduced to acceptable numbers in compliance with alert level 3 Regulations. The other delegates attended the conference using online platforms.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni welcomed SAUS delegates to the UNIVEN SAUS National Conference Gala dinner that was held at the University Auditorium in the evening of Friday, 25 June 2021.



In his welcome message, Dr Nthambeleni said 'We are delighted to be hosting this august event at the University of Venda, more especially during June as the country is celebrating and commemorating youth month.' He congratulated SAUS for fifteen years of existence and championing robust engagements which is a significant milestone in student politics. He reminded the young leaders to continue to honour the bravery and sacrifice of the courageous youth who were at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid and Bantu education.

'You represent over 1 million students from the 26 public universities. Therefore, you should champion their course and advance their interests. You play a critical role in the governance of higher education institutions in this country.'

Dr Nthambeleni applauded progress made by the government in introducing a fully subsidised free Higher Education and

Training for the poor and working-class South African undergraduate students which was implemented since 2018. He also commended the Department of Higher Education and Training and NSFAS for rolling out funding to over 1 million disadvantaged undergraduate students over the years.

He briefly told SAUS delegates about developments at UNIVEN in terms of its infrastructural development, student throughput rate, research outputs and community engagement initiatives.



Limpopo MEC of Economic Development, Mr Thabo Mokone addressed the delegates on behalf of the Premier of Limpopo Province, Honourable Stan Mathabatha who couldn't make it to the conference due to ill health. The MEC commended SAUS leadership for choosing Limpopo Province, and UNIVEN in particular, to host the important assembly of student leaders who hailed from all corners of the country. Mr Mokone wished the conference to be a festival and contestation of ideas.

'As members of the FEES MUST FALL generation, you can be proud of the advances your generation has made in forcing the doors of learning to be wide open,' Mr Mokone said.

He further deliberated the issue of safety in various campuses in the country which is a serious challenge which requires the government's attention. 'No student should walk in fear of harassment, assault or rape on campus or off-campus,' Mokone emphasised. The student leaders were encouraged to take the issue of security with the seriousness it deserves. Mokone reminded student leaders about the painful story of Precious Ramabulana, a Capricorn TVET college student who was brutalised, raped and killed in her room. He concluded by challenging the young leaders to make education fashionable to seize many opportunities that are available to them in the country.

"As members of the FEES MUST FALL generation, you can be proud of the advances your generation has made in forcing the doors of learning to be wide open."



Dr Blade Nzimande addressing student leaders through Microsoft Teams



The 7th SAUS outgoing President, Mr Misheck Mugabe delivered his opening remarks centred on five key aspects namely, Commitment to the revolution; Revolutionary morality; Ethics in leadership; Accountability of Leadership and structures; and Critical thinking. 'It has always been our hope and it is still our goal to see the rise of historically disadvantaged universities hence we decided to come to Venda as a vote of confidence to our black universities,' says Mugabe in his conclusion.



Delegates also received a presentation on the state of Student Affairs and Governance in the PSET sector by the President of SASSAP (University Deans), Dr Sibusiso Chalufu.

"One of our key challenges facing our higher education system is that of the urgent necessity to transform the patriarchal, class and racialised nature of knowledge and its production in our country."

In his address to the student leaders, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande thanked UNIVEN leadership for hosting the conference. 'One of our key challenges facing our higher education system is that of the urgent necessity to transform the patriarchal, class and racialised nature of knowledge and its production in our country. It is a crucial dimension in the dismantling of barriers, through access to relevant, transformative and liberating knowledge', said Dr Nzimande.

'Another key dimension of dismantling barriers is that of ensuring that we build student centred and student-friendly universities and other post-school institutions.' He criticised institutions that are not student friendly as they constitute a serious barrier to effective financial and epistemological access.

'As student leaders sitting in institutional forums and committees where these matters are debated and decided upon, you need to make sure that universities are designed for student success, and that there are adequate academic and non-academic support systems to ensure student-centred institutions.'

When concluding his address, Dr Nzimande recapitulated that the government is committed to supporting the post-school education and training system by progressively introducing financial support for students from poor and working-class backgrounds in South African Universities as resources become available. 'We are committed to addressing the current gaps in funding, depending on the affordability and sustainability of the funding systems that should be put in place.'

Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo described as great leader

On Friday, 18 June 2021, the Department of Student Affairs held an event to bid farewell to the Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo. This farewell function was held at Kalahari Waterfront, Nandoni. Staff from the Department of Student Affairs described Mr Tshikhudo as a great leader with big heart.

"You kept us all together like a family, you are such a patient leader." She told him to Keep the same working spirit where he is going and continue to lead with diligence. "We are proud of you and hope you will make a difference. Your leadership will make an impact that will be reported to us not by you but through the good work that you will be doing there."



When delivering the purpose of gathering, Mr Patrick Thaba said they are bidding farewell to a leader who had a vision, a vision to grow the Department to serve students. He said if it was not because of him, the Student Affairs Department would not be how it is today. He wished him well in his new position.



Mr Ntai Mokoena, Head of Student Housing also wished Mr Tshikhudo well in his new position. "In the seven months that I have spent at this University, you have shown to be a great leader and keep it that way even where you are going. Enjoy your new role and nourish the growth of your career."



Representing Campus Health Clinic, Maggie Hlungwani reading a note from Ms Faith Mashau, Head of Campus Health Clinic said it was easy for Student Affairs Department to work together in your presence.



Mrs Francina Mutavhatshindi representing Student Governance Section, rendered a poem praising Mr Tshikhudo for his hard work and love for people. She rendered the poem with mixed emotions.



Ms Della Muvhango from Student Affairs explained Mr Tshikhudo as a man who believes in an open-door policy. She said Mr Tshikhudo always created time to listen to everyone, both staff and students. "I have learned a lot from him."



In his response, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo explained this moment as a very emotional moment for him to be leaving UNIVEN but he is happy because this shows growth in life. "This was a very difficult decision to make but I had to take it anyway because at some point, one has to grow." He said he is confident that he will make a difference even where he is going though it might not be easy. Mr Tshikhudo discouraged Student Affairs from celebrating quantity over quality.

"Always make sure that everything you do is done whole heartedly and with diligence. I am where I am today because of your dedication, hard work, team spirit and support."

"Continue to learn, never cease to learn new things. We grow by learning. Work very hard and let your works talk for you." He concluded by advising Student Affairs to continue making impact and UNIVEN the best institution where every learner/student and employee would wish to be part of.

"Continue to learn, never cease to learn new things. We grow by learning. Work very hard and let your works talk for you."



Mrs Esther Mashavhanduna of Student Governance welcoming attendees.



Mr Ambrose Mogashoa giving a vote of thanks



Student Affairs Staff members posing for a group photo with Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo (fourth from left in the first row)

Frank Moffat is the first Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Regional Planning at UNIVEN



PhD graduate Dr Moffat

Join the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in celebrating youth achievements in this youth month (June) of 2021. UNIVEN is celebrating with Dr Moffat Frank for his achievement of PhD in Urban and Regional Planning Degree, one of the accredited professional degrees offered by the University of Venda. At the age of 31, Dr Moffat is the first student to have started from first year and completed through to PhD ever since the Department of Urban and Regional Planning was established at UNIVEN. This also marks the first PhD candidate to graduate from this Department within the new restructuring by the University from School of Environmental Sciences to Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture.

Dr Moffat narrates that this was not an

easy journey, as experienced by most black students coming from disadvantaged family backgrounds. He did not let his background determine his future, "I am really grateful for the academic financial support from my supervisors, lecturers, teachers, family and the rural community I grew up in". The African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child" best describes the relentless efforts by several people who saw potential in me from an early age. This achievement is not mine alone and serves to inspire the youth out there not to give up in life. In 2005, at Sherenje Secondary, a school in the deep rural village in Zimbabwe, Dr Moffat became the first student to break a generational record chain of failing to pass up to 50% of registered subjects. He did not only pass all his eight registered subjects but also got 2 distinctions in Integrated Science and Technical Graphics, which was a huge success for his school. "I also give thanks to my late Maths teacher Mr Shonhiwa, who saw grains of potential and believed in me". He said, Mr Shonhiwa took him to his place in Rusape town where he mentored and coached him in preparation for his Ordinary Level exams during the second school term of August in 2005. Dr Moffat then completed his Advanced-Level studies in 2007, at Mount Camel Secondary School, where he also pushed boundaries despite all odds and became second best student by getting 11 points out of a total of 15 points. His fees were paid out mostly through proceeds from subsistence farming, brewing and selling of traditional beer, all thanks to my grandmother 'Conilia Mukangi' for her bravery. Without financial means to continue his studies he could not continue to any university and opted for informal trading activities.

He never gave up on his dream to further his studies, with family support, in 2011 he got the highly esteemed Zimbabwean Presidential Scholarships to embark on his higher education studies in South Africa. He then enrolled at UNIVEN for the accredited professional planning degree, Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (BURP) and completed in 2014. He was also awarded with the Vice-Chancellor's Merit certificate of academic excellence for the academic year 2013. The UNIVEN Work Study Programme aided him to pursue his studies and he completed Masters in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) with a Distinction in 2016 from the University of Venda. Over the years he developed interest in research on small and intermediate cities as this weave through his research and publications. His BURP research was titled: Exploring revenue enhancement strategies in rural municipalities; a case of Mutale Municipality; and MURP research was also titled; Exploring the developmental paradigms of university towns: a case of University of Venda's 'Univen Town Concept'.

His PhD thesis titled "Spatial transformation in the City of Polokwane, South Africa (1996-2016)" is part of a bigger project on a National Research Foundation (NRF) Postgraduate Collaborative Training Project focusing on Resilience and Spatial Justice in South Africa's Built Environment: Generating interdisciplinary transformative knowledge. The research project is a partnership involving the University of Venda, Witwatersrand University, and Durban University of Technology. Dr. Moffat Frank's thesis interrogated the spatial transformation of the City of Polokwane in South Africa from 1996 to 2016. The key findings from the study unravel the complexities of spatial

transformations in secondary cities not only in South Africa but in small-medium sized cities/towns of developing countries and emerging economies. The research generated spatial transformation maps for the City of Polokwane and developed an integrated framework for tracking spatial transformation in small and intermediate cities in South Africa. The thesis's findings and results are useful in recommending the establishment of a planning institute focusing on small and intermediate cities spatial transformation and planning agenda in South Africa.

He said "I am grateful to my main promoter, Dr. James Chakwizira, my co-promoters Dr. Emmaculate Ingwani and Prof Peter Bikam for their unwavering support, guidance, patience, invaluable advice and encouragement during my PhD study. Their expertise and copious experience have made it possible for me to reach this far in academia".

When congratulating Dr Moffat, Head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Dr. Chakwizira, indicated that Moffat always showed great interest in academia, hence he has always stood above other students in examination results, class tests, practicals and group projects. All this is testimony to his intelligence, dedication and perseverance.

"To the youth, be inspired, do not let your background define your future. I was once known as an informal trader in the eyes of others and now known as Dr Moffat", so says Moffat.

The University of Venda Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni congratulated Dr Moffat and all graduates for their hard work and dedication.

UNIVEN hosts a lecture titled 'Engaged Scholarship-Balancing the Nexus of Teaching Innovation, Research and Engagement'



Professor George de Lange from the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) delivered a guest lecture titled: Engaged Scholarship-Balancing the Nexus of Teaching Innovation, Research and Engagement on 23 April 2021. In her welcome address, Professor Vhonani Netshandama, Director of Community Engagement appreciated the over 120 colleagues in attendance that represented not less than seven institutions of higher learning in SA.

Professor George de Lange provided outlines of the contextual factors that influence the institution's engagement focus and the production of scholarship. The importance of the institutions' conceptual approach to engagement was emphasised.

Professor de Lange further highlighted that, Engagement should be about how the university teaches and what they teach, how they research and what they research, and how they have shifted off-campus and what they are doing in the community.

When delivering the lecture, Professor de Lange indicated that, the internal and external factors determine how universities engage and would affect the number of scholarly outputs produced through engagement. He said, the mission, vision, values and the level of institutionalisation and embeddedness of the core functions. "Secondly, the resources in institutions in terms of infrastructure is important. Thirdly, of utmost importance is balancing the nexus; bringing teaching and learning, research, innovation and entrepreneurship together in an interactive-co-dependence and co-production process. Fifth, the integration of

engagement, collaborative research, applied/action research, technology transfer/participatory research, contract research, commercialisation of IP is important for sustenance. In this regard, Professor de Lange shared the NMU case studies."

"If a university stands on its island without talking to the society around to make inputs, it is not going to transform at the pace that you expect. Engagement invigorates, stimulates, enhances and contextualises the core functions of the university," Professor de Lange insinuated.

He continued to say that Institutional Enablers are vital. "Institutions need to create enabler or drivers for engaged scholarship and provide support to academics to feel much more comfortable doing on-campus research in the office than working outside. Traditional academic structures tend to reinforce isolation amongst academics and external stakeholders. Therefore, structural adjustment is required to create a healthy engagement environment that allows academics and external stakeholders to work together in achieving the integration of the core functions. The formation of entities,

industry chair/other forms of chairs and hubs of convergence assist in flattening the hierarchical relationships between academics and external stakeholder and create a free flow of information."

Prof. Mahlomaholo, the Research Professor from the University of Mpumalanga delivered the closing remarks. He highlighted that Prof de Lange's lecture has enabled delegates to understand what it means for a university to come to its fullness by responding to community needs.

When conveying the vote of thanks, Professor Joseph Francis, Director Institute for Rural Development, appreciated the participation of colleagues. A special vote of thanks conveyed to Professor de Lange for an insightful presentation, stressing that the lecture provided several ingredients for an engaged campus which is crucial to UNIVEN in its first year of implementing its new Strategic Plan 2021-2025 that placed engaged scholarship at the centre of all its activities.

The presentation was useful for UNIVEN to take the lessons learned and to encore on existing strength to take the institution forward.

Insights into Implementation of the Innovation Champions for Local Economic Development in Vhembe District Project



Prof Joseph Francis

Researchers, Academics from various institutions of higher learning, officials from municipalities, provincial and national government departments, and representatives of business and non-governmental sectors participated in a high-level and well-received presentation that UNIVEN's Director of the Institute for Rural Development Prof Joseph Francis delivered on 28 May 2021. The theme of the webinar was: Laying the Foundation for Innovation-driven Local Economic Development: A Peek at the Vhembe District Social Experiment. Dr Emmanuel Tshikwatamba of the University of Mpumalanga chaired the webinar.

Beginning his presentation, Prof Francis said he had accepted to deliver the presentation because he believed it was important to introduce and create awareness of "The National Framework for Local Economic Development: Creating Innovation-driven Local Economies" especially to colleagues in the higher education sector. At the centre of it was sharing how UNIVEN was leading implementation of a national pilot project seeking to "integrate innovation into local economic development practice". He was using the platform to solicit inputs that might "strengthen or enrich our on-going social experiment and also, hopefully mobilise more 'Foot Soldiers' to become involved in similar work".

Prof Francis acknowledged and appreciated the Department of Science and Innovation for funding the project through a grant that the Technology Innovation Agency was managing. Besides emphasising the importance of the financial support, Prof Francis indicated that the Local Economic Development (LED) Office of Vhembe District Municipality was co-leading the project which was involving all the four constituent Local Municipalities. Other key players at the centre of implementation included the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and Department of Cooperative

Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, Limpopo Department of Economic Development Environment and Tourism, and Small Enterprise Development Agency, among many other players. In his presentation, Prof Francis revealed that increasingly, universities were being called upon to demonstrate how they could play more meaningful roles in socioeconomic transformation and development. He proceeded to share how the University of Venda was championing the process of localising the National Framework for Local Economic Development (LED): Creating Innovation-driven Local Economies, 2018-2028. In this framework, LED was regarded as "an adaptive and responsive process by which government, public sector entities, citizens, business and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for innovation-driven inclusive economic development that is characterised by knowledge transfer and competence building; employment generation; capacity development; investment attraction and retention; image enhancement and revenue generation in a local area in order to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all."

Continuing with the webinar, Prof Francis presented an overview of the origin of the new national framework before clarifying how LED and innovation were defined in it. He then spelt out the vision and the six pillars of the framework, namely:

- 1) Building diverse and innovation-driven local economies;
- 2) Developing inclusive local economies;
- 3) Enterprise development and support;
- 4) Developing learning and skillful economies;
- 5) Economic governance and infrastructure;
- and 6) Strengthening local innovation systems.

Central to the project, which he equated to a social experiment, Prof Francis revealed that various activities had been executed to create an enabling environment for multiple stakeholders (local government, provincial and national government departments, state-owned agencies, organised business, tertiary institutions and other key players) to collaborate for successful implementation of the national pilot project. Special emphasis, he clarified, was placed on preparing the ground for implementation and sustainable involvement of key stakeholders. He indicated that the on-going work entailed: 1) Scoping, mapping, analysing and adopting priority economic clusters and drivers that can be supported to yield increased job creation and sustainable employment; 2) Building the capacities of individuals, implementation

teams, Municipalities, strategic partner organisations and tertiary institutions to integrate innovation into LED practice; and demonstrating how to inculcate engaged scholarship through facilitated structured deliberations and decision making for inclusive, innovation-driven LED. Prof Francis spent considerable time taking his audience through the road map which underpins the social experiment in Vhembe District. As he did that, he emphasised the essence of what he referred to as "feedback and feedforward" activities after each phase or milestone of implementation. What also stood out was how innovation (in terms of process, products, services and communication) and a wide range of participatory engagement tools were being weaved into the road map to highlight what innovation-driven LED was in practice. Before concluding his presentation, he shared highlights of the lessons that students, staff, academics and partner organisations, and institutions had learnt to date.

Responding to the presentation, Mr Dovahani Johannes Mulaudzi, a Senior Manager of Development Planning in the City of Mbombela in Mpumalanga, noted that the project was adding value to LED practice by bringing in innovation. He said, "This will assist municipalities to move away from traditional LED practices, where the government and the public think LED is only about government appointing local people in implementing projects. Also, I like the fact that it adopts a change management-based approach instead of our traditional problem-based ways. The fact that the project is clearly stakeholder-driven excites me especially instead of consulting at the tail end, the project road map advocates for stakeholders' inputs and agreement across its plan value chain".

Another respondent was Prof Bhekithemba Mngomezulu who is a Full Professor of Political Science and Deputy Dean of Research in the Economic Management Sciences at the University of the Western Cape. He reflected as follows: "I have interacted with Prof Francis in different contexts and have found him to be an erudite academic. He never brags about his achievements. He is a pragmatic scholar and a champion of action research who believes in practice. Today's seminar epitomises that. Implicit in his talk are two questions: What is the role of the (African) university in LED? What should we, as researchers, do to assist the process? These are pertinent questions through which he calls for a re-look into how policies are formulated and implemented".

Also reacting to the presentation, Dr Modjadji Malahlela (Deputy Director General, Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs) said: "The session provided an opportunity for various stakeholders from government, academia, private sector and civil society movement to dialogue on local economic development, which is a matter of common interest, but stakeholders hardly collaborate on this cross-cutting matter. Furthermore, the approach taken by UNIVEN is inclusive of all stakeholders, including key beneficiaries, ensuring a demand-responsive (rather than a supply-driven) approach to economic development. Such an approach will help to refocus the contextual understanding and approach to local economic development which has lost traction over the years, in some instances even equated to job-opportunities provided by programmes such as EPWP, CWP, and thereby defeating the objective of a redistributive agenda which is key to South Africa given our history and the resultant poverty. The approach by the University is key to mobilising the knowledge, experience and capacities of various stakeholders, and thereby leading to co-creation of sustainable and impactful solutions. This would however require agile institutions, with an appetite for taking risks within the confines of applicable prescripts".

Mr Albert Jeleni, the Executive Governor of the Vhembe Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and also President of the National Union of Municipal Chambers of Commerce and Industry (NUMCCI) expressed the view that different types of innovation can play different roles at various stages of development, and for South Africa choosing the right innovation can be challenging given that "the country remains a dual economy with one of the highest, persistent inequality rates in the world, and is also a Free Market and a Capitalist Economy. Therefore, in addressing local economic development it is critical to pay attention to the type of innovation that is used, and we believe the approach taken by the LED wherein arts/music and local knowledge are used as innovation for disseminating and educating about LED is the right one, and we support it".

In her closing remarks, Prof Vhonani Netshandama acknowledged the participating universities, business, students, academics, municipalities and government departments, among other entities for their inputs.



Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education organises a successful webinar to yield a multiple stakeholder owned centre

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education recently held a Webinar under the theme 'Towards a Stakeholder-owned Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy'. This webinar was designed to be a unique platform to engage Senior Managers of Parliament so that they surface some potential research areas for possible inclusion in the research agenda of the budding research centre being established at UNIVEN and was held on Microsoft Teams.

This Webinar was organised because the University of Venda (UNIVEN) is establishing a centre that focuses on research to enhance informed decision making and functioning of the legislative sector (At grassroots structures such as Traditional Leadership decision making Fora, Municipal Councils, Parliament, Provincial Legislatures, SADC-Parliamentary Forum and Pan African Parliament). Considerable progress has been made to date, especially with respect to establishing linkages, collaboration and partnerships with potential partners and funders. The principal intention is to distil the core business of the new Centre and co-define its core areas of focus. It is also envisaged that the interface will help identify potential scope and specific areas of synergy.



In his welcoming message Prof Takalani Mashau said UNIVEN is part of the society and is not isolated hence it also participate in the programmes designed by parliament. He further outlined some of the content found in the University's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.



In his welcoming address, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni said the UNIVEN has identified 4 Strategic Thrusts in which Strategic Thrust 1 - Student Centeredness and Engaged Scholarship and Strategic Thrust 4 - Linkages, partnerships and internationalisation talk

to this initiative. He highlighted that the Legislative Centre remains under researched and because of that, UNIVEN has seen the reason to establish this Centre which will support the work of Legislative Centre.



When rendering the purpose of the Webinar, Prof Vhonani Netshandama said this webinar is intended to unite UNIVEN, communities and the National South African Parliament and to also assist attendees to understand operations of both the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces.



Mr Masibulele Xaso, Secretary to the National Assembly from South African Parliament presented the overview of the National Assembly (NA) while Advocate Phindela presented on the role of National Council of Provinces.

Manager Knowledge Management and information Services at the Parliament's Research Unit Focus, Dr Leon Gabriel presented about the 6th Parliament strategy map, knowledge management strategy, research plan, and strategic collaborations focus on Research Unit.



In his vote of thanks message, the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education Executive Dean, Prof Bongani Bantwini indicated that this initiative is pivotal in strengthening our democracy. "To us this knowledge you shared is fundamental because the parliament serves the society, and the society should know how parliament functions. Today you have empowered us, you have educated us," said Prof Bantwini, telling a delegation from South African Parliament.



In closing remarks, Prof Joseph Francis indicated that this has been a very enriching platform for University staff members. He said this is the first of a series of seminars, workshops and webinars to serve as platforms for engaging key stakeholders.

"To us this knowledge you shared is fundamental because the parliament serves the society, and the society should know how parliament functions. Today you have empowered us, you have educated us."

Manenzhe Traditional Council Receives Pre-Training from UNIVEN School of Law



Attendees of the Pre-Training during Pre-Training

The University of Venda through the School of Law, Public Law Department held a pre-training meeting hosting the Manenzhe Traditional Council led by Thovhele (Chief) Vho-Manenzhe. The meeting was held on Thursday, 17 June 2021 in the Council Chambers. The pre-training meeting follows an invitation by the Manenzhe Traditional Council (under the traditional leadership of Thovhovhele Vho- Manenzhe T.E) for training on the latest 'Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act 3 of 2019' ('Act').

The Act was signed into law in 2019 by President Cyril Ramaphosa and commenced with effect from 01 April 2021 as proclaimed by the President under Proclamation No. 38, published in Government Gazette No. 43981 of 11 December 2020. The Act has since repealed (replaced) the previous Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003.



The School of Law Executive Committee resolved, following an invitation by the University's Community Engagement Directorate to have the training facilitated by the Public Law Department led by Professor Ademola Oluborode Jegede.

The purpose of the pre-training meeting was to obtain specifics and or clear guidelines from the Manenzhe Traditional Council on the planned training.



The meeting was directed by Adv. Tshilidzi Norman Raphulu, a lecturer in the School of Law, Public Law Department. In attendance amongst the University delegates were the former Dean of School of Law, Professor Lonias Ndlovu, Professor Jegede (convener and Head of Public Law Department) Professor Joseph Francis (The Institute for Rural Development), Adv. Hlako Choma (Senior Lecturer, Public Law), Adv. Walter Makulana (Lecturer, Public Law), Mr. Phuthi Thokolo (Head of the Law Clinic) and Mr. Emmanuel Masindi (Attorney, Law Clinic). Chief Manenzhe was accompanied by members of the Manenzhe Traditional Council.



Professor Lonias Ndlovu delivered an opening and welcome address. During the deliberation session, Chief Manenzhe provided some context on the planned training. The Chief indicated that the government has since the commencement of the new Act given all senior traditional leaders, including himself, until the 31 of March 2021 to have elected new traditional leadership councils in compliance with the provisions of the new Act. As such, the Chief and his Council saw it fit to obtain some form of training from the University to acquire sufficient working knowledge on the new Act to help them elect a properly constituted Council as required by the new Act.



The Chief indicated that they chose the University of Venda for this training specifically targeting the School of Law as they (Council) consider it one of the best law schools in the Country. Moreover, according to the Chief, the training will help them understand the relevant legislative provisions relating to the newly introduced traditional and Khoi-san leadership which has since been introduced into the existing traditional leadership structures.

It was agreed during the meeting that the training will amongst other things focus on explanation of definitional concepts of the Act, issues of gender representation in traditional council structures (from local to national) and issues of municipal representation, as contemplated by the Act. It was further agreed that the workshop will be held at Manenzhe village and it will be attended by the Manenzhe Traditional Council, local traditional councils, and various local community stakeholders under the traditional jurisdiction of Chief Manenzhe. The training will be spread over several days to ensure the health and safety of participants and in compliance with COVID-19 Regulations. The local stakeholders identified for training include School governing bodies,

SANCO, Ward Councillors, Ward Committees, Home Based Cares and farmer's representatives. Furthermore, the School of Law intends to award all the participants of the training with certificates of attendance.

The dates for the workshop were yet to be announced; however the workshop would take place late July 2021. The relevant University and government Covid-19 protocols were observed during the pre-training meeting.



A group photo of attendees of the Pre-Training meeting

Student Representative Council bids farewell to the Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo

Mr Tshikhudo touched the lives of many students during his tenure at UNIVEN.

The University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Student Representative Council (SRC) recently held an event to bid farewell to the Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo. This farewell function was held at Porche-Villa Hotel and Conference Centre.



SRC President, Mr Gifft Chauke said he hopes and believe that Mr Tshikhudo will continue to do well in his new position. "Your door was always open when we needed you. Under your leadership we were able to achieve a lot. You have assisted a lot of students to move forward until today." He wished him all the best in his new position.



When rendering the purpose of gathering, SRC General Secretary, Siphon Mavhungu said Mr Tshikhudo was like a parent to all students and his door was always open for all who needed his help.

"Mr Tshikhudo was like a parent to all students and his door was always open for all who needed his help."



Speaking on behalf of Previous UNIVEN SRC Presidents, Mr Andisani Mathelemusa explained Mr Tshikhudo as a very progressive man who always make sure that things are done in an orderly manner. He said Mr Tshikhudo was always there for students. "When students had challenges, he was hands-on and always ready to take decisions even if they are unpopular. On behalf of the generations that have led UNIVEN students, we congratulate you and wish you well on your new appointment. We believe that at the end you will come back to serve this University going forward."

"When students had challenges, he was hands-on and always ready to take decisions."



When giving a Keynote Address, Adv Edward Lambani, University Registrar said that the hospitality that Mr Tshikhudo has given UNIVEN since he joined the University until today has been noticed. He further said that the orderly behaviour which is uncompromisingly maintained by the student's leadership is a striking testimony to the discipline which has always characterised the person in Mr Tshikhudo's veins. "Although we may be silent, we are given to think and hidden away in our minds that there is no small amount of gratitude to Mr Tshikhudo for the kindness he cheerfully contributed to our student community. Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears, our faith triumphant over fears, are all with you."



In his Response, Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo said he feels very much honoured that the SRC has organised an event for him. He said, in normal circumstances, the SRC would not organise an event of this nature for the Director, especially of Student Affairs. "This means that I have touched the lives of many students during my tenure at UNIVEN. I have served the University for almost nine years and it was not easy, but with your cooperation, you have made my life easy. This appointment didn't come by miracle but because of the good work that they saw at UNIVEN."

"As some of you might be aware, to have served the University for five years in the department of Student Affairs is not a simple task, but with your guidance, cooperation, and support, together we have made it. We are respected in the sector as one of the stable institutions with leaders who engage professionally."

He expressed that challenges were there but together with SRC of previous years, they made sure that they make the lives of students easy while they are home away from home. "We need to be honest with ourselves and with the people that you represent." Mr Tshikhudo advised the SRC to plan and not to wait for the next academic year to start before they address issues especially those of financial exclusion. "We have a good story to tell. Many things were achieved in the past nine years and UNIVEN was the first University to run the project of tablets given to all students before other Universities could think of it."

"We are respected in the sector as one of the stable institutions with leaders who engage professionally."

"I am very good at training students to become leaders of tomorrow and I am confident to say I have that skill. Violence and vandalism to solve problems should always be discouraged. Student leaders were encouraged to resolve issues in a very responsible way and not by destroying property that future generations would need." He advised Student Affairs staff members to love their job, build teams and synergies among themselves because this would help them achieve many of their goals.



Minister of Education, Mr Mulaio Ravhura welcoming attendees.



In his vote of thanks Deputy Secretary, Mr Bafana Mangena said Mr Tshikhudo lives to inspire others and always strives to produce future leaders.

Farewell Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo

UNIVEN hosts a lecture titled 'Engaged Scholarship-Balancing the Nexus of Teaching Innovation, Research and Engagement'



Professor George de Lange from the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) delivered a guest lecture titled: Engaged Scholarship-Balancing the Nexus of Teaching Innovation, Research and Engagement on 23 April 2021. In her welcome address, Professor Vhonani Netshandama, Director of Community Engagement appreciated the over 120 colleagues in attendance that represented not less than seven institutions of higher learning in SA.

Professor George de Lange provided outlines of the contextual factors that influence the institution's engagement focus and the production of scholarship. The importance of the institutions' conceptual approach to engagement was emphasised.

Professor de Lange further highlighted that, Engagement should be about how the university teaches and what they teach, how they research and what they research, and how they have shifted off-campus and what they are doing in the community.

When delivering the lecture, Professor de Lange indicated that, the internal and external factors determine how universities engage and would affect the number of scholarly outputs produced through engagement. He said, the mission, vision, values and the level of institutionalisation and embeddedness of the core functions. "Secondly, the resources in institutions in terms of infrastructure is important. Thirdly, of utmost importance is balancing the nexus; bringing teaching and learning, research, innovation and entrepreneurship together in an interactive-co-dependence and co-production process. Fifth, the integration of

engagement, collaborative research, applied/action research, technology transfer/participatory research, contract research, commercialisation of IP is important for sustenance. In this regard, Professor de Lange shared the NMU case studies."

"If a university stands on its island without talking to the society around to make inputs, it is not going to transform at the pace that you expect. Engagement invigorates, stimulates, enhances and contextualises the core functions of the university," Professor de Lange insinuated.

He continued to say that Institutional Enablers are vital. "Institutions need to create enabler or drivers for engaged scholarship and provide support to academics to feel much more comfortable doing on-campus research in the office than working outside. Traditional academic structures tend to reinforce isolation amongst academics and external stakeholders. Therefore, structural adjustment is required to create a healthy engagement environment that allows academics and external stakeholders to work together in achieving the integration of the core functions. The formation of entities,

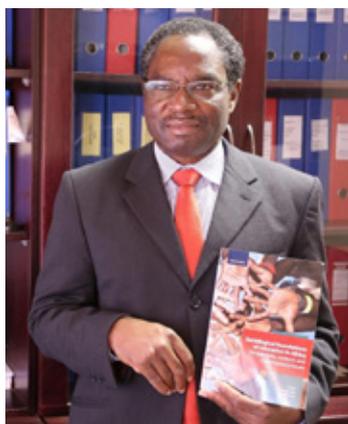
industry chair/other forms of chairs and hubs of convergence assist in flattening the hierarchical relationships between academics and external stakeholder and create a free flow of information."

Prof. Mahlomaholo, the Research Professor from the University of Mpumalanga delivered the closing remarks. He highlighted that Prof de Lange's lecture has enabled delegates to understand what it means for a university to come to its fullness by responding to community needs.

When conveying the vote of thanks, Professor Joseph Francis, Director Institute for Rural Development, appreciated the participation of colleagues. A special vote of thanks conveyed to Professor de Lange for an insightful presentation, stressing that the lecture provided several ingredients for an engaged campus which is crucial to UNIVEN in its first year of implementing its new Strategic Plan 2021-2025 that placed engaged scholarship at the centre of all its activities.

The presentation is useful for UNIVEN to take the lessons learned and to enquire on existing strength to take the institution forward.

University of Venda Professor Publishes a Book to Revolutionise the Study of Education in Africa



Professor Tawanda Runhare displaying a book that was recently published

A University of Venda educational sociologist and former acting Dean of the School of Education, Professor Tawanda Runhare has published a book that should have an impact on the study of education in postcolonial Africa. The 424-page book, published by Oxford University Press Southern Africa (OUPSA) is titled Sociological Foundations of Education in Africa: Perspectives, Contexts and Contemporary Issues. The volume is co-

edited by Professor Runhare and Professor Pesianayi Gwirayi, former Director of Research and Postgraduate Studies and Educational Sociologist at Great Zimbabwe University, has chapter contributions by scholars drawn from higher education institutions in 6 African countries; Eswatini, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe, as well as a Kazakhstani-based academic of African descent. Of the sixteen (16) chapters in the book, 6 are written by four (4) University of Venda academics, namely Professor Takalani Samuel Mashau, Dr Willard Munyoka, Professor Ratau John Monobe (retired) and the book editor Professor Runhare.

Major objective of the book is to challenge the dominance of Eurocentric sociological epistemology by employing Afrocentricity as a liberatory, revolutionary and theoretical instrument for critical analysis of education in African settings and from African perspectives. In this respect, the ideas of Afrocentric and African scholars such as Marcus Garvey, Molefi Kete Asante, Martin Carnoy, Walter Rodney, Chidozie Chukwuokolo, Julius Nyerere, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Clement Tsheloane Keto (South African) Mualana Kerenga, and Thabo Mbeki's vision of an ideal African, complement each other to contest the Eurocentric sociological study of education which is prevalent in most

African universities and colleges. In South Africa, this book has come at the right time when the teacher education landscape is undergoing profound change in its design and curriculum.

Anchored on infusing African theoretical, conceptual and contextual propositions on the study of education in the continent, the book consists of four parts; sociological perspectives on education, education as an agent of socialisation, contemporary issues on education in Africa, and education and development in Africa. Of interest to South Africa is the section with a chapter on a case study of how funding models of South African education led to higher education students' demand for transformation, which sprang to the #FeesMustFall protests of 2015 and the wide-ranging demand for radical transformation in the country's higher education policies, practices and the curriculum. Other important aspects that come to fore in one section of the book include decolonisation and africanisation of education, impact of quantitative expansion or the 'massification' of education in Africa, the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) and impact of the fourth industrial revolution (FIR) on education.

Commenting on the book in its foreword, Professor Saloshna Vandeyar, Director of the Centre for Diversity and Social Cohesion at University of Pretoria said he has no doubt that this book will become influential and widely be used wherever discrimination and inequality still determine educational outcomes.

Dr Nomkhosi Nzimande of the University of KwaZulu-Natal said that, "having a sociology of education book written with an African perspective in mind is necessary in this era flooded with discourses of decolonising and Africanising the curriculum".

Recently, on the announcement of the book publication at the Research and Publications Committee (RPC) meeting by Professor Bongani Bantwini, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; Senior Professor Georges-Ivo Ekosse, the Director of Research and Innovation added that this is an important academic development that we should shout about as it puts UNIVEN on the map in higher education.

The University of Venda congratulates Professor Runhare and the team for this academic accomplishment, which was supported by the internationally reputable publishers, Oxford University Press.

University of Venda becomes the fourth member of the SATN Converis Consortium on Research Publications Management System

On 07 and 09 June 2021, the Directorate of Research and Innovation organised a successful two days online training on the South African Technology Network's (SATN's) Converis Research Management System through Microsoft Teams. The SATN's Converis is a software for capturing and reporting of research outputs to DHET and for management of other grants such as those received from the National Research Foundation (NRF). The University of Venda's (UNIVEN's) inclusion in the SATN's Converis Consortium makes it the fourth University after Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), Central University of Technology (CUT), and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). Through this Consortium, the SATN Members will make cost savings emanating from discount and cost sharing of the software and services.

In his opening remarks, the Director of Research and Innovation, Senior Professor Georges Ekosse, mentioned the challenges that UNIVEN encountered when administering annual Research Outputs (RO); and believes that the challenges would be overcome through the procurement and application of the SATN Converis software. The Converis System will effectively assist in the management of research and publications data. The Converis System will also be used to manage patent applications, and post-graduate thesis submissions.

It should be noted that Converis is among the most powerful tool available for research analytics and management of information of researchers, and research activities.

Converis offers extensive reporting capabilities with the relevant indicators, charts and tables based on live data, that enable researchers to report accurately on their publications and other outputs resulting from their research projects. The Directorate of Research and Innovation will continue to work with the IT Services and conduct training for UNIVEN researchers. The acquisition has empowered UNIVEN with the capacity to: direct and manage workflows and approvals associated with research activities



Director of Research and Innovation, Senior Professor Georges Ekosse

and achievements; assist on budgeting, expenditures, and forecasting; assign and delegate tasks and deadlines; gather project information linking outcomes with funding, validate processes for open access repository and bibliometrics, aggregate data on critical institutional research processes and activities for internal and external reporting; conduct Intellectual Property (IP) licensing for patents, expertise and products to manage workflows, and promote and publicise records and activities of the institution via public and searchable web portal. The SATN's Converis System will facilitate the efficient publications management for researchers, including integration with the Web of Science, and ORCID, among others.

Hence, Converis supports advanced bibliometric including researcher's citation data. Files can be imported and exported in formats like EndNote. Researchers including postgraduate students and postdoctoral research fellows will benefit immensely from this acquisition.

Converis Training Guide- Researchers & Administrators

The South African Technology Network:
Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)
Central University of Technology (CUT)
Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
University of Venda (UNIVEN)



UNIVEN male staff members attend Men's Health Day in numbers



Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

On 28 and 29 June 2021, the University's Employee Health and Wellness Section of the Human Resources Department organised an educational Men's Health event. This educational Men's Health event took place on Microsoft Teams and was organised for male staff members.

In his opening address, the University Registrar, Advocate Edward Lambani underscored the fact that the event was planned to address the 'men who die silently' challenge. He pointed out that the event was intentionally organised in June because June is the month of 'men'.

Advocate Lambani further advised men to seek assistance when they experience challenges in life. He characterised challenges into those which affect mental, physical, sexuality, and all other issues affecting men in general. He concluded by making a call to all men to attend an event like this one because they will learn how to be open, talk about their problems, and seek help.

The guest speaker, Dr Takalani Makulana addressed men on other things that men don't understand about women under the topic of women and sex.

She was followed by the Head of Control Prosecutor at Department of Justice, Dzanani Magistrate Court, Advocate Khathutshelo Nemudzivhadi who addressed male staff members on matters of love and respect. He enlightened and motivated men, quoting some Biblical scriptures. Advocate Nemudzivhadi concluded his talk by advising male staff members on how they (men) should conduct themselves as heads of families, especially during challenging times. He further spoke about some of the legal aspects that bind two people who are

married to each other and those who are staying together, married, or not married. He advised men to be exemplary as heads of their families.

Head of Labour Relations, Advocate Rudzani Makhema gave a vote of thanks. As the programme director, Mr Esrom Phungo remarked that as a man, one might start doing better after the health talk. In that way you will be able to build your families and the community at large,' said Mr Phungo

When rendering the purpose of the event on Day Two, the Director Marketing, Branding and Communication, Dr Takalani Dzaga indicated that, for the HR Department to organise this kind of event for staff members, it means that the University takes its staff members' health serious and that staff members should also do likewise. He encouraged male staff members to take regular checkups. Dr Dzaga mentioned that the secondary purpose of this event is to encourage a healthy diet among staff members because this will result in staff members being productive.

As the guest speaker, Dr Munyadziwa Albert Kwinda addressed male UNIVEN staff members under the topic 'Common health problem in men: Prostate problem and sexual related problem'. In his address, Dr Kwinda also used Biblical scriptures to motivate and advise men on how to address life challenges. He encouraged attendees to go for regular check-ups and to monitor their health statuses. 'Every disease can be treated as long as it is detected at an early stage,' concludes Dr Kwinda.

The Head of Human Resources Operations, Mr Victor Sigama gave a vote of thanks.

UNIVEN-North West University IKS Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship Webinar is an entrepreneurial eye opener

The University of Venda (UNIVEN), North West University (NWU) and Indigenous Terrain, NWU student-led non-profit organisation that strives to empower the use of indigenous knowledge with integration of the modern knowledge co-hosted the 1st collaborative student organised Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship Webinar series on Tuesday, 15 June 2021. This webinar took place online through Microsoft Teams platform.

The webinar was co-chaired by Ms Tsakani Nyoni, the founder of UNIVEN IKS Student Chapter and Ms Mandy Rasehlomi, Co-founder of Indigenous Terrain.

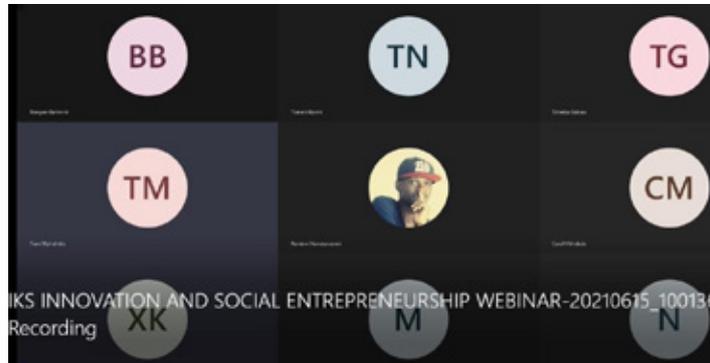
The purpose of the webinar was to introduce innovation and social entrepreneurship through the experiences of students and graduates of IKS who run their own businesses. The webinar was attended by 105 participants.

In his Welcome address, the UNIVEN Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, Prof Bongani Bantwini opened by quoting John Maxwell who once said a leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way. He said that "the greatest gift you can give someone is your time." Prof Bantwini further indicated that it was encouraging to see students taking entrepreneurship seriously. He reminded students that unemployment statistics rose from 32.5 in the first quarter of 2021 to 32.6 in the last period, a highest unemployment rate since comparable data began in 2008. "Of great concern is that the highest number is youth who even have degrees," he said. Professor Bantwini further motivated and congratulated students for being proactive and for introducing the collaborative webinar.

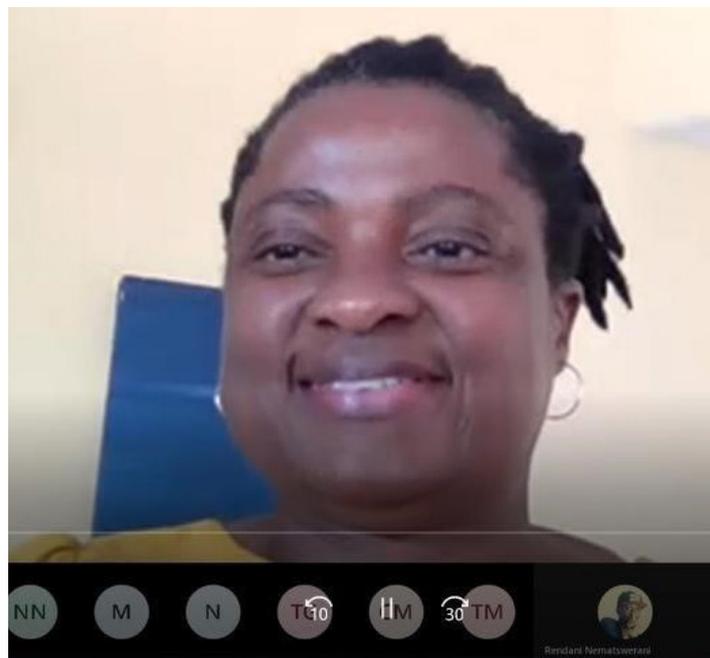
He concluded his talk by reiterating Strategic Thrust- 2 of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 of the University of Venda, which is about UNIVEN being an Entrepreneurial University-two of the strategic objectives being to develop entrepreneurial culture and develop enterprise. "The strategic plan requires a paradigm shift enabling students to refrain from thinking of themselves as prospective employees but employers," said Prof Bantwini.

...the greatest gift you can give someone is your time."

Director Community Engagement, Prof Vhonani Netshandama appreciated the power for collaborative innovation which encourages students to share their ideas with their peers and tap into diverse insights and perspectives to cocreate entrepreneurial ventures. She said innovation is an interactive process in which different types of knowledge are combined as defined by Lundvall 1985 and 1988. She familiarised the students with the '4Cs' of innovation, namely Creativity, Critical thinking, Communication and Collaboration "which should be embedded in our thinking and in our doing.



Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, Professor Bongani Bantwini



Director Community Engagement, Prof Vhonani Netshandama

"I take from the Biblical version of us being created in God's image that we were given the tools and means to create. "Students should be critical thinkers and not take anything at face value, however, that cannot be possible if they do not communicate." Prof Netshandama also reminded the students about the importance of communication. She told them that, whatever they do will have no meaning unless they communicate it. Prof Netshandama also emphasised the importance of collaboration.

"We live in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous world. Covid-19 happened, and is still happening, unemployment will happen, including other things that we don't need in our lives will still happen." She continued to tell students that it is important that they take care of their mental health the same way as they take care of their physical being, "a topic that is also dear to my heart", she said. She stated that future IKS leaders should be educated to view uncertainty of the unknowable future not as a problem to be solved but rather as reality to be embraced. IKS students should stand their ground and interact with the knowledge users, producers, policy makers and indigenous knowledge holders. "We need challenges and problems to be innovators. "You should also be willing to volunteer your time as Professor Bantwini has indicated in his opening." She made an example of the work that Enactus is doing in terms of indigenous agriculture. "Many innovations that are today multi-million-dollar businesses were started by a group of students who came together from different disciplines to find solution to a problem or problems that were bothering them at the time. Today, the work of EDHE and the recently announced University of Venda Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator provides students with a laboratory for innovation and creativity. There shall be no perfect environment for you to start. Start where it is possible to start. Turn lemon into lemonade," she concluded.

"We live in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous world. Covid-19 happened, and is still happening, unemployment will happen, including other things that we don't need in our lives will still happen."

UNIVEN-North West University IKS Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship Webinar is an entrepreneurial eye opener continued...



A picture of Africentric Organic cosmetics

Esther Obasa said Africentric Organics is a cosmetics brand that manufactures hair products from plants produce. "The cosmetics brand was founded in 2020, and the first batch of products was released in March 2021. The plant produce used in the hair care products are mostly fruits from the trees such as Olive oil produced from *Olea Europaea*, Black Sesame seed also known as Kalonji, from a flower bearing plant called *Nigella Sativa*, Fenugreek seeds, and Shea butter from *Vitellaria Paradoxa*.

She also shared with the audience that her skills developed along the way through UNIVEN Social Entrepreneurship Programme; She Leads Africa webinar; Financial Success masterclass; the Lab at Formula Botanica and Beauty business webinar. "Benefits of the product are that it provides consumers hair with the natural compound that enhance hair growth; replace splits ends; soften dry brittle hair; reduces hair fall for adults from the age of 50 upward; reduces itchiness and dandruff in the scalp; keeps the hair and scalp moisturize; detangles the hair and provides smoothness," said Esther, an Honours student of African Studies.

Third level student in Bachelor of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) at the North West University, Mandy Rasehlomi presented on their Indigenous Terrain, a Non-Profit organisation founded in 2020 by three North West University students. She explained that the word 'genus' came from Latin word meaning birth or origin and 'terrain' is also from a Latin word meaning earth or root. She clarified that the logo was designed such that it left the leaves out to show that the organisation is still growing.

...the logo was designed such that it left the leaves out to show that the organisation is still growing.



Mr Innocent Khazamula, a former UNIVEN BIKS student presented on 'Indigenous Garden'. He said they are still working on the project. He further mentioned that the idea came after it was noted that medicinal plants have become extinct.

Mr Khazamula also said they aim to package medicinal plants and sell them to pharmacies. He stated that they have good relationship with local traditional health practitioners. "Key partners of the project amongst others are pharmaceutical companies, Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa, University of Venda and The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. In his conclusion, he said there should be preservation and agroprocessing of the plants that lead to final product.

Miss Boitumelo Mphahlele founder of Modish-I presented on her business. She shared that she had a challenge with her skin and her mother would take her to a dermatologist and it did not work. She then

said she became inquisitive and checked the active nature ingredients and sampled them for herbal medicine through her ancestral calling. She also shared that her mother had allergy and she tried a certain traditional medicine concoction, and the outcome was positive. Boitumelo then approached a relative to do graphic design for her products so she could market her products to a wider spectrum of consumers. She said her product wanted to destigmatise the perception of indigenous plants and medicinal herbs.

When summing up the webinar, NWU BIKS Programme Coordinator Dr George Sedupane reminded students to take advantage of the time they spend at varsity by emphasising that students pay far less than the resources they get from their respective universities. He encouraged entrepreneurs who presented at the webinar to share their short business profiles and ideas with him and others, so that they could be supported in getting funding opportunities.



Acting Director NWU IKS Centre, Dr Motheo Koitsiwe

In his closing remarks Acting Director NWU IKS Centre, Dr Motheo Koitsiwe indicated that the webinar shifted the mindset of thinking of IKS as traditional medicine. He encouraged students to be proud of speaking in vernacular and to consider doing their dissertations in their vernacular to promote the multidisciplinary Indigenous Knowledge.

Students should be proud of speaking in vernacular and consider doing their dissertations in their vernacular to promote the multidisciplinary Indigenous Knowledge.

UNIVEN success stories should continuously be told

"There is a need for the Department of Marketing, Branding, and Communication to bring the world to the University of Venda (UNIVEN) by showing off the good stories and achievements that the University accomplish on daily basis," says UNIVEN Deputy Vice-Chancellor Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin during the Department of Marketing, Branding and Communication workshop that was held at 2Ten Hotel on Tuesday, 08 June 2021.



In his welcome and opening remarks, Dr Martin stated that the Marketing, Branding and Communication Department should effectively play its role to change the attitudes and perception of staff and students about UNIVEN. He said, stakeholders should

be aware that UNIVEN is only a rural based University with impact and relevance to the world. "Let us use our location as our unique selling point and believe in our own brand," he said. He also emphasised the fact that staff members should start believing that they are working for the best institution with average students. "This will assist both staff and students to always strive for the best in whatever they do." Dr Martin further, urged staff members to project positive image of the University. "Let us be the future leaders we aspire our students to be and lead by example."

In his concluding remarks, Dr Martin advised staff members to be self-driven, goal setters and to be more sensitive to students and the institution itself. He highlighted that individual Annual Performance Plan should be aligned to the University's Strategic Plan.

"Let us be the future leaders we aspire our students to be and lead by example."



The workshop was also attended by SABC Business Unit Manager, Mr Madikana Matjila who indicated that the SABC is ready to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with UNIVEN with the aim of contributing in the mandate to educate, inform and get involved in engaged research projects. Mr Matjila also highlighted that the MoU would also see UNIVEN's public interest programmes and the name of the University being massively promoted on the SABC Limpopo Combo platform.



When presenting the Departmental Communication Strategy, the Director Marketing, Branding and Communication, Dr Takalani Dzaga indicated that it takes many years to build a brand whereas it only takes one incident to ruin everything that has been built over many years. He further said that staff members and students should brag about the good stories concerning the University. Dr Dzaga said these stories that we tell out there will assist in building a positive brand of the University. He also mentioned that the Department continues to work closely with other strategic stakeholders in its endeavor to market the reputation of the University, citing the importance segmentation of stakeholders and packaging of messages relevant to the diverse target audience. The Department of Marketing, Branding and Communication continues to play its role to support the University in the effective implementation of 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and to ensure that the University success stories are widely circulated, using multiple communication tools.



A group photo of Marketing, Branding and Communication staff members posing with Dr Martin and Mr Matjila

UNIVEN School of Law facilitates another successful Corporate Governance Training



Adv Shibambu from the Private and Mercantile Law Department facilitating one of the Corporate Governance Training Sessions

The School of Law through the Department of Private and Mercantile Law organised and facilitated yet another successful Corporate Governance related Workshop/Training. The workshop focussed on the drafting, interpretation and or amendment of a company's Memorandum of Incorporation (MOI). The workshop was specifically organised for and at the request of the Board of Directors of a non-profit company, namely Nwanedi Agri-Hub NPC, and it was held at Sand River Resort, Musina on Tuesday, 25 May 2021. This Corporate Governance Training was attended by all Nwanedi AgriHub NPC Board of Directors including a representative of the Department of Agriculture, Vhembe.

The workshop was part of the School of Law community engagement initiatives, and it is part of a series of previous Corporate Governance workshops organised by the School of Law under the then Department of Mercantile Law, to capacitate the Nwanedi Local Agricultural farmers on issues of corporate governance to help sustain their agricultural businesses.

Two previous workshops were held following an invitation to the School of Law by Timbali Technology Incubator (Timbali), a non-profit company (NPC). Timbali, through government financial support, developed and operated a mentorship model programme for the Nwanedi Small Hold Commercial farmers to create for them a sustainable commercial farming model that has direct market access. In the process, Timbali successfully built a multimillionrand packhouse for the benefit of the Nwanedi Local Commercial farmers.

The aim of the packhouse is to bridge the gap between the farmers and the market through reputable and reliable operational mechanisms.

The need for the workshop was owing to that Timbali, who previously administered the Nwanedi Packhouse on behalf of the local farmers, were finalising the handing over and or transfer of the Nwanedi Packhouse to the newly incorporated and now operating Nwanedi Agri-Hub NPC, which has already started administering the Packhouse for the benefit of local farmers. The School of Law in 2019 at the request of Timbali, trained several Nwanedi local famers on issues of corporate governance in anticipation of some of them becoming board members of the newly formed Nwanedi Agri-Hub NPC, and this was done to ensure the smooth running of and sustainability of the NPC.

Some of the farmers have since been appointed board members of the Nwanedi Agri-Hub NPC. Now members of the newly appointed Nwanedi AgriHub NPC felt the need to be trained on issues relating to their company Memorandum Of Incorporation (MOI). The MOI training covered various legal issues including the interpretation and amendment of the MOI.

The workshop was facilitated by staff members and the students in the School of Law. The Steering Committee comprising of several members of the School, namely - Adv Raphulu, Adv Shibambu, Dr Simbo and Ms Lavhengwa were the driving force behind the success of the workshop. This team has even developed a training manual on MOI's applicable to non-profit companies.

Five law students participated in the facilitation of the workshop. Amongst the students were: Ms Tatenda Alice Muchineripi (third year LLB student), Ms Tafadza Natasha Mugabe (third year LLB student), Ms Tshivhase Livhuwani Precious (third year LLB student), Mr Thakhani Nephawe (Final year LLB student) and the outgoing 2019/2020 Chairperson of the Law Student Council (LSC), Mr Oda Ramusekene (final year LLB student).

The Nwanedi Agri-Hub NPC Board undertook to make use of the knowledge acquired during the workshop to amend their current company MOI to specifically fit their structure, vision, and objectives of the company. The relevant government COVID-19 protocols were observed during the workshop.



Adv Raphulu from the Public Law Department facilitating one of the Corporate Governance training sessions

SEDA approves establishment of the University of Venda Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (UCFERI)

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) is elated to have had its business plan to establish a Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (UCFERI) accepted and approved by the Small Business Development Enterprise Agency (SEDA). This news, delivered through a formal letter to the Vice Chancellor and Principal, Dr N.B. Nthambeleni, is significant because it presents us with the opportunity to serve as the anchor institution for regional development. It complements and strengthens operationalisation of our strategic drive towards becoming an entrepreneurial university. Through the UCFERI, we will partner, link and collaborate with other stakeholders to provide start-up and business development support to staff, students and members of our broader local and provincial community. We would like to highlight that the UCFERI will help consolidate the gains of the work UNIVEN is already championing such as the Innovation Champions for Local Economic Development in Vhembe District Project, which the Department of Science and Innovation is funding through the Technology Innovation Agency.

The objectives of the UCFERI are amongst others to:

- a) recruit, screen and induct potential entrepreneurs for inclusion in the technology business incubation programme;
- b) provide incubation support services to develop potential entrepreneurs;
- c) formalise partnership agreements with a national corporate or key stakeholder, focused on the development of suppliers in sector product or service value chains;
- d) facilitate processes for incubatees to obtain business contracts with corporate and public institutions through hosting regular business linkage and networking sessions.
- e) facilitate processes for incubatees to obtain business financing and procurement of appropriate equipment and machinery; and
- f) mentor the new enterprises on business skills, technical advice and operations know-how.

Currently, the University is preparing to sign the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with SEDA and establishing a representative Steering Committee to oversee the Centre's activities. The Centre will collaborate with three already established Communities of Practice (CoPs) at UNIVEN, namely:

- a) StudentPreneurship led by Dr Nkondo and Dr Obadire;
- b) Academic Entrepreneurship led by Prof Netshandama and Dr Nkondo; and
- c) Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development Goals led by Dr Ngirande and Dr Masehela

Interested staff and students are welcome to contact the CoP leaders for inclusion in any entrepreneurial activity on campus.



World Whistleblowers Day

Are you a whistleblower?

World Whistleblowers Day is an international observance held on June 23 every year. Its main goal is to raise public awareness about the important role of whistleblowers in combating corruption and maintaining national security.

A whistleblower is a person who exposes any kind of information or activity that is deemed illegal, unethical, or not correct within an organization. The information of alleged wrongdoing includes violation of University policy/rules, regulation, law, or threat to public interest or national security, as well as fraud and corruption.

Any employee, student or external party of the University who has reasonable belief that there is fraud and corruption or misconduct may raise a concern under the procedure detailed.

Concerns must be raised without malice, in good faith and not for personal gain and the individual must reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegations contained in the disclosure deserves investigation.



Ethics Hotline

A toll-free telephone number:
0800 212 755

A secure email address:
univenhotline@tip-offs.com



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders



TIP-OFFS ANONYMOUS

TRUST US, TALK TO US

Issues that cannot be resolved by using the University's normal internal communication channels should be reported to Tip-offs Anonymous. If you are not sure, report it anyway!

What should I report to Tip-offs Anonymous?

- ✓ Any wrong doing
Theft, Fraud, Crime Syndicate Activities

- ✓ Not obeying University policies or procedures
*Over-riding controls
Sharing of user ID's or access badges inaccurate disclosure of one's business mileage*

- ✓ Not obeying the law
*Alcohol/Drug abuse
Non-Roadworthy vehicles
Illegal Pollution*

- ✓ Highly sensitive issues
Sexual Harassment, Nepotism, Racism

- ✓ Abuse of University Property and Equipment, Making personal calls on the University's telephone account, Use of the internet, fax machine and University equipment to run your own business

- ✓ Collusion with external and internal parties, Backhanding

- ✓ Theft of Time
*Playing computer games in University time - Solitaire
Exaggerations or incorrect information on timesheets, Extended lunches, Prolonged personal calls*

- ✓ Bribery and corruption
A supplier offers a kickback to the employee to gain the tender

Remember

- You can remain totally anonymous
- You can call us 24 hours a day
365 days a year

Make that call

Free Call: 0800 212 755
 Free Post: KZN 138 Umhlanga Rocks 4320
 Free Fax: 0800 00 77 88
 Email: univenhotline@tip-offs.com
 Website: www.tip-offs.com

What should not be reported to Tip-offs Anonymous?

- ✓ Petty arguments amongst staff
- ✓ Product complaints
- ✓ Service complaints
- ✓ Personality clashes
- ✓ Salary complaints



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

Two UNIVEN social structures embark on a career outreach programme



Mercy Nemavhola, Mukona Ramutsheli and other students from the two UNIVEN student social structures assisting learners to apply for tertiary enrolment online

A group of University of Venda (UNIVEN) students called Victorious Academic Youth Forum in collaboration with a recognised UNIVEN social structure, Stopthespot Youth Organisation (SYO) have embarked on a career outreach programme which was intended to assist secondary school learners on how to apply and University students on how to register online. This career outreach programme also assists prospective students on career guidance.

A second year UNIVEN student of Guidance and Counseling honors degree who is also the founder of Stopthespot Youth Organisation, Mercy Nemavhola said this initiative came after realising that there are many young people who have obtained good marks but

not being able to acquire admission into institutions of higher learning because they do not have enough knowledge and ability to apply for themselves. She said it pains her to see so many young people who have obtained good marks in Grade 12 roaming around the streets due to lack of information.

According to Mercy and Mukona, some of the challenges that they come across are that they sometimes lack data to access internet. They further highlighted that they fund this programme directly from their own pockets whereas they still depend on NSFAS and other bursaries to fund their studies.

"We need laptops to assist in dealing with a large group of learners per school because

we are assisting high school learners as well as higher institutions students to also apply for bursaries."

To date, the two UNIVEN student social structures have already visited more than 20 secondary schools.

Mukona Ramutsheli founder of Victorious Academy, who is doing second level of Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Mathematics at UNIVEN, said this career outreach initiative was established in 2020 to assist students on how to register online. He advised students and learners to always believe in themselves if they want to achieve anything in life.

We would like to hear from you!

Nendila is your communication channel.

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