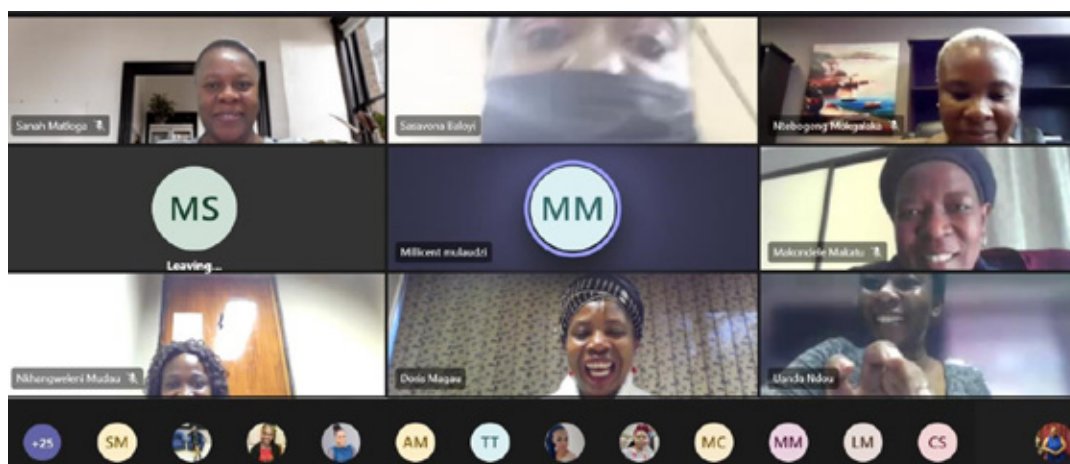




2021 UNIVEN women's month celebration event discusses matters affecting women's rights and health



In South Africa, the month of August is a National Women's Month. This is an opportunity to celebrate women's achievements and the important role that women of all races have played and continue to play in South African society. It is for these reasons that this year the University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Department of Human Resources organised Women Celebration event under the theme 'Generation Equality: Realising women's rights for an equal future'. The celebration took place on Microsoft Teams on 25 and 26 August 2021.

The aim of this event was to empower women with knowledge because without knowledge there would be no means of advancement. A community without knowledge shall perish. The event attracted knowledgeable great speakers who were drawn from different fields such as law, psychology, and health. These knowledgeable speakers were all females imparting valuable knowledge to their fellow women.

The four speakers critically reflected on four different sub – topics: A Woman and Mental Health; Work Life Balance; The Promotion and Protection of Women's Rights in Customary Marriages and Succession in the Post-Apartheid South Africa; and Men and Sex.



On the first day of the celebration, Dr Angelina Maphula, a Clinical Psychologist and Lecturer in the Department of Psychology at UNIVEN presented about 'A Woman and Mental Health'. Dr Maphula had a lengthy, crucial discussion around this topic. This is the aspect of health that hit most of the women. She said women habitually put on make-up to enhance beauty and people believe that everything is going well in their lives, while hiding that they are abused, depressed and unhappy. Dr Maphula indicated that mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how women think, feel, act, make choices, and relate to others. Mental health is more than the absence of a mental illness, it is essential to one's overall health and quality of life.

Women by virtue of their role tend to worry about everything and everyone (worry about the children's progress or behaviours, the husband, family, etc) and amidst COVID-19 the pressure is heightened with devastating stressors. Given the tremendous stress that women go through, self-care can play a role in maintaining optimal mental health. When it comes to one's mental health, self-care can help in managing stress, lower risk of illness, and increase one's energy. Even small acts of self-care in one's daily life can have a big impact. Another emphasis was that women must pay attention to signs and symptoms. When the body begins to send signals, it is time to reflect and address life stressors, ignoring problems, going to a shopping spree, over-eating, emotional outburst and shouting seldom resolve problems. She discouraged women to judge each other. "Instead, women were seen as game changers because they are influential and capable." As she was concluding, She mentioned that women need to stay connected, reach out to friends, loved ones, Pastors, health care workers or family members who can provide emotional support and practical help.

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Andiswa Petunia Lefakane (Photo supplied)

Ms Andiswa Lefakane from CareWays unpacked the topic on Work Life Balance. She started her presentation by saying that in Work life balance there is no one size fits all. She advised women to never try to be everything to people to prove a point. "Focus on your strengths." Ms Lefakane said that to live a work life balance you need to prioritise your tasks. According to Ms Lefakane, the balance of your life has the element of spirituality, career, family, financial, health, personal growth, recreation, etc. She also spoke about the issue of beliefs that keep most people stuck. She highlighted that, when personal issues arise, it can be tempting to bury yourself in your work. "Don't do it if you don't make time for your personal life, your "me" time, including your family and your health. Set work hours for yourself and do everything in your power to stick to them. Otherwise, before you know it, you'll be working until midnight every night." As she was concluding her talk, she encouraged employees to make use of the services of EHWP that are for free because CareWays is UNIVEN's official Employee Health and Wellness Programme (EHWP) service provider. "Let's commit to the self-love and honour ourselves", she concluded.



On day two of the celebration, Ms Zama Mopai, a Customary Law lecturer and expert in the Department of Public Law at UNIVEN discussed matters of 'The Promotion and Protection of Women's Rights in Customary Marriages and Succession in the PostApartheid South Africa'.

Ms Mopai spoke about the way customary law is developing itself through legislation and judicial decisions to promote gender equality by promoting women's rights. She explained that the most ground-breaking cases have been on issues relating to property rights in marriage and traditional leadership where women are afforded equal opportunities and entitlement as their male counterparts. Ms Mopai discussed few other practical legal issues pertaining to customary marriages and succession, to enlighten women on their legal standing and rights.

She also warned against ignorance of the law and negligence with customary law issues as many of them have legal implications. The discussion related to Customary Law was also a wakeup call to people to put together their valid wills while they are still alive for the sake of their children and loved ones. Attendees were also advised that it is important to register their customary marriage for certainty. Ms Mopai urged people to take customary law seriously as a significant source of law. Many South Africans still subscribe to customary law on a day-to-day basis. She further assured the people that customary law is still relevant and useful and that if anyone has a matter before the courts of law involving customary law, they have the constitutional right to have that matter settled using the applicable customary law principles instead of the common law or any other law that does not consider customary law interests.

This women celebration event was very interactive and enabled attendees to ask peculiar customary law-related questions. The questions, which touched on succession, the status of customary law in the constitutional era, the possible codification of customary law, customary marriages, and other related questions were answered in a responsible manner.



The last speaker on day two was Dr Takalani Makulana who is a Gynaecologist. Dr Makulana shared information on Men and Sex. She indicated that women need to be loved and cherished, and this is often through verbal signs of affection. "Men, on the other hand, are very straightforward and almost primal in their needs." The importance of sex for men is different to women. She said men need to have sex in a relationship because it shows strength and unity. She highlighted the importance of sex in a relationship as is paramount because it is a pathway to build an emotional intimacy too. "This is your connection, this is your bond, and this is how you show that you love each other. It was observed that it is a taboo as Africans to speak about sex openly. It is perceived as something that should happen in the dark and this should not be in that way." Dr Makulana advised women to go for pap smear at least once in a year or depending on their Medical Doctor's advice. In this way, women were encouraged to take care for themselves and go for medical check – up more often.

The Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, Professor Ntebogeng Mokgalaka-Fleischmann welcomed participants on day one while the Director of Human Resources, Mrs Uanda Ndou proposed a vote of thanks. On day two, Mrs Ndou handled the item of the purpose of the event and welcomed the audience who attended day two programme. Mrs Gertrude Maluleke, a Lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education proposed a vote of thanks. Programme facilitators were Mrs Doris Mutobvu and Ms Tshimangadzo Tambani.

Dr Marizvikuru Manjoro encourages parents to support the girl child to become confident in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects

As the country is moving towards the end of Women's month commemoration, let us look at the journey travelled by Dr Marizvikuru Manjoro, a Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Rural Development at the University of Venda (UNIVEN).

Dr Manjoro explains her journey worth travelling...



I besiege you to support the girl child to take up Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and help her achieve her dreams, no matter the deterrence and challenges. To the girl child, despite the discouragements or detours in life, raise your confidence and do not give up on your dream to pursue the career path that you desire. One day you will be a shining star and save the nation and world at large.

Dr Manjoro explained that she acquired a doctoral degree from the University of Fort Hare which was made possible through the Free-Standing PhD Bursary from the Department of Science and Innovation/ National Research Foundation (DSI/NRF) Africa Scholarship award. She mentioned that she was also fortunate to be a pioneer Postdoctoral Research Fellow of the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in October 2010. The two- and half-year fellowship was sponsored by DSI/NRF and UNIVEN, during which I received several of the UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor's research awards. Thereafter, I took up another Postdoctoral Fellowship with North-West University, in the Indigenous Knowledge system Centre, where I received an award as the best Postdoctoral Fellow in 2013. In 2015, I re-joined UNIVEN, now as a Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Rural Development (IRD). Some of my great achievements at UNIVEN include passionately coordinating the Postgraduate programme in IRD, serving the Research Advisory Forum and the Social Sciences Research Ethics committee as a member and Deputy Chairperson, respectively. Thanks to UNIVEN, my coaches and mentors who created an enabling environment for me to continue navigating my academic journey.

From a tender age when I started my primary education, I have been good in science subjects, especially Mathematics. This was during the era when majority of community members where I come from were against educating a girl child and vehemently discouraged my family to invest in my education. Against all these odds, my parents were serious in my education though with some misgivings on whether they were taking the right decision. They were torn in between on one hand supporting the community norms for them to be socially correct and on the other hand fulfilling the desire of their daughter. Then came the other challenge from the myopic perception of some section of the community who believed that Mathematics and Science subjects were meant for only boys in school. Against all odds, I took up these subjects and excelled because I was good at them, and I enjoyed them. Alas! my performance in science all the way through to acquiring a doctoral degree in Animal Science paid dividends and gave my family a great relief. Linking up with colleagues that are like-minded, and a supportive family gave me courage and confidence to pursue my passion of Mathematics and Science, to which to date I like very much and teach the science of Research Methods to Honours students and train Postgraduate students on the science of data analysis and data management. Parents/guardians,

I besiege you to support the girl child to take up Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and help her achieve her dreams, no matter the deterrence and challenges. To the girl child, despite the discouragements or detours in life, raise your confidence and do not give up on your dream to pursue the career path that you desire. One day you will be a shining star and save the nation and world at large.

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Parents/guardians, I besiege you to support the girl child to take up Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and help her achieve her dreams, no matter the deterrence and challenges.

continued on page 2...

Dr Marizvikuru Manjoro continued...

This enables me to remain focused towards my goals and vision and subsequently empowered me to remain relevant, becoming instrumental and, have been rewarded by receiving recognition as an active researcher by my institution (Vice-Chancellor's research awards), NRF rating as a promising young researcher and nomination into various esteemed professional associations. Some examples of the recognition are being invited to membership of the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS), where I actively participate in making the voice of the youth scientists heard through science advocacy, policy influence and as science ambassador, and have served as an Executive Committee member in 2019/2020 and currently as the co-Chair of SAYAS. I am active in the Research Ethics and Integrity Community of Practice for the Northern region including Botswana where we have recently developed guidelines for research ethics and integrity for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. As a Women in Science in the Developing World member, I have participated in programmes encouraging women and girls to take up Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

(STEM) subjects and contributed three book chapters. Worth of mentioning is my participation in the International Day of Women and Girls in Science (Pathways Into Science: Twinkl Celebrates International Day of Women and Girls) to encourage women and girls to take up STEM subjects and career pathways. As a Fellow of the esteemed Africa Science Leadership Programme, I periodically participate in the mentorship working group for graduates and early career researchers. I have also gladly served the science community as a reviewer of many journals that include Veterinary World, Welwitschia International Journal of Agricultural Science, Journal of Traditional and Complementary Medicine, South African Journal of Animal Science (SAJAS) and Environmental Sustainability Indicators. I also serve as a sub editor of the SAJAS, external examiner and, reviewer and moderator of NRF applications. To date I have published at over 60 peer-reviewed Journal articles, three papers in conference proceedings and two book chapters culminating to a Google H-index of 18 and Scopus h-index 11. I have successfully supervised/co-supervised 11 PhD candidates, 9 research Master's and 18 Honours students, in addition to mentoring a Postdoctoral Fellow.

I also gratefully mentor students, peers and female academics and in particular when I served as an oversight member of the NRF-funded project on Customised intervention Grant for mentorship of University Female staff members where I mentored about 15 female researchers at UNIVEN in 2019; where I derived the joy of seeing them sailing through. I also had a privilege to attract research grants, mentor students and Postdoctoral fellows to attract bursaries, lead and participate in projects that are impacting lives of the rural communities through improved village chicken production, water saving mechanisms and enhanced food security. Fruitful collaborations nationally, regionally and at the global space have enriched my academic journey.

Taking a pause and reflecting on my journey, what made me who I am and reach this far, is the privilege of supportive supervisors and mentors, strong social support structure, linking up with like-minded colleagues, passionate and diligence. Early career guidance is crucial in assisting learners to gather courage and choose appropriate career pathways that they are passionate for and follow their dreams successfully which I strongly believe should be given a priority in the society. The privilege of mentors

who identified the potential in me and helped me to explore my full potential is incredible. I keep tapping into my mentors and at the same time mentor others without any reservation.

Yes, the journey is not easy but pressing forward, remaining focused and having both social and academic supportive structures is key to attain the aimed goals and join the stream of impactful human beings in the society. Women are faced with many responsibilities, but tips for it to be manageable are working effectively on a task, courage to enquire with others if not sure of what needs to be executed, multi-tasking, teaming up with like-minded colleagues, in any case, collective action is exciting and implausible; to which I owe my personal success. Women should also take time to rest, refresh and re-energise for the next tasks. Above all "Me Time" is pertinent which if you do not create it for yourself, nobody will. As such, let us join hands in helping the girl child becoming confident in the Science field, excelling in what we do and be each each's role models, mentors and coaches for a better us, a better nation and a better world. Together we can and are capable to use Science to make a difference in humanity

Dr Angeline Singo breaks chains against all odds



As South Africa celebrates Women's Month, the University of Venda's Nendila newsletter took its time to listen to Dr Angeline Singo who started her journey as a Typist/Clerk and now a Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration and Development under the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, at the University of Venda. Dr Singo, a mother of five was able to juggle between her career and as a mother, wife, and learner at the same time. Through the Almighty she managed to break all chains against all odds.

Dr Singo explained that she had this passion of personal development to acquire a degree. She further expressed that she knew by then that one day she would make it and achieve her innermost desire of obtaining a degree, which by then seemed to be a far-fetched dream. "Today I am a lecturer at the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law under the Department of Public Administration and Development."

She obtained her Matric at Rambuda High School in 1983 which by then was one of the top qualifications. She later joined the then Venda Agricultural Corporation known as

AGRIVEN in 1984 as a Typist/Clerk but was soon promoted to a Secretarial position, rendering service to two Departments: Animal Husbandry and the Subtropical departments. AGRIVEN was an agricultural semi-government institution with its headquarters at the current Thulamela Municipal Offices. Dr Singo said she was fortunate because she was exposed to an extensive training of managing office through workshops.

In 1992, Dr Singo enrolled for Management courses at INTEC College as advised by her seniors who told her that her knowledge and experience exceeded secretarial services. During her studies, she developed the passion of furthering her studies to enroll for a degree. Unfortunately, as a mother and a wife it was not easy to fulfill her dream. To make matters worse, she was staying 95 kilometers away from Thohoyandou, at Dzimauli which was quite a stretch, considering that she did not have a car at the time. Dr Singo expressed that the reliable means of transport was a bus which used to depart at 04:00am and arrive in Thohoyandou between 05:40 and 06:00 in the morning. After knocking off at 16:30 in the afternoon, she would then board a bus which would arrive at Dzimauli at 18h00, sometimes at 19h00 depending on the response from the commuters. She explained that the journey to and from work interfered with her studies.

After obtaining her secretarial diploma, she then took a break from studying. She then realised that time was flying without any positive lead to her dream. In 1994 she was appointed at UNIVEN as a typist/clerk in the Department of Public Relations and Development, which was like a demotion from her previous position she held at AGRIVEN. Nevertheless, she then said she knew that this was a ticket to fulfil her dream. "I told myself that the road to success is not straight, it is full of bumps that can affect your

arrival in time to your intended destination, nevertheless I will arrive." From 1996, she was seconded to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal as an Executive Secretary to render secretarial service. She endured as it was not easy to juggle from two offices. In 2006 she moved to the Registrar's Office at Committee Section as Chief Administration Officer taking minutes in SENEX, Senate, Ad-hoc Committees and Strategic Plans of the University. In 2008, she was transferred to IPQA to provide administrative support to the University academic projects such as Strategic Plans, NUFFIC and HEQC related matters. Dr Singo said she was determined and focused on her destiny and not let her career become a stumbling block to her destiny. "In the back of my mind, my father's voice kept on echoing saying a hero is the one who conquers his/her dream than enemies." I strived to conquer my mind.

"I would like to acknowledge the role played by my late friend, Mrs Norah Machaba. In 1997 Mrs Machaba reminded me about my dream of acquiring a degree qualification. I told her it would not be possible as I am in one of the busiest offices at UNIVEN and it will interfere with my studies." Her response was to remind me to put the prize on your dream. "Mrs Machaba told me that she would support me and played a critical role in my achievement and my career, she was a pillar of strength, a mentor and a friend to reckon with. Little did I know that she meant she would also enroll and study with me as a way of motivating me. We then graduated our undergraduate degrees together and enrolled for Master's in Public Management (MPM) which we also graduated within stipulated time frame. She then urged me to continue with my studies to fulfill my dream of being an academic." Dr Singo later enrolled for a Doctor of Public Administration in the then School of Management Sciences,

a PhD which she graduated in time in 2018. "Unfortunately, Mrs Machaba could not witness my achievement as she passed away in 2012."

She advises those who want to study up to doctoral degrees to hold on to their dreams. Dr Singo thanked the University of Venda for its policy on remission of fees which encourages and motivates staff members to further their studies to realise their dreams.

"Throughout my career I mentored members of my family, colleagues and some individuals who asked for my help towards their studies. Throughout my career at UNIVEN, the functional activities I rendered in various offices provided an insight into academia as they were purely responsive to teaching and learning. My educational passion was like a compass to the upcoming generation from my village at Dzimauli and Mbahela who saw me as a beacon and realised that it is possible to achieve anything. Most parents started to have faith on UNIVEN programmes because even my children graduated from UNIVEN and seem to be doing well in life. My family, church and individual members realised that through hard work and dedication, one can realise his/her dream of making one's life better through education."

"To all women out there, please do not give up on your dream. Although it can be a long journey but where there is a will there is way. Hold on to your dreams. Do not dwell on the hurtful past you have gone through, it will derail you on your journey to victory as you will spend more energy trying to fight the past that you have conquered already. Let us use the skills in every sphere of our lives. Do not be discouraged by anything or anyone. Sooner or later the clouds could bring rain and serve as shower towards your victory." She advised learners and students to focus on their studies until they realise their dreams.

The call for women to vaccinate bears fruits during women's month

On Friday, 20 August 2021, the University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Faculty of Health Sciences celebrated women's month by providing vaccination to women from ages of 35 years and above. The purpose of this event was to increase access to women to get vaccinated and reach herd immunity as women are primary caregivers of families and their loved ones.

Women's month celebration through women vaccination was a success. Most women heeded the University's call and came in numbers to vaccinate. According to the Acting Head of the Department of Advanced Nursing, Prof Dorah Ramathuba, men also responded to the call by availing themselves and they were also vaccinated. In terms of statistics, on Friday 20 August, one hundred and twenty-seven (127) women and twenty-four (24) men were vaccinated. Two hundred and thirty-four (234) students and youth between ages of 18 and 34 were also vaccinated. In total, three hundred and eighty-five (385) people were vaccinated from 08:00 – 13:00 on Friday, 20 August 2021.

According to Prof Ramathuba, the event was a success. As she was welcoming attendees, Prof Ramathuba outlined the important stature that women have in the society.



4th level nursing students who voluntarily assisted the district by being trained vaccinators and data capturers.



She explained women as pillars of families. Prof Ramathuba advised women to stand at the forefront of their families and their loved ones' health by encouraging and supporting their family members to get vaccinated. She gave example of women who marched to the Union building in 1956 against pass laws. She further expressed that the determination of women should also be visible today amid this Covid-19 pandemic. "Women should hold the fort for better health and welfare

of their families because health starts from individuals within families then to communities."

"From the University of Venda, we would like to send our sincere appreciation to the 4th level nursing students who voluntarily assisted the district by being trained vaccinators and data capturers, staff from Campus Health Clinic, paramedics and Ms Maggie Hlungwani as the team leader for making the event a success," she said.



Prof Tshildzi Mulaudzi - Acting Executive Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences, Deputy Dean and HOD Nutrition - Dr Lindelani Mushaphi, Dr James Takalani - HOD Psychology, Dr Miriam Mohlala - HOD Centre for Biokinetics, Sport Science, Recreation and Leisure/ Dr Stella Mashau HOD - Public Health and Prof Dorah Ramathuba Acting HOD - Advanced Nursing Science



Nursing lecturers and the team of vaccinators posing for a photo at the vaccination centre



Some of the event attendees

As she was concluding her talk, Prof Ramathuba encouraged everyone to get vaccinated because getting vaccinated means protecting yourself and others. "Once you receive your first shot, your body begins producing antibodies to the coronavirus. These antibodies help your

immune system fight the virus if you happen to be exposed, so it reduces your chance of getting the disease. So, getting vaccinated not only reduces your chance of being infected, but also contributes to community protection, reducing the likelihood of virus transmission."

Chancellor of UNIVEN talks about issues of inequality within communities during intergenerational dialogue



On Wednesday, 18 August 2021, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) Chancellor, Adv. Mojankunyane Gumbi participated in a distinguished panel of speakers during the intergenerational dialogue that was organised by the National Heritage Council, an agency of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in South Africa. This was a hybrid event that was also attended on Facebook and Microsoft Teams.

The dialogue was organised as part of the commemoration of Women's month and the 150 Years of Charlotte Maxeke. This was hosted under the theme "Reaping the benefits of the efforts of Charlotte Manny-Maxeke to create a better life for all". The Intergenerational dialogue was aimed at uniting the different generations unraveling the revolutionary stories of this liberation struggle stalwart that are entrenched in deep

cultural, traditional values, spirit of resilience, heroism and patriotism.

During this Intergenerational Dialogue, Adv Gumbi mentioned that it is important to check what the current generation has done for this country. "We can take some of the values from the speech that was prepared by Mme Charlotte Mmakgomu Maxeke 83 years ago." She spoke about three (3) points derived from Mme Maxeke's speech. "Do not live above other people's lives. Secondly, if you can rise, bring someone with you, and this is not happening with this generation, we have failed Mme Maxeke. Mme Maxeke wanted us to help each other and that is not happening," she said. Lastly, she spoke about tribalism. "Once more, my generation has failed Mme Maxeke. She encouraged attendees to treat each other like brothers and sisters irrespective of tribal differences.

She regards tribalism as an animal that will tear us apart.

Towards her conclusion, Adv Gumbi spoke about levels of inequality that exist in our communities. When talking about levels of inequality, she said people should treat each other equally irrespective of gender, tribe, and skin colour. The other element she brought in her talk was eliminating hunger, she said that could be done in a way of eliminating inequality. Lastly, she expressed her wish for future generations to attend to the scourge of gender-based violence. She said this all starts at home. She added that home is a community and not just a unit of parents and two children. Equality is learned at home. However, she said that "our homes have been destroyed by the apartheid regime. I hope the next generation will do better than us."

Dr Patience Mativandlela is the new Director of Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance



Dr Sannah Patience Nkani Mativandlela joined the University of Venda (UNIVEN) as the Director: Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance with effect from 01 August 2021. She obtained her Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science Honours degrees at UNIVEN. She further obtained her PhD in Plant Sciences from the University of Pretoria, and Management Development certificate from Stellenbosch University.

During her post-doctoral tenure, she received the 2009-2010 Department of Science and Technology / National Research Foundation scholarship award to study the in vitro and in vivo drug discovery models at the Department of Chemistry, Emory University, Georgia, United States of America.

She has over 15 years of unique blend of research and development experience. She brings her senior managerial expertise for effective management operating system, strategic administration initiatives, policy research, policy drafts and implementation,

quantitative and qualitative research methodologies with an ability to coordinate and manage allocated aspects of organisation's management programmes, knowledge support, quality systems, design systems and operational solutions.

Before joining UNIVEN, Dr Mativandlela was the Director for Strategic Administration and Initiatives at the University of Johannesburg. She also worked as a Specialist Scientist, Research Team Manager and a Senior Manager at the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), Agricultural

Research Council (ARC) and the National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS) respectively. She was the secretariat and facilitated the Pathology Research Development (PathReD) biennial conference for the medical scientists, pathologists and public health medical registrars at NHLS.

Her short-term goal is continuous contribution using her ideas and becoming an authority in the educational sector with a long-term goal of taking a bigger leadership role, responsibilities and interacting with multiple-disciplinary sectors globally.

"I regard myself as a leader who focus on goal-oriented objectives, an advisor and committed to the work ethics, good governance by creating relationships based on mutual trust and understanding within a broad team, prioritise delivery of quality programmes, and take up the challenges in fulfilling all my responsibilities".

When welcoming Dr Mativandlela, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin congratulated her on her new position and said that her skills and experience will be a definite asset to the University.



Dr Mativandlela (seated on the right side) with Dr Robert Martin (seated on the left side) and other Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance staff members

Institute for Rural Development Welcomes Youthful Innovation Champions for Local Economic Development in Vhembe District Project

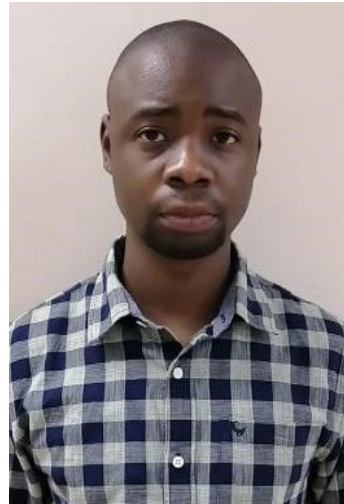
For the next two years, the Institute for Rural Development (IRD) at the University of Venda (UNIVEN) will be home to six degreed young people, all thanks to the funding received from the Department of Science and Innovation through the Technology Innovation Agency. The young graduates will anchor implementation of the Innovation Champions for Local Economic Development (IC4LED) project in Vhembe District. Three of these Innovation Champions (ICs) assumed duty on the 2nd of August 2021. Broadly, their role will be to facilitate and coordinate the integration of innovation into local economic development (LED) practice, working closely with multiple stakeholders and role players both within and out of the District. Specifically, the ICs will apply various methods, techniques and tools in creative, unique and inclusive ways as they spearhead stakeholder engagement, map the local economy, analyse priority value chains, unearth inherent innovations and introduce new ones, and seek viable solutions to impediments to life-improvement activities and health of businesses across all economic sectors in Vhembe District. The 21 development nodal areas that make up Collins Chabane, Makhado, Musina and Thulamela Local Municipalities of Vhembe District Municipality in Limpopo Province are the implementation sites.

Prof Joseph Francis who leads the IC4LED project could not hide his delight at the prospect of co-mentoring the ICs with the LED Managers of all the five Municipalities in Vhembe District. Here is what he had to say, "We are immensely proud to announce that the IC4LED is the first national pilot project designed to test how some core imperatives of the South African National Framework for Local Economic Development, 2018-2028 can be operationalised. Call us a Guinea pig, yes – but that's precisely what innovation partly entails – who would not gloat under these circumstances – having six young people tasked with using their brains and skills to connect innovation with LED?". Note that this project was officially launched during a multi-stakeholder workshop held at Muofhe Graceland Lodge from 11-12 February 2020. A lot has happened already. The ICs are jumping onto a train that is in cruise mode. So, who are the three ICs on board now?

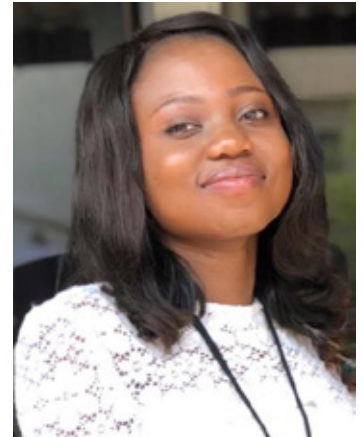


Mr Rudzani Bernard Mamphweli has qualifications in social work and development studies. His educational qualifications include Bachelor of Social Work and BA Hons (Sociology) obtained from the University of Venda. Financial support received through a prestigious international scholarship from the European Commission under the framework of Erasmus Mundus saw him complete a Master's in International Development Studies from Palacky University in the Czech Republic. During his studies towards the masters degree Rudzani benefitted from a CzechAid sponsored internship that took him to Bosnia/Herzegovina in South-eastern Europe for a journey in monitoring and evaluation of rural village-based projects funded by Czech Development Cooperation. He has experience in community and international/rural development, stakeholder mobilization, communication and marketing, and project coordination. Also, Rudzani argues that it was a privilege to be placed as an Office Intern for the German Development Cooperation in Pretoria and DSI/NRF Intern in the Institute for Rural Development at UNIVEN.

The most exciting thing about the journey ahead is that "I will contribute to local economic development practice and learn by doing as we collectively seek to enhance the performance of local municipalities through infusing innovation into LED."



Mr Andani Nemetandani holds a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning degree from the University of Venda. Currently, he is studying towards a Masters degree in Town and Regional Planning with the University of Pretoria. Andani is a registered member of the South African Council of Planners and South African Planning Institute. His experience encompasses natural resource management and rural development. He joins the IC4LED project after a learning expedition whilst attached to the Matsila Community Development Trust as an environmental management intern. Prior to that he was part of a team that prepared a conflict resolution and area spatial development proposal for Mankweng (Nobody community) for the City of Polokwane. "I am extremely excited that I am embarking on a journey that inspires hope and has immense potential to impact on local economic development practice. What more can I ask for when I know I will be leading solution-seeking processes in unique, creative ways within a previously marginalized rural district?"



Ms Amukelani Hlaseka is a social scientist whose working experience has been in the fields of rural and sustainable development, and monitoring and evaluation. She holds the following qualifications: Masters in Rural Development from the University of Venda, and BA Honours in Development Studies and BA Psychology from the University of Johannesburg. She is currently studying towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Management (Public and Development

Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) with the University of Witwatersrand. Amukelani will deploy into the IC4LED project her wealth of experience in multi-disciplinary social and policy research, monitoring and evaluation, programme and project management that was gained whilst attached to the public, private and non-profit sectors. "My exposure, experience and skills in desktop research, survey design, mixed methods research, multi-stakeholder engagement, and written and oral communication will make me immerse seamlessly into the Innovation Champion post. I look forward to learning from and contributing to the IC4LED objectives as we strive to build a better life for all".

"We are immensely proud to announce that the IC4LED is the first national pilot project designed to test how some core imperatives of the South African National Framework for Local Economic Development, 2018-2028 can be operationalised."

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Prof Addmore Shonhai 's former students fly UNIVEN flag high at other institutions of higher learning

On Friday, 23 July 2021, the University's Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture's Biochemistry and Microbiology Department held a Protein Biochemistry and Malaria (ProBioM) research group reunion event. ProBioM is led by Prof. Addmore Shonhai, interim Chair of the Biochemistry & Microbiology Department. This reunion event was held on Microsoft Teams.



Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, Prof Ntebogeng Mokgalaka-Fleischmann, gave the keynote address and thanked the team for organising the reunion event. She enlightened attendees on the 2021-2025 strategic plan. She further highlighted the transformation that is currently taking place at UNIVEN. Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann told the gathering that whatever their stations, their conduct impacts on UNIVEN's reputation and as alumni their actions should always be marked by high levels of work integrity and ethics.

Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann mentioned that she was impressed by the objectives of the meeting which sought to afford former UNIVEN students the opportunity to give feedback on their career progress. "Carry the badge of the University with you, we also depend on you to enhance the University's corporate identity as brand ambassadors. We further aim to be a University leading in engaged scholarship."

In her response after hearing their experiences, Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann said she was impressed by what Prof Shonhai is doing and encouraged him to do more as his work is placing the University of Venda on the local and international platforms. "We can see the fruits of Prof Shonhai 's work. Our alumni are today flying the University of Venda's flag high at other institutions of higher learning. This Faculty is in good hands, and I am confident and happy to have staff members like Prof Shonhai."



In his response, Prof Addmore Shonhai, said his biggest focus is to prepare students to do well in the world of work. "As a research group, our focus is to study heat shock proteins and their role in supporting malaria parasites. We are one of the earliest groups to study these proteins and have had the privilege to name some of them. As part of our contributions and that of others, the field has now grown to the point where these proteins are being targeted as part of antimalarial drug discovery efforts."

"As part of my early career phase, I had the opportunity to work in both the pharmaceutical production industry and biotechnology (vaccine research) field. This early experience endowed me with technical skills which I make an effort to pass to my students." Prof Shonhai took them through his career path until to date. He gave them words of encouragement by also motivating

them, highlighting his international recognition and awards, amongst them, a prestigious Alexander von Humboldt and research award amounting to around €500 000 secured from the GRF (Germany Research Foundation) from 2009-2018. Prof Shonhai joined UNIVEN in 2014. He was instrumental in resuscitating this Department and supervised the first PhD and Masters students to graduate from the Department. He highlighted that launching a career in science within a resource constrained setting is not an easy undertaking. He recalled that when he joined the Department nearly all its lab equipment were obsolete. "But today, the Biochemistry Unit has state of the art equipment worth several millions of rands. My passion is to empower previously disadvantaged students. We need to train students to attain a standard that allows them to be globally competitive. If we do a good job, we get a lot in return as academics since the good reputation of our graduates certainly speaks well of us out there."

He said he was overwhelmed by the words of encouragement from Prof Mokgalaka-Fleischmann and his colleagues in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture. "I would like to encourage colleagues to invest in student training and to organise workshops to hear from them long after they would have joined the work world. This provides us with the opportunity to assess the impact the students within the work setting."

Former UNIVEN students were given an opportunity to share their academic journey on how they started as students and how they are doing so far. In all their presentations, these UNIVEN alumni also presented their experiences in ProBioM and how this shaped their current career stations. Among those who presented were Dr Xolani Makhoba, senior lecturer, University of Fort Hare, Dr Tawanda Zininga, lecturer, Stellenbosch University, Dr Adelle Burger, senior lecturer, (University of Venda), Ms Simakeleng Monyai, PhD candidate, University of Pretoria, Dr Stanely Makumire, Postdoctoral

Fellow, University of Cape Town, Dr Graham Chakafana, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Cape Town, and Mr Tendamudzimu Dongola, part-time lecturer and MSc student, UNIVEN. Dr. Graham Chakafana highlighted that he was recently awarded a 4-year postdoctoral fellowship by the prestigious, and ivy league member institution, Stanford University of the USA. This testifies to the growing stock of UNIVEN graduates at the international scene. The event was also characterised by a question and answer session that facilitated interaction between current and previous students of the group.



Former Dean of School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Prof Natasha Potgieter said it was good to see staff members and alumni of the University doing well, putting the name of the University on the map. She noted that the University of Venda is creating future leaders who are determined to put the University on the national and international arena.

In her welcome remarks Dr Adelle Burger pointed out that the reunion event sought to bring current and previous students of the group towards encouraging the current students to take up careers in science as well as to motivate them to keep focussed as they embark on their studies.



Dr Ntakadzeni Madala, a senior lecturer and acclaimed researcher in his own right, gave a vote of thanks. In his vote of thanks message, Dr Madala congratulated the group that was put together by Prof Shonhai. He highlighted that Prof Shonhai is a hard-working colleague who is always determined to do the best for his students. He further said that Prof. Shonhai's commitment to the Biochemistry unit has tremendously improved with respect to research resources and student training. "Now UNIVEN has its footprints in notable local and international universities." He congratulated Prof Shonhai and encouraged him to continue serving students as this is a sure way to develop them into useful citizens.



Group photo of founding members of ProBioM at UNIVEN - the picture was taken before the COVID-19 pandemic

Science should solve challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality in our communities

From 02 to 06 August 2021, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) together with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), University of South Africa (UNISA), National Research Foundation (NRF), South African Agency for Science and Technology (SAASTA), Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) collaboratively held the 2021 National Science Week. The official opening of the 2021 National Science week was held on Microsoft Teams on Monday, 02 August 2021 under the theme 'National Systems of innovation stakeholder's role in white paper on Science, Technology and Innovation'.



During the opening and introduction of plenary, Dr Vijay Reddy from HSRC said this is the first time the National Science Week is being hosted online since it was established.



UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni indicated that UNIVEN is grateful to be co-hosting this 2021 National Science Week. He said science has made a massive impact in everyone's life. "It has changed the way we live and the way we work. Science and innovation are the key drivers for economic growth." Dr Nthambeleni further mentioned that Research and Innovation assist to improve the lives and health of our people. "The National Science Week contributes to develop societies, more importantly, it brings and help demystify the myths about certain science related matters. We need to teach and demystify these myths." He said this National Science Week will assist us to understand the role of science and its impact in our lives.

"The National Science Week should bring awareness about what the country has achieved so far. It should also solve poverty, unemployment, and inequality in our communities. We need to communicate these sciences to ensure that even our community understands.

People should be able to connect online everywhere in the country. People should not have to travel to certain areas to get network coverage. He said even students who are studying from home, attending online classes from rural areas should be able to connect without a struggle. Network coverage should be available everywhere."



Acting CEO of the Human Sciences Research Council, Prof Leickness Simbayi thanked SAASTA for ensuring that the 2021 National Science Week is organised irrespective of difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic we live in. He said the aim of the National Science Week is to create enabling environments for all, to transform and bridge inequalities. "COVID-19 has given us an opportunity to invest the science skills. We need to push and ensure that South Africa competes in science at global arena because it is already a leading African country in science."

He concluded by mentioning that the HSRC encourages collaborations because through collaborations, there is so much work that can be achieved to help people improve their living conditions.



Prof Thenjiwe Meyiwa from UNISA presented about Innovation, Technology and Commercialisation: A Science Week Imperative. Among others, she spoke about the significance of science week where she highlighted some of the reasons why it is important to have this National Science Week annually. She said this is to create awareness of the importance of science for socio-economic development progress. She highlighted that the National Science Week provides a platform for students to present and discuss their research across disciplines. "It affords an opportunity to understand the strategic major initiatives that the country is pursuing. It creates an opportunity to interact on issues relating to alternative knowledge production and ways of knowing."



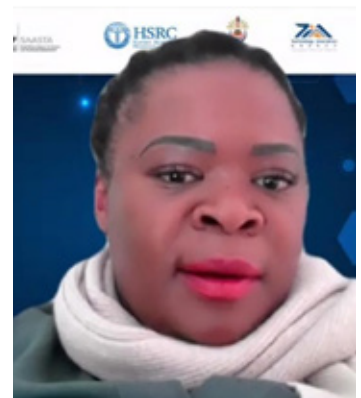
Ms Tandokazi Nquma-Moyo from TIA presented about TIA's mandate, Vision and Mission. She said in terms of input and innovation capability, South Africa is ranked number 60 in the world and number 2 in Africa. "This means that South Africa is not doing too bad, and we need to sustain our country by improving our ways of doing things." As she was speaking, she outlined TIA's strategic roles in detail.



Dr Mmboneni Muofhe from Department of Science and Innovation said everyone has grown as citizens of this world, and this is a proof enough that science improves our lives. "Taking a snapshot today is way too different from taking it in the 1960s. This is about raising awareness of science, informing the new generation and the whole of our population about the importance of the role of science." He further highlighted that Science and Innovation are not only limited to documented scientists. "We have undocumented scientists; those are our indigenous knowledge systems by our ancestors and traditionalists. The traditional way we used to do farming in the 1960s were innovation by our undocumented scientists."

He mentioned that the word science means knowledge, it is not about engineering, not about technology but knowledge. "Scientific illiteracy is a huge global problem, therefore we need to reach even our rural communities when we spread knowledge, so that tomorrow we don't experience challenges of illiteracy that we have today."

"Scientific illiteracy is a huge global problem, therefore we need to reach even our rural communities when we spread knowledge, so that tomorrow we don't experience challenges of illiteracy that we have today."



Dr Palesa Sekhejane concluded the official opening of the National Science Week with a vote of thanks.



Dr David Tinarwo from UNIVEN introduced a Biogas Project documentary which was viewed by all attendees.

Day two programme was based on the Webinar discussion on 'Perspective on how scholars perceive attitudes to science in policymaking in South Africa.' The programme was directed by Prof Nosisi Feza (DVC: Research and Postgraduate Studies, University of Venda). Several speakers presented their views based on the Indigenous knowledge systems, Vaccines landscapes and development, renewable energy, climate change, water resource and 4IR. The webinar discussion is in line with the current research focused on water-energy-food nexus concepts in South Africa and around the world.

Science should solve challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality in our communities continued...

The speakers include: Adv Dr Pfarelo Matshidze (UNIVEN - IKS), Dr Palesa Sekhejane (HSRC - Vaccines landscape and development contestations), Prof Sampson Mamphweli (Stellenbosch University - Renewable Energy), Prof Keolebogile Motaung (DUT - Innovation), Prof Joel Botai (Weather SA - Climate change), Prof Sylvester Mpandeli (WRC - Water Resources), Dr Michael Gastrow (HSRC - 4IR), The day was concluded with the EXHIBITION: PYEI INTERNSHIP – HSRC.

The PYEI programme at the HSRC was borne from the extensive COVID-19 sociobehavioural research that was undertaken by the HSC division in 2020. The research identified the need for social compacts and health promotion at a community level. The Presidential stimulus via the President's Youth Employment Intervention gave the research team the opportunity to make the dream of health promotion at a local level, a reality, and the project kicked off in November 2020 with our recruitment drive to appoint 1000

unemployed graduates. The aim is that these 1000 graduates are trained and provided with experiential learning to improve their marketability in the labour environment and encourage social entrepreneurship.

The programme continued on day three which was done in collaboration with the University of South Africa. The topic for the webinar was titled 'The importance of uncertainty in many scientific predictions; and the relevance of this to environmental controversies.' Dr. Malebo Tibane directed the webinar of that day with different panellists including: Prof Mantile Lekala (Director, School of Science, UNISA), Dr Basetsana Ntsime/Dr Nozipho Gumbi (SoS Women in Science and Engineering, UNISA), Dr Wilfred Lunga (HSRC), Prof Gaotsiwe Rampho (CoD Physics, UNISA), Ms Gladys Magagula (Project Manager, SANS Space Operations), Prof Simiso Dube (Acting Deputy Executive Dean, CSET, UNISA, and Prof Mmantsae Diale (SARCHI: Clean and Green Energy University of Pretoria). The programme was concluded with the astronomy recorded exhibition.

Day four of the 2021 NSW was based in collaboration with on the Technology Innovation Agency which is the national public entity that serves as the key institutional intervention to bridge the innovation chasm between research and development from higher education institutions. The topic of this webinar was titled 'A perspective from women in technology and Innovation supported by local and global partners. The speakers were Mrs Tsholofelo Mokotedi (EW Seta: Executive Planning & Reporting), Ms Petro De Wet (UNIDO Gender Expert), Ms Lucy Moteka (TIA Programme Manager), Dr Jo-Ann (UCT, Innovation "GIFT" Genital Inflammation Test), Ms Mukundi Lambani (CEO "Ambani Africa": Innovation Augmented reality app for African language learning), Ms Sandiswa Qayi (MD AET Africa Innovation, "Hotspot" Geyser Sleeve). Issue based on different innovation established by women in SA and worldwide were discussed. As it is a women's month, speakers were women and motivation were done to motivate other women to start

something which will help the communities and other women.

One of the most important activities which was happening throughout the week was the community programme where the University of Venda together with HSRC were showcasing the physics in my village documentary. The documentary is based on the biogas research work which is done in the Capricorn district municipality. The teams were running the community engagement aiming at establishing the public's current understanding of biogas technologies and its value, creating awareness about the potential of biogas as a source, exploring community perceptions on how they can be engaged and participate in the project.

The following communities were visited: Mokgalakwena, Maruleng and Ga-Phasha as part of community engagement and showcasing the documentation <https://youtu.be/KK7NWtwzVKA>.

Honouring Women's Month



"Female security staff members in charge of manning the University main gate posing for a photo during women's month."

The voice of the church during a devastating national catastrophe, Covid-19 pandemic

The University of Venda's Department of Human Sciences, Theology Section under the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education has on Thursday, 19 August 2021 hosted a successful virtual Annual Lecture series under the theme: 'The Church in the Midst of Covid-19 Pandemic: Theology of Lamenting, Healing and Hope'. This lecture series took place on Microsoft teams.



The three speakers who were drawn from various theological backgrounds critically reflected on three sub-themes.

Prof Christina Landman who has a systematic theology background that includes interests in Church Polity and Pastoral Counselling, presented the keynote address on the Theology of Lamenting.

Prof Gordon Dames from a Practical Theology background and whose academic interests include African contextual transformational practical theology, ethnographic ecclesial studies and life narrative and practice-oriented research in leadership and spirituality, presented on the Theology of Healing.

Dr Kelebogile Resane who has researched broadly on New Apostolic Reformation, Pentecostal theology, and public theology in general presented on the Theology of Hope.



Prof Christina Landman from the University of South Africa, who is the first woman to become a Professor of Theology from a South African University and a C2 NRF rated researcher, addressed the issue of how the church is to deal with the Covid-19 during this devastating period of national catastrophe, Covid-19 pandemic. Prof Landman outlined the church's role in lament as one that gives a voice to those who weep in silence. Through lament the church starts the process to listen to God's voice for those who experience God as absent, and it is through this theology that the church seeks to recover communion with God. She further elucidated that the church should not only lead in lamenting, but also in jubilation, rejoicing in the God of Possibilities.

Prof Landman illustrated the Theology of Lament through five Sermons that identify features of lament and rejoice. The Sermons were based on Exodus 31:1-5 – the story of

Bezalel; Psalm 91; Philippians 2:5-11; Isaiah 43:1 and Genesis 8:1-12. Through these sermons, she emphasised the need for people to have an opportunity to lament the deaths of their loved ones.



This was followed by a presentation by Prof Gordon Dames who is a full professor in practical theology at UNISA. He is a C3 NRF rated researcher. His presentation was based on an academic point of view. His talk was around the church in the midst of Covid-19: Theology of Healing. In his presentation Prof Dames indicated that he saw a need for a multidisciplinary approach to address challenges posed by Covid-19, that we need a ministry praxis of care and Africa is ideally poised to reframe the values of society. He spoke about a need for the prophetic voice of the church to address socio-economic challenges.

He added that there is a Kairos moment for the church during this pandemic to develop gender-based violence ecclesial public pastoral interventions. He revealed that focus should be placed on Jesus Christ as the medicus/healer.

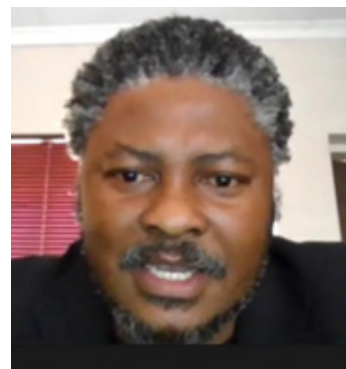
"Covid-19 brought a traumatised culture to the people"; hence, the people were faced with a Eurocentric challenge: the commercialisation and corporatisation of medicine and healing. He went on to convey that we need to expose religious leaders who exploit the poor. The church needs to regain the urgency to proclaim the Gospel as the good news. To offer an integrative and holistic theology of suffering and healing; so that an authentic Africanised contextual theological praxis of healing and wellness may be developed.



When expounding on the Theology of Hope, Dr Kelebogile Thomas Resane from the University of the Free State spoke about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences on various sectors and religious spaces. Dr Resane said the church

government trust level is at its lowest ebb; however, the church will struggle, experience trauma, and find new hope. He affirmed that there is always a crisis that precedes hope. Further to this, he illustrated through biblical history how hope is not a new theme across the disciplines and that hope implies a progressive increase in knowledge, setting aside superstition and prejudice. Dr Resane continued to express that hope is not irrational and that human life is impossible without hope. The church has the responsibility to exercise Kerygma (the proclamation of the word), Koinonia (fellowship) and Diakonia (the acts of service/love). Theology of hope is audible through preaching, exercised through service and experienced through fellowship.

Dr Resane explained that pandemics are not permanent, we will in the end conquer and go back to our normal way of life." He advised attendees to be resilient because perseverance comes from resilience. "Resilience means bouncing back from a difficult situation to a normal situation." The church always survives cosmic challenges, and we should maintain theocratic focus. He imparted the significance of the virtue of Huponeo (steadfastness and patience) and that as a communal ecclesia we must embrace the Theology of hope. In his conclusion, Dr Resane stipulated that the theology of hope holds a substantive message that rests on the finished work of Jesus Christ.



Theology lecture series was declared officially open by the Executive Dean Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, Prof Bongani Bantwini. In his opening remarks, Prof Bantwini started by wishing women a happy women's month. He touched on the issue of Covid-19 and how at first people were very sceptical, to the extent of believing that the virus only kills a particular race. He indicated that Covid-19 has severely disrupted everyone's life. "Life for many of us has made a 360-degree turn. We all need to know the role of church during this difficult time. I believe the power of knowledge has the potential to save a lot of people's lives." Prof Bantwini thanked Theology section for organising this significant lecture series during this difficult time.

"Life for many of us has made a 360-degree turn. We all need to know the role of church during this difficult time."



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning, Prof Jan Crafford conveyed words of appreciation to the speakers, leaders of faith-based organisations and all the attendees. He noted the need of decolonisation and Africanisation of the curriculum as expressed by one of the guest speakers. He concluded by expressing appreciation for the efforts of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education for arranging a well organised Annual Lecture Series.



Prof Mokgale Makgopa, Dean of the School of Human and Social Sciences had a privilege to propose a vote of thanks to this prestigious august occasion of the 2021 Annual Lecture series. The School of Human and Social Sciences annual lecture series were launched in 2016 under the auspices of Professor Mokgale Makgopa and resulted in three books publications.



The Head of the Department of Human Sciences, and a senior lecturer in the Theology section, Dr Lufuluvhi Mudimeli acknowledged the participants and chaired the session.

Trail Blazing UNIVEN students put institution on world map by successfully completing the demanding and intensive three-week Impact Investment Bootcamp

Nine University of Venda (UNIVEN) students recently completed a three-week Impact Investment Bootcamp that was conducted by USA based University Impact (UI) from 12 July to 30 July 2021.

UNIVEN is only the second South African university after UCT to be invited by University Impact, a USA based Social Impact Organisation, to participate in their annual Bootcamp. The Bootcamp aims to expose students to Social Impact Investing.

These nine UNIVEN students include four Community Engagement Research Assistants – Tsakani Nyoni, Adebisayo Obasa, Unarine Ndou and Nthangeni Thakhani who were afforded an opportunity to participate following a rigorous interview process conducted by University Impact between 1st and the 3rd of June 2021 on Google Meets. The other UNIVEN postgraduate students were James Chapangara Mugabe, Gudani Mudau, Livhuwani Tshisevhe, Pelewe Mphephu and Ntiyiso Ally Mahlaule. The bootcamp was also attended by more than 50 other students from universities all over the world.

All attendees were divided into cohorts of about nine participants each, and each cohort was led by one or two mentors who are UI Associates. Daily activities included check-in sessions with their mentors,

guest speaker sessions on social impact and entrepreneurship, with other sessions focusing on different aspects of impact investing.

Guest speakers were experts like Tony Elvin, Sheryl Grant, Nicky Swartz, Todd Manwaring and other amazing speakers who shared their experiences in social impact and entrepreneurship and the importance of understanding a problem.

Different cohort mentors shared and encouraged the value of building and maintaining friendships that would go beyond the bootcamp and possibly collaborate on projects with students that shared similar interests.

A key feature of the bootcamp were the two projects which attendees had to complete within their groups. The first one was to conduct a due diligence for a grant application, while in the second project the attendees conducted a due diligence for a debt/ loan application. The companies or organisations involved in each case were real companies that had applied for funding from UI. Both projects entailed drafting a "Lay of the Land" and culminated in a Grant Memo and Debt Memo respectively. Each group then presented their memo to members of UI's Investment Committee recommending whether to award the grant/ debt and the reasons for the decision. In addition to learning how to conduct due diligence, students also learnt the value of teamwork. Some of the key lessons highlighted by the students were that they have learnt to look at a problem differently while some expressed that: "Understanding a problem takes time, and to solve it, one must fully understand it and love it enough".

One student shared that from the classes and meetings they had, they have learnt that persistence is very important. "I am grateful to Prof Netshandama because some of the things I was learning are life lessons that she tries to instill in us daily".

Another student added that, "The sessions were fruitful, I was encouraged to think creatively, to not complain if things are not going my way but rather have a positive mindset, to be disciplined, and work hard and to not listen to negative thoughts from within and from other people."

Even though some of the meetings were overwhelming because it was one after another with a little time to break, all the classes and meetings were very insightful and informative. There was always something new to learn in each class. Some of the classes were difficult to grasp as they related to content which was completely new. Other times, the speakers tried to squeeze a lot of content in a short space of time. In instances where the content of the lesson was accounting, one would have to continue learning and understanding the concepts beyond the class, through tutorials from classmates.

Key lessons from the bootcamp are: "to be a successful social entrepreneur, one must communicate, connect, collaborate and build up the community. This also means that one must step out of the comfort zone and be willing to serve the community." Students reflected on "the best time to chase your dreams is now", the time we have now is a gift that we ought to use wisely. One of the speakers had shared that FEAR is just false evidence appearing real, one needs to believe in their capabilities and start working

towards their goals. This speaker continued to explain that, everyday a person must wake up with an intention and most importantly one must pay attention to how they think because it can either destroy or build.

Students acknowledged the assistance of Dr Robert Martin (University of Venda, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Services), Prof. Vhonani Netshandama (University of Venda, Community Engagement Director), Ms J. Nicholson (University Impact, Managing Director), Mr D. Blake (University Impact, Managing Director), Ms C. Torrington (University Impact, Investment Associate) and Ms K. Detering (University Impact, Investment Associate).

"to be a successful social entrepreneur, one must communicate, connect, collaborate and build up the community. This also means that one must step out of the comfort zone and be willing to serve the community."



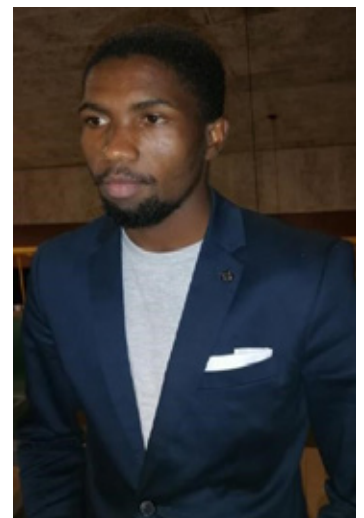
Tsakani Nyoni



Adebisayo Obasa



Thakhani Nthangeni



Unarine Ndou

Pictured above are Four of the nine (09) participated UNIVEN students

"the best time to chase your dreams is now"

UNIVEN Chancellor, Advocate Mojanku Gumbi is among a panel of experts that will examine all aspects of the Country's security response



UNIVEN Chancellor, Adv Mojanku Gumbi

During his Cabinet reshuffle speech in the evening of Thursday, 05 August 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa said, as part of the critical measures that the South African government is undertaking to strengthen its security services and to prevent a recurrence of recent events in some parts of the country, he has appointed a panel of experts to lead a thorough and critical review of the country's preparedness and the shortcomings in the government's response. The University of Venda (UNIVEN) Chancellor, Advocate Mojanku Gumbi is among a panel of experts that will examine all aspects of the Country's security response. He mentioned that the panel will examine all aspects of the country's security response and will make recommendations on strengthening the country's capabilities.

Advocate Mojanku Gumbi is a human rights lawyer, who has worked as both an Attorney and Advocate and has over 30 years of experience in private practice, public policy development and African conflict resolution.

She holds Law degrees from the University of Limpopo (former University of the North) and the University of Witwatersrand, as well as a certificate in Trial Advocacy from the University of Texas in Austin.

Advocate Gumbi acted as the Head of the Adjudication Secretariat of the Independent Electoral Commission during South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994.

She was the Special Advisor to South African

President Thabo Mbeki from 1999 to 2008. From 1994 to 1999, she was an Advisor to the then Deputy President Mbeki in the Mandela administration. During this time, she spearheaded South Africa's economic diplomacy, ensuring a global presence for South African companies, as well as peace-making initiatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Lesotho, Somalia, the Balkans and the Middle East. At the same time, she also provided advice to the Presidential Office on domestic policy issues including the reform of the local healthcare industry, the expansion of South African telecoms operators to the rest of Africa and the world, banking and mining sector reforms.

Advocate Gumbi serves and has served on the boards of many companies, trusts and philanthropic foundations, including the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, the Open Society Foundation, the Southern African Political and Economic Trust, the Black Lawyers Association, and the Thabo Mbeki Foundation.

She also served on the Councils of the former University of the North (now the University of Limpopo) and the former Technikon of the Witwatersrand (which merged with the former Rand Afrikaans University in 2005 to form the University of Johannesburg).

The University of Venda Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni when congratulating the UNIVEN Chancellor said

"This is indeed a great opportunity. I know you've worked hard to reach this point, and I'm so happy that you've been recognised for your accomplishment with this significant assignment. With your vast experience and expertise, I am confident that you'll rise to the occasion. Congratulations on your new position.

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UNIVEN Alumni makes it to the top 20 FAMELAB 2021 competition



Dr Oluwatoyin Onipe is one of the top 20 semi-finalists who will participate in the national competition on 28 September 2021. She entered the competition under the title: 'Oil uptake reduction in magwinya'. A Masterclass in science communication and public speaking is presented before the semi-finals by a trainer brought in from the UK by the British Council. The top ten from the semi-finals will compete at the national finals on 06 October 2021 and the winner of FameLab SA will represent South Africa on a global stage at the international finals.

FameLab is a programme that aims to develop science communication skills, specifically public speaking skills, in young scientists. While it takes the format of a competition, it is primarily a development initiative. For many participants, it is their first exposure to science communication

and presenting to a public audience outside their science community. The first phase of the competition involved the running of heats across the country, some of which are open heats, and some are run specifically by science institutions for their students and young researchers. Each heat is preceded by a science communication workshop. From each heat, one or two speakers are selected to go through to the semi-finals.

The Northern regional heat/ competition was held on 17 February 2021 with researchers from the Universities of Venda and Limpopo.

UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni congratulated Dr Onipe for making it to the top 20 in the FAMELAB 2021 competition and wished her best of luck as she proceeds to the next round of the competition.

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Sol Plaatje University task team visits UNIVEN for benchmarking

On Tuesday, 24 August 2021 the University of Venda (UNIVEN) Executive and Senior Managers led by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni met with a task team from Sol Plaatje University (SPU). The delegation from SPU comprised of Mr Themba Dingindlela (Director Facilities and Services); Ms Faith Nkonyane (Senior Manager: Residences) and Mr Mbokodo Mbatha (Manager: Residences).

A key aspect of this visit was to learn what UNIVEN is currently doing in areas of services and security and to share with UNIVEN any progress SPU has made.



When welcoming the delegation from SPU, Dr Nthambeleni shared with them several projects that the University has accomplished to date. He thanked DHET and UNIVEN Council for the support they are offering to address the challenges in terms of the infrastructure. Dr Nthambeleni highlighted that UNIVEN is still under construction. Hence, there are projects that

the University continues to brag about, such as the distribution of tablets to first entering students and being the first University in the country to use facial recognition on campus.



SPU's Director Facilities and Services, Mr Themba Dingindlela said Sol Plaatje University (SPU) is currently looking at a review of its security and services models with a view of introducing more efficiencies around cost savings. "We want to see how other institutions are doing in terms of catering, security, student residences, facility and protection services", says Mr Dingindlela.

He had a chance to speak to the leadership of UNIVEN, managers and members of operational teams in the areas of Protection Services; Student residences (on and off – campus); as well as University Facilities. Mr Dingindlela indicated that they were grateful to see UNIVEN willing to assist them in improving their systems and processes. He also shared historical background of SPU as one of the youngest universities in South Africa.



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin said we are excited to see SPU taking confidence in us for benchmarking with our institution.



The University Registrar, Adv Edward Lambani also indicated how UNIVEN used to look like before. He further indicated that UNIVEN has been doing a lot in terms of infrastructure development and in his concluding statement, he said that, currently, the University has state of art infrastructure and no longer looks like a secondary school.

"We want to see how other institutions are doing in terms of catering, security, student residences, facility and protection services",



UNIVEN and SPU members

UNIVEN conducts Entrepreneurial and Design Thinking Bootcamp



Dr Martin (Back Row-far right) posing for a group photo with attendees of the Entrepreneurial and Design Thinking Bootcamp.

Dr Robert Martin, DVC Corporate Services, recently conducted an Entrepreneurial and Design Thinking Bootcamp at the University of Venda (UNIVEN) Research Conference Centre. The main purpose of the Bootcamp was to show the benefits of applying design thinking methodology to infuse entrepreneurship in the curriculum.

The Bootcamp was attended by the Executive Deans, newly appointed Director IPQA and some Academics.

As part of UNIVEN's Community Engagement drive, the newly appointed Local Economic Development Champions, appointed under the Department of Science and Technology funded IC4LED Project, led by Prof Joseph

Francis were also invited to participate.

Dr Patience Sannah Mativandela, Director Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance (IPQA) said that the Entrepreneurship and Design Thinking workshop was key on redefining problems to get into solutions, also revitalisation of an academic scope of teaching, learning and community engagement to come up with actionable solutions more especially putting students at the centre as the main clients and end users. Using the steps - empathy, defining, forming ideas, prototyping, and testing. She said these design thinking tools are great for curriculum development, enhancement and for change. "The activities done on day 2

incorporated the design thinking systematic processes to help tracking and measuring progress and outcomes. At the same time, from a qualitative perspective entrepreneurial educational programmes will help to develop or improve students' entrepreneurial skills (personal characteristics, creativity, problem-solving, self-confidence and collaboration, etc.)."

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane highlighted that it became evident that the bootcamp was not a contestation of ideas but a fertile ground to trigger entrepreneurial thinking for our teaching and learning. He mentioned that the

camp helped them to plot an entrepreneurial curriculum to reaffirm the University as the first choice by prospective students. "What mattered most was to translate that plot into dynamic graphic that is not only understood but also applied in real-time. The camp has a potential to be replicated as a prototype in faculties to attract more attention and actionable entrepreneurial ideation from broader faculty community".

The Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Prof Tshilidzi Mulaudzi expressed that every time when she conducts orientation for first entering students, she always makes sure that they are informed about the kind of graduates that the University aspires to produce. She told attendees that when reviewing the modules, "evaluate how many modules are informed by research of not more than three (3) years old. Preparation of the following year's registration must be planned and be ready by October of the year preceding registration (Module outline, study guides, assignments, and tests dates, etc). They must be uploaded and be available for students upon registration. In this way the entrepreneurial characteristics come into place."

When explaining his experience after the bootcamp, the Innovation Champion IC4LED Project, Mr Rudzani Bernard Mamphweli said that the entrepreneurship and design thinking bootcamp enhanced his understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship. "I am excited about the journey that the University is taking to create an entrepreneurial infused curriculum." Mr Mamphweli further explained that, as an Innovation Champion for Local Economic Development, he intends to apply the elements of design thinking when integrating innovation into LED practices.



Group presentations



University of Venda

Creating Future Leaders

2022 UNIVERSITY OF VENDA ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION AND HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION ARE NOW OPEN

Students who intend to enrol for programmes of their choice with the University of Venda in the 2022 academic year, are hereby informed that **ONLINE** applications for admission and hostel accommodation are now open as from 20 July 2021 and the closing date is Tuesday, 28 September 2021.

Prospective students are encouraged to apply on or before the closing date to avoid frustration in 2022.

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

ALL APPLICATION ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO STUDENT ADMINISTRATION:

Undergraduate:	Email: undergraduateadmission1@univen.ac.za	Phone: 015 962 8959
	Email: undergraduateadmission2@univen.ac.za	Phone: 015 962 8953
	Email: undergraduateadmission3@univen.ac.za	Phone: 015 962 8974
Postgraduate:	Email: postgraduate.admission@univen.ac.za	Phone: 015 962 8882 / 015 962 8954
International Students:	Email: international.admissions@univen.ac.za	Phone: 015 962 9347 / 015 962 9348

UNIVEN Subscribes to a Service Called Tip-offs Anonymous

One of the key obstacles faced in the fight against corruption is the fact that individuals are often too intimidated to speak out on corrupt and unlawful activities they observe occurring in the workplace. Those who do stick their necks out are victimised and intimidated. The fear of being labelled a "troublemaker" and appearing disloyal to colleagues are powerful deterrents to speaking up. However, UNIVEN subscribes to a service called Tip-offs Anonymous.

Tip-offs Anonymous provides you with an opportunity to report any unethical activity and dishonest behaviour anonymously. What is the purpose of anonymity? It affords you protection against victimisation, intimidation and being oppressed. Anonymity is essential for the atmosphere of trust; openness and a firm assurance of confidentiality is imperative in order for a service like Tip-offs Anonymous to be a success.

Important tips to remember when using Tip-offs Anonymous hotline:

- **Avoid calling Tip-offs Anonymous from your telephone extension at work.**
- **We do not recommend using your office e-mail if you send Tip-offs Anonymous an e-mail.**
- **Do not tell anyone in your organisation about any communication you have made with Tip-offs Anonymous.**

Under no circumstances will the Tip-offs Anonymous report reveal the identity of the person who provided the information.

Don't support wrongdoing, report it to Tip-offs Anonymous and your anonymity is guaranteed!

Tip-offs Anonymous Contact Details:

FreeCall: 0800 212 755

Free Fax: 0800 00 77 88

E-mail: univenhotline@tip-offs.com

Website: www.tip-offs.com

Deloitte.

We would like to hear from you!

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Main Administration Building
University of Venda

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

**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.