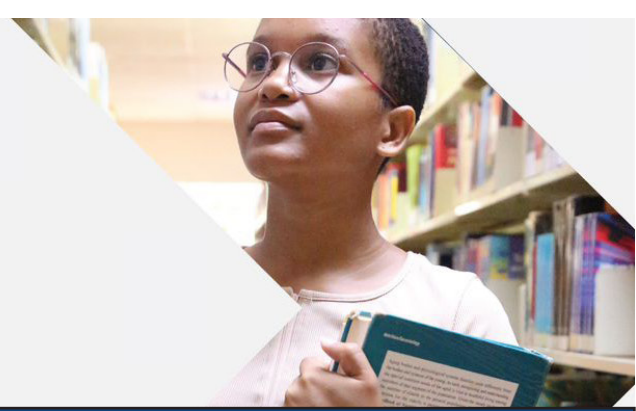




University of Venda  
Creating Future Leaders

# UNIVEN Weekly e-Newsletter



ISSUE 13 | 04 December 2024

## The University of Venda Holds a Joint Farewell for Council Members and Dr Robert Martin

On Thursday, 28 November 2024, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted a joint farewell event for the outgoing members of the University Council and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin. This prestigious occasion took place at Park Hotel in Mokopane, celebrating the contributions and leadership of these individuals.



The ceremony commenced with heartfelt remarks from the Chairperson of the University Council, Mr Juneas Lekgetha, recognising the outgoing council and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) of Corporate Services, who is retiring. He thanked the Council for its service since 2020, highlighting its perseverance through challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Key achievements included approving the University's 2021-2025 strategy, restructuring, and improving financial management. He commended the Vice-Chancellor's leadership and the strides the University has made. The Chairperson also praised Dr. Robert Martin for his pivotal role in the University's turnaround, emphasising teamwork and collaboration.

He urged the University community to continue working together for progress.



The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, also offered his farewell address, extending his gratitude to the outgoing Council members and Dr Martin. Prof Nthambeleni praised Dr Martin, who joined the University in 2017, for his invaluable leadership and contributions to various departments, particularly Corporate Services Division. He also acknowledged the Council members for their dedication to steering the University's strategic direction, academic excellence, and societal impact. Under their guidance, the University achieved significant milestones, including increased research outputs, high graduation rates, and successful international partnerships. The 40th anniversary celebration of the University was also cited as a testament to the institution's progress. Despite financial constraints, Prof Nthambeleni expressed appreciation for the contributions of the departing leaders, concluding with heartfelt thanks and best wishes for their future endeavours.



On behalf of the University Council, Ms Ndanduleni Makhari, the Deputy Chairperson, responded with gratitude, recognising the support of UNIVEN community throughout their term. She reflected on the challenges, particularly COVID-19 pandemic, and how it tested the resilience of the University. However, she highlighted that significant progress has been made, and the Council members, staff, and students' collective efforts paved the way for a promising future. She emphasised her confidence in the University's continued growth and thanked everyone who contributed to the University's achievements.



Dr Robert Martin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Corporate Services, also shared his response, expressing deep gratitude to the Council members for their support throughout his tenure. He reflected on the unique and fulfilling experience of working at UNIVEN, emphasising that this moment was not a farewell but rather an opportunity for rejuvenation and growth. Dr Martin offered words of encouragement to all stakeholders to continue striving for success and wished peace and prosperity for all stakeholders.



The event also featured a warm welcome from Dr Ryneth Mbhele, the Chairperson of the Student Affairs Committee of the Council, who celebrated the University's achievements and acknowledged the leadership of Mr Lekgetha. Reflecting on the progress made, Dr Mbhele shared an inspiring quote: "Every sunset brings a promise of a new dawn," highlighting the notion that endings give rise to new beginnings. She thanked the guests, including the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council, Vice-Chancellor, Executive team, UNIVEN staff, fellow Council members, and Dr Martin, for their contributions and presence at the event.



The evening concluded with a vote of thanks from the University Registrar, Dr Joel Baloyi. Dr Baloyi expressed that the past years had marked significant progress for the University, largely due to the unwavering support of the Council members. He reflected on the challenges faced during the early stages of the term and emphasised the crucial role of the Council in advancing the University's strategic goals. He mentioned that the University's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan was a key driver in repositioning UNIVEN for global impact. Dr Baloyi expressed gratitude for the leadership of Mr Lekgetha and Dr Martin, concluding with optimism for the future and a commitment to continued collaboration.



The farewell event was a fitting tribute to the leadership and contributions of the outgoing members of the University Council and Dr Robert Martin.

The occasion highlighted both the challenges and the substantial achievements made during their time in office, reinforcing a shared vision for the University's continued growth and success.

## University of Venda Hosts 2024 USSA Football Tournament Send-Off Programme

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted a vibrant send-off event for the 2024 USSA Football Tournament at the Student Parliament – Student Centre Building on Friday, 29 November 2024. The atmosphere was charged with energy, with over 50 attendees present, and the event began with lively football songs.



*On photo: Mr Patrick Thaba, Sports Officer and Coordinator of the Sports and Recreation Unit*

Mr Patrick Thaba, Sports Officer and Coordinator of the Sports and Recreation Unit opened the event by welcoming everyone and emphasising the importance of sharpening skills ahead of the upcoming finals. He congratulated the female participants for their excellent performance and encouraged all players to focus on continuous improvement in the lead-up to the event.

Thaba introduced several key guests who were in attendance. He also acknowledged the presence of Mr Jabulani Ndobe - President of SAFA Memorial Gym, and Mr Emmanuel Singo - Deputy Chairperson of SAFA Vhembe Region, thanking them for their support. Additionally, the event attendees included staff members from the Sports and Recreation Unit, first aiders, coaches, and team captains. Mr Thaba highlighted the University of Venda's affiliation with the South African University Sports Federation (USAFA), which enables the University to compete in

prestigious tournaments such as the Summer USAFA Tournament. He expressed confidence that both the male and female teams would represent the University with pride and that this participation could lead to opportunities for players to be selected for the University World Student Championship or the Varsity Football Tournament.

Thaba encouraged the players to remember that they are not only representing the University but also themselves, as their performances on the field could open doors for future opportunities. The event was designed to motivate and inspire the athletes, ensuring they were mentally and physically prepared for the upcoming competition.



*On photo: Mr Jabulani Ndobe, President of the South African Football Association (SAFA) Vhembe*

The keynote address was delivered by Mr Jabulani Ndobe, President of the South African Football Association (SAFA) Vhembe. He gave an inspiring speech about the role of football in building communities, shaping individual character, and promoting national unity.

Drawing from his long-standing involvement in football as a player, coach, administrator, and leader, Mr Ndobe spoke on how football can foster social cohesion, prevent conflict, and unite people from diverse background. He referenced the 2005 Ivory Coast situation, where football played a crucial role in averting civil war.

Mr Ndobe encouraged athletes, particularly the University of Venda football team, to maintain consistency in their efforts and to represent both their community and their institution with pride. He highlighted football as not only a unifying force, but also as a potential career path, citing examples of African football stars like Didier Drogba, who used his success to support his country. He reassured the athletes, that pursuing football was the right choice, as the sport cultivates discipline, bravery, and leadership.



*Photo: Mr Andisani Mathelemusa, Head: Student Governance*

Mr Andisani Mathelemusa, representing the Dean of Students, also delivered an encouraging message to the football team. He acknowledged the presence of SAFA leadership and other dignitaries and emphasised the strong support the University has shown to the team. Despite some setbacks, such as the team's failure to gain promotion, Mr Mathelemusa expressed confidence in the players' abilities and encouraged them to continue striving for success. He highlighted the team's past achievements and that their success serves as an inspiration to the broader University community.

Mathelemusa also recognised the resources the University has invested in supporting the team, including funding for travel and coordination.

While acknowledging that other sports clubs may feel envious of the soccer team's prominence, he stressed that the support is well-deserved. He motivated the players to perform their best not only for the University but for their growth and potential future opportunities, including exposure through televised matches.

He concluded by reaffirming the University's commitment to supporting the team and encouraging the players to maintain a strong, united spirit. He emphasised that the team is unstoppable and capable of achieving victory.

Mr Kennedy Sivhaga, Head of Student Housing, closed the event by expressing gratitude to everyone who contributed to making the event a success. He thanked all attendees for their support and wished the football teams the best of luck in the upcoming tournament.



*Group photo of attendees*



## Announcement from the Office of the University Registrar

### CHANGE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 2025 OPENING DATE FROM WEDNESDAY, 08 TO MONDAY, 06 JANUARY 2025

Please be advised that the University will open on Monday, 06 January 2025 in line with the approved 2025 University Annual Plan, and not on 08 January 2025 as shown in the 2024 University Annual Plan. The change was necessitated by a need to accommodate some of the activities that should be scheduled in the first quarter.

The change was duly approved by relevant approval structures, including the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the Senate.

**Issued by:**

Dr. J.J. Baloyi

University Registrar

**If you spot anything out of the ordinary on campus - contact the University Hotline by calling toll free number 0800 212 755 or email: [univenhotline@tip-offs.com](mailto:univenhotline@tip-offs.com)**

### Improper conduct includes the following...

1. Financial misconduct,
2. Misuse or misappropriation of University assets,
3. Health and safety risks,
4. Plagiarism,
5. Fraud and corruption.