

Nendila

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA



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Creating future leaders

Leadership is not about power, but ethics and authority

"The Student Representative Council will deliver on long-awaited services," says Council President, Gcina Mhlabane.

Speaking at the recent parliamentary sitting, the newly-inaugurated president said the SRC should be transparent, accountable and selfless.

"2018 is the year of students - we will ensure service delivery. The Univen management can be assured that we will deliver."

Magistrate Shirley Nemutandani of the Thohoyandou Magistrate's Court led the inauguration process and members of the SRC, students and Univen management attended the inauguration of the 2017/2018 SRC cabinet members.

Nemutandani ensured the successful running of the swearing-in processes,

which gave legitimacy to the oath of office taken by the cabinet members. This ensures that they uphold the policies that govern the University of Venda.

"One cannot politicise leadership roles," said Univen's Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Jan Crafford.

"Many true leaders like Chris Hani and Thomas Sankara prove this, the latest being the new Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Mamokgethi Phakeng. Kagiso Rabada, who has an astonishing cricket career, is also doing well for his country."

The acting Director: Student Affairs, Lufuno Tshikhudo, congratulated Ronald Lamola, a former Univen SRC president, on obtaining his second master's degree in Law. Lamola is the chairperson of Univen's Gauteng Alumni Chapter.



Parliamentarians, Lufuno Tshikhudo, Prof Jan Crafford, Magistrate Shirley Nemutandani and Dr Robert Martin attended the inauguration ceremony.



The new Univen SRC cabinet.

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UNIVEN welcomes international students

Univen welcomed the 2018 international students during an orientation programme organised by the Directorate of International Relations, the Student Representative Council and the university's International Student Union.

Among others, students were taken on a tour around Thohoyandou to visit the Thohoyandou Post Office, the Department of Home Affairs, the Tshilidzini Hospital and the Thavhani Mall.

"We at Univen are proud that you have chosen our university as a place to study," said the acting Director of International Relations, Dr Segun Obadire.

"Pursue your career with motivation, great pleasure, enthusiasm and commitment. As management we will strive to give education and service of the utmost quality. Participate in different intercultural activities like the internationalisation evening, Buddy programme, Africa Day and the celebration of countries' independence days organised for local and international students."

"In collaboration with the university management, the Univen SRC endeavours to ensure a peaceful stay for all students, irrespective of nationality," said the SRC Minister of Information, External Affairs and International Relations, Mapaseka Mokgaphane.

"Learn, understand and speak indigenous languages," said Univen's Schools Liaison Officer, Takalani Philip Nyelisani.

"Speaking in an indigenous language tells how much you have appreciated the people. It also determines how much you will be welcomed."

"Univen is culturally diverse with numerous social clusters that may deter or influence your success," said the Executive President of the Univen International Student Union, Ishmael O Iwara.

"We should all be proud and continue to impact positively until the institution becomes the best place for everyone, irrespective of cultural background and nationality."

There was a high turn-out of both local and international students during the welcoming function. They were entertained by different Univen cultural groups.



"We are proud that you chose Univen" - Dr Segun Obadire.



Takalani Philip Nyelisani demonstrating signs of indigenous languages.



"Univen is culturally diverse" - Ishmael O Iwara.



First-entering international students learning about Thohoyandou.

Photovoltaic performance under the spotlight

A partnership between Univen, the Nelson Mandela University, Eskom, the CSIR and the Vuwani Science Resource Centre is comparing coastal and inland photovoltaic performance.

A workshop to introduce the basics of photovoltaic technologies to Univen's postgraduate students was held on campus recently.

Photovoltaics are methods for generating electric power by using solar cells to convert energy from the sun into a flow of electrons by the photovoltaic effect. Solar cells produce direct current electricity from sunlight which can be used as power (electricity) or to recharge a battery. It is a phenomenon studied in physics, photochemistry and electrochemistry.



A photovoltaic station at the Vuwani Science Resource Centre.

and degradation of different photovoltaic plant configurations in Johannesburg.

"The workshop fostered a broader research scope for most postgraduate students," said Fortunate Elegbeleye, a PhD candidate at Univen's Department of Physics.

Solar settlement in a sustainable housing community project.



Photovoltaic systems have the major disadvantage that the power output is dependent on direct sunlight. So about 10-25 percent is lost if a tracking system is not used, since the cell will not be directly facing the sun at all times. Dust, clouds and other obstructions in the atmosphere also diminish the power output.

A typical photovoltaic system employs solar panels, each comprising a number of solar cells, which generate electrical power. Photovoltaic installations may be ground, rooftop or wall-mounted. The mount may be fixed, or use a solar tracker to follow the sun across the sky.

"The workshop compared different photovoltaic technologies performance for coastal and inland regions," says the Head of the Physics Department and Coordinator of the Vuwani Science Resource Centre, Dr Eric Maluta.

"It also promotes photovoltaic research to students and empowers communities with the findings."

"This collaboration will bear much needed fruit as it also transfers knowledge from one generation to another," said Dr Frederik Voster, Senior Lecturer at Nelson Mandela University.

Other presenters touched on topics like photovoltaic cells and modules, defects, degradation and characterisation, the study of potential induced degradation in photovoltaic modules, photovoltaic plant characterisation and risk mitigation strategies and the comparison of performance



A learning curve - presenters from Nelson Mandela University and other delegates.

Funding based on research performance

“Without research, a university cannot be sustainable,” said the guest facilitator at the recent 4th Univen Research Indaba Day, Prof Urmilla Bob.

“Universities are locally and internationally ranked based on research output.

“Universities receive funding based on their research performance. There are universities of which performance looks promising in terms of publications, the number of graduates they produce and their number of National Research Foundation-rated researchers.

“Universities are being judged based on the rankings and it is unfortunate because even companies or employers prefer candidates or graduates from universities that are doing well.”

She encouraged postgraduate students to further their studies and remain in the academic field to rescue South Africa from the crisis of shortage of researchers.

“It is unfortunate that, out of 100 percent of PhD graduates, only ten percent remain in the academic

field to teach and conduct research. A university cannot climb the ladder if its researchers do not publish papers. Academics should spend more of their time on research and article writing than on teaching.”

Prof Urmilla holds a BA Pedagogic degree in Education, English and Geography from the University of Durban-Westville, a BA honours in Geography from the University of South Africa and a master’s degree and PhD in Geography from West Virginia University in the USA. She is currently the Dean of Research and a Full Professor of Geography in the School of Agriculture, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

“Females at Univen are letting us down,” said Univen’s Director of Research and Innovation, Senior Prof Georges Ekosse.

“We expect to see a lot of women coming to our offices enquiring about how to become professors or even to register for PhDs. At other universities, the situation is different, many women

are becoming professors and are even occupying higher positions. Women should not put the blame on others for their failure but only on themselves. Stand out in the crowd. Do not get lost inside the crowd. Take charge and join other women who have already started to flourish.”

He congratulated Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi on being appointed as Nelson Mandela University’s new chancellor and Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng on her appointment as the new vice chancellor of the University of Cape Town.

“Research supervisors should create a comfortable atmosphere in which students are not frightened to ask questions,” said Univen’s Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr Abimbola Enitan.

“They should help students to find their way through literature and provide constructive comments on writing styles. It is the duty of postgraduate students to manage time very well. Limit yourselves from being too active on social media because it is time consuming. After all, a successful outcome depends on the relationship

between a student and a supervisor,” she said.

“There are universities that are funded by the government, institutions or companies which earmark students to come and work for them after completion of their studies,” said Rev Dean Dr Enos Ranneditsheni, a Postgraduate Research Fellow at Univen.

“Therefore these companies, institutions and the government cannot continue to fund people who do not complete their qualifications in record time. This is the reason why some companies withdraw their funding if they realise that the students of a particular university like protests, and they are not learning anything. These companies fear that if they take them as interns or workers after graduating, they would downgrade their companies because these students would be lacking experience and will not be competent enough in the global market.

“Work hard and leave the university so that your younger brothers and sisters can get the space which you are now occupying,” he said.



It’s all about research - Presenters, Univen staff members, researchers and postgraduate students at the Research Conference Centre.

Focus on field work for Integrated Learning supervisors

In a first-ever workshop, Univen’s Department of Nutrition recently offered assessment training to Field Work Integrated Learning supervisors.

Conducted by Univen’s Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning, the goal was to equip supervisors to assess students who are doing Work-Integrated Learning at their organisations.

According to the Health Professions Council of South Africa, it is a prerequisite that Field Work Integrated Learning supervisors must be trained at the beginning and end of each year. This is essential as supervisors are changed from time to time due to staff turnover.

In 2017 the Department of Nutrition had a feedback meeting with field supervisors from different training institutions, including primary health care, provincial districts and nongovernmental organisations. This assisted in reviewing student training manuals and assessment tools, in identifying challenges regarding the supervision of students and understanding of student activities during their internship.

The Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning comes to play as it is mandated to advance issues related to teaching and learning to both academics and students. The workshop saw the centre enhancing Work Integrated Learning supervisors who are employed in different organisations that work with the Department of Nutrition.

The workshop discussed key areas such as the legislative framework impacting on assessment, learning outcomes and assessment criteria, understanding assessments, feedback in assessment, principles of quality in assessments and evaluation of Work Integrated Learning supervisors by students.



At work - Field Work Integrated Learning supervisors, Nutrition and Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning staff members.



Take care of your library!

"Libraries are like a human heart, if they do not function properly, communities will suffer," says Dr Isaac Ndlovu, a lecturer in Univen's English Department.

Speaking at the recent Library Week celebrations at Univen, Ndlovu said it was the responsibility of all students and communities who utilise libraries to make sure that they are in good condition.

The theme of this year's Library Week was 'Libraries: the heart of the community'.

"Libraries have resources to assist you to improve your reading, speaking and writing skills. Read to improve your life. Do not allow yourself to graduate and leave this university with a bad vocabulary. Make use of Univen's library to improve yourself. Without a library, the university would close down," he said.

"Without libraries people would remain illiterate," said Univen's Director: Library Services, Mushoni Mulaudzi.

"A library gives students life on campus and it makes their lives easier by giving easy access to information. Libraries bridge the digital divide, especially those in rural areas."

"Use libraries to empower yourself and improve your life," said Univen LLB masters student, Kudzai Mpfu. "The only way to change the situation within the communities we come from, is through making use of libraries."

"Learning is like a muscle, once you are educated, you will live a better life with minimal challenges," said third year Bcom Accounting student, Yamkela Bam.

"No library in the world works in isolation, they work together," said Univen's Information Librarian, Jerry Mahlangu.

"Univen students are privileged to have a library of this calibre. Univen students are unlikely to queue for services. Students are likely to find what they are looking for and if it is not there, we will order it for you. Use our suggestion box for suggestions or complaints."



Our library - Univen Library Services staff members in the library foyer.



It's all about books - Students listening to speakers.

Univen honours Winnie Madikizela-Mandela



"uMama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was a fearless and courageous woman who always kept the struggle for liberation alive," says Univen's Dean of the School of Law, Annette Lansink.

Speaking at the school's recent memorial service for Madikizela-Mandela, Lansink said she fought tirelessly for the people of South Africa and the freedom of Africa.

"uMama Winnie was an extraordinary woman, a leader of the struggle who never gave up, despite being detained for 491 days in solitary confinement, arrested, banned and banished.

"We should all be fearless and able to stand up for justice at all times. Read books about the life of uMama Winnie to draw insight from them. Study and learn lessons from history and make great leaders like uMama Winnie proud. May the spirit of uMama Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela-Mandela rest in peace," she said.

"uMama Winnie was a soldier who was crucified for her role in the liberation of South Africa," said the Deputy Dean of the School of Law, Puleng Letuka.

"She sacrificed a lot, including her marriage and

children for the purpose of freedom.

"We all have the privilege of being free today because of her contribution."

"We are thankful for what uMama Winnie has done for us," said Programme Director, Zama Mopai.

"She earned the title of the 'Mother of the Nation' not because she was married to the former President of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, but because she was her own person who chose to fight for a cause."

"Many times we talk about the good things that people do, but we don't act," said Univen's Director of Community Engagement, Prof Vhonani Netshandama.

"Irrespective of her own duties as a mother and a wife, Mama Winnie did not have an excuse to make her dream be known and to make it come true. She fought for what was right for all, because she loved her country," she said.

"uMama Winnie was a fighter who was never shaken by the apartheid regime," said the Chairperson of the Law Students' Council, Thanyani Mahamba.



"uMama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was a fearless and courageous woman" – Lansink.

"She was very fond of the youth and that demands of this generation to emulate her. Take her life as a lesson to guide your life destinations. Always set goals for your life. Know what you live for and what you live up to."

"She was not an ordinary woman - she was an extraordinary woman who taught other women to be resilient and to continue fighting for their rights," said a Senior Lecturer in the School of Law, Dr Emma Lubaale.

"A giant has fallen and may her soul rest in peace."

Other speakers included Dr Ademola Jegede, who spoke of the importance of Madikizela-Mandela's contribution to the entire African continent.



A tribute to an icon.



Students and lecturers honour uMama.

Never fake sexual harassment

“Report lecturers who promise students marks in exchange for sexual advances - we deal with such cases,” says the Senior Legal Advisor at the Commission for Gender Equality, Dennis Matotoka. Speaking at the Univen public lecture about sexual harassment and international conventions, Matotoka said sexual harassment can also be in the form of non-verbal communication. It is the duty of an employer to ensure that the working environment favours both male and female employees – it should not be one-sided.



Lecturers and students listening attentively to what speakers had to say.

The public lecture was presented by the Department of Public Law - Gender and Law at Univen's School of Law. The aim was to impart knowledge to students studying towards their LLB and Gender Studies degrees.

“Gender equality is not only about women and their rights, it is about balancing the rights of both males and females,” said an Education Officer at the Commission for Gender Equality, Nkhensani Hlekani.



Delegates at the Commission for Gender Equality public lecture.

“The reason why most people think that way is because in most cases, we talk about protection of girls and women. This is because women were previously being oppressed, hence most programmes seek to promote women and the girl child. Women were previously being discriminated against, now they should be given equal opportunities in terms of access to state resources. They also need to be secured by a framework of laws and policies and supported by institutions and mechanisms for their operations,” she said.

“Understanding sexual harassment in its entire

context is very important,” said a lecturer in Univen's School of Law, Zama Mopai.

“Get the facts right and never misinterpret the speakers. This information is not only for you to pass tests and exams, but it should also be imparted to communities where you come from,” she told students.

Lavra Malatjie, an intern at the Commission for Gender Equality, advised students to apply for internships when they are about to graduate. She advised them about the available opportunities at their offices.

Sasol Inzalo Foundation donates over R3 million to Univen

The Sasol Inzalo Foundation has donated over R3 million's worth of laboratory equipment to Univen's Departments of Chemistry and Resources Management.

“How grateful we are to the foundation for this donation to improve the research capacity of graduates with honours, masters and PhDs,” said Univen's acting Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic, Senior Prof Base Khoza, when signing an agreement with the foundation.

“I have no doubt that these donations are an enabler to achieving the university's strategic goals. Academics and researchers should share and not own resources. We must encourage an interdisciplinary approach that should be promoted among researchers.

“Congratulations to the young researcher, Dr Lutendo Chester Murulana, National Research Foundation and Sasol Inzalo Foundation beneficiary, a competent supervisor for postgraduates in Chemistry. Also to Prof Mugera Gitari, an established researcher, for providing outstanding support and supervision to the foundation-funded postgraduates over six years - most notably for his supervision of Dr Vhangwele Masindi who published 27 articles during his studies and filed two patents.”

Prof Emeritus Liliana Mammino, the need-based supporter, received a donation of five computational chemistry computers to the value



of R107 500 based on students' need for these specialised computers.

The foundation's Director, Dr Mapitso Molefe, said the partnership they have with Univen will soon lead to the establishment of a research chair.

“We have been granting bursaries for engineers and scientist undergraduates since 2010. We now also support students who want to do medicine as well as teaching. In 2012 we launched a science fellowship programme to increase the pool of graduates with honours, masters and PhDs in Chemistry and Environmental Chemistry at seven regional historically disadvantaged institutions.

“In 2014 we partnered with the National Research Foundation to co-fund the programme. To date, more than 250 postgraduate students have been supported, with more than 150 having graduated with one or two degrees. This group has produced more than 350 publications with two patents that came from Univen.”

“We are not just interested in seeing you obtaining

It's a deal – from left, Senior Prof Base Khoza and Dr Mamusa signing the memorandum of agreement.

your degrees but to retain you by giving you funding,” said Dr Mamusa Lesofe.

“Some South Africans who studied at Wits and the University of Pretoria are now valued as billionaires. Dr Vhangwele Masindi who studied at Univen produced 31 publications in the Department of Higher Education and Training - accredited and peer reviewed.”

Dr Vhangwele Masindi, as one of the beneficiaries of the Sasol Inzalo Foundation, shared his academic journey from undergraduate level to where he is today.

“I started publishing at master's level to PhD under the supervision of Prof Gitari. I see myself as a National Research Foundation-rated professor in the area of water purification.” He is currently a senior researcher at the CSIR.



Hard workers – from left, Dr Vhangwele Masindi, Prof Mugera Gitari and Dr Lutendo Chester Murulana.



Witnessing the deal - Prof Natasha Potgieter and Dr Mapitso Molefe.

Univen bids farewell to the Director of Facilities Management

March this year signalled the end of an era for Univen's Director of Facilities Management, Malose Lamola, as he officially bid farewell to the university.

He joined the Polokwane Municipality after two years with Univen.

“Accept change, parting is part of change, even if there could be challenges,” said Lamola.

“Thank you to Mr Mukheli who taught me Tshivenda which I now speak fluently – I even know some of the idioms and proverbs. Thank you to Tshililo Nengovhela for her superior wisdom as my personal assistant. Thank you to all the heads of departments for their support.”

“We cherish the role Malose played and the contributions he made within a very short space of time,” said Univen's Deputy Vice Chancellor: Operations, Dr Robert Martin.

“God's grace and peace go with you. Never underestimate peace in your life, as it leads to success.”

“It is not about the time you spend at an institution, but the contribution you make,” said Manenzhe.

During his tenure, Lamola championed several infrastructure projects on and off campus.

“He was hardworking and well known for his interrogative nature,” said the Director: Community Engagement, Prof Vhonani Netshandama.



Thank you - Malose Lamola (left) receives a token of appreciation from Dr Robert Martin.

Univen and VIVES sign memorandum of agreement

The Univen team of the Department of Public Health in the School of Health Sciences, Dr Takalani Tshitangano, Dr Jabu Mabunda, Dr Ntsieni Mashau, Shonisani Tshivhase and Bumani Manganye, recently visited VIVES University College in Belgium.

They signed a memorandum of agreement to strengthen the capacity of community health workers through the use of the communities of practice strategy.



Signing the deal – Dr Takalani Tshitangano, Head of the Department of Public Health at Univen and her team and Joris Hindryckx, Rector: VIVES.

The team also attended a lecture titled the 'Introduction to a health system in Belgium' at the VIVES campus in Brugge. The health system in Belgium has adopted a social security system, which covers all the citizens on a 60/40 or zero percent base, depending on individual social status. The private and public health services are integrated.

The Department of Public Health at Univen and VIVES University College's strategy is to share knowledge and good practices among people in the same field. Univen's Department of Public Health lecturers act as process guides, whereas community health workers from Nweli, Mbahe and Malavuwe villages are the learning teams.

This project was funded by the Flemish government and it will run until the end of 2018. The visit was also part of the capacity building for staff development component of the project.

The team also visited the Antwerp Institute of Tropical Disease. They worked under the guidance researchers Josefine and Jerome.

The team took several guided tours around the VIVES Brugge campus where they visited a

technology care room. It is a sample of user-friendly technology for elderly people with dementia and physical disability who are staying alone. They also visited the campus library, where they were shown the games archive for different age groups, which is also open for public rentals.

The team visited a psychiatric hospital together with the south intensive programme student exchange. They learnt that hospitals in Belgium are in the process of reducing the number of beds in favour of home care. They also learnt that there are patients who go to this psychiatric hospital to sleep. In the morning they wake up and go to work. There is also day care for patients who come for therapy and psychiatrist consultation.

Accompanied by two VIVES lecturers, the team went to the Rustenburg Psychiatric Institution, where a dialogue workshop sharing a South African versus Belgian perspective of psychiatric services, was conducted.

Univen delegates also participated in the VIVES International Week with collaborators from China, Finland, Portugal, Ukraine, Tanzania and South

Africa. There were parallel presentation sessions in Dutch and English where the Univen team participated as presenters and panel members. The delegation benefited immensely from the visit, learning new techniques in the field of health care.

Continuing the collaboration between the two universities, Univen will receive 18 staff and students on an exchange programme from the VIVES University College in September.



Univen delegates and psychiatric hospital staff members.



Univen delegates at a technology care room.



Dr Takalani Tshitangano, Dr Jabu Mabunda, Ms Shonisani Tshivhase, Dr Ntsieni Mashau, Mr Bumani Manganye and VIVES colleagues.



The Univen team at the Rustenburg Psychiatric Institution.

Buddy programme to connect international and national students

The Buddy programme, jointly organised by Univen's Student Representative Council, the International Student Union and the Directorate of International Relations, celebrates the university's diverse community and generates a socially viable academic atmosphere.

"Take advantage to integrate, network with new people, establish new friends, and make Univen a better place for all, irrespective of cultural differences," said the student union's Executive President, Ishmael Lwara.

The Minister of Information, External Affairs and International Relations, Mapaseka Mokgaphane and student union Adviser, Dipoo Mashifane, explained the Buddy programme and its goals. The essence is to clear cultural boundaries. The benefits of such a thought-provoking initiative goes beyond cultural exchange and social cohesion. It also offers good opportunities for students to network and explore other opportunities outside the academic terrain.

The programme's theme for 2018 is 'Understanding



Group discussions.



"Open your mind to gain from interactions" – Obadire.

identity, stereotypes and prejudice'. The recent launch featured focus group discussions, cultural dances, physical exercises and fun time, presentations on cultural diversities and drama sketches as well as poetry relating to the theme.

The programme develops the university community as one body whose members are willing to exchange ideas and learn from each other for positive social coexistence.

Throughout the programme, intercultural exchange between international and local students took place in a leisurely environment. The participants were made up of 60 percent local students and 40 percent international students. About 130 students participated in this year's opening function.

"Participants in the programme should have an open mind so as to gain from interaction with other students," said the Acting Director: International Relations, Dr Segun Obadire.

"Make use of the fully funded scholarship opportunities and visit our offices – we will help. Visit the university website for more information. We have developed a game called 'Study abroad', which enhances understanding of student mobility, cultural backgrounds, a perfect homestay and the demystification of negative perceptions about countries. To establish a friendly environment, participants were introduced to an exercise on stereotypes."

Groups were formed with new leaders, which will meet regularly. In the second semester, the groups will share their interactive experience in a

feedback workshop. This will afford participants the opportunity to showcase their experiences with other programme participants.

The groups will decide on a project they will be engaged with during the year and will meet regularly to assist one another in their academic work and for social integration.

Some of the data collected during the programme will be analysed scientifically for more understanding on the theme and for possible recommendations that may influence the policy on social cohesion at the university.



UNISU Adviser Dipoo Mashifane and SRC member Mapaseka Mokgaphane.



Participants at the Buddy programme opening function.



Students having fun in the pool after the formal programme.



Discussing the Buddy programme.

23rd International workshop on quantum systems in Chemistry, Physics, and Biology

Hosted by Univen, this workshop will bring together researchers from around the world with cutting-edge contributions to a broad range of quantum systems. The workshop will be held in the Kruger National Park's Mopani Camp from 23 to 29 September.

For more particulars visit <https://sites.google.com/view/qscp-2018>.

We would like to hear from you!

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