



Univen nGAP Lecturer and PhD candidate receives the Soil Science Society of South Africa award

Ms Siphwe Lusiba, an nGAP Lecturer and PhD candidate in the Department of Soil Science at the University of Venda (UNIVEN) received an award from the Soil Science Society of South Africa (SSSSA) for best paper presented in the soil fertility session. She received this award during the 2019 annual Combined Congress that was jointly organised by the Southern African Society for Horticultural Sciences (SASHS), the South African Society for Crop Production (SASCP), the Southern African Weed Science Society (SAWSS) and the Soil Science Society of South Africa (SSSSA). The congress was held at the University of Free State in Bloemfontein from 21-24 January 2019. The annual Combined Congress was held under the theme "A dynamic environment moulds the future".



Ms Siphwe Lusiba being congratulated by Mr Kobus Anderson, a Council member of the Soil Science Society of South Africa (SSSSA).



Ms Siphwe Lusiba (Middle) with the promoter, Prof JJO Odihambo (Univen) on her right side and co-promoter Prof R Adeleke (University of North West) on the left.

The award comprised of a framed certificate, a medal and cash prize that were handed to her during the gala dinner on the final evening of the congress. The Department of Soil Science and Plant Production congratulated Ms Lusiba for representing the School of Agriculture, as this is her second award from the Society. She received the best poster award during the 2015 Combined Congress that was held in George.

The congress was attended by more than 300 delegates from public institutions and private sector across the country. Presentations included oral and poster sessions of which hundred and thirty (130) delegates presented oral and ninety-eight (98) delegates presented posters in four concurrent sessions. The Combined Congress was graced by the presence of Prof. Danie Vermeulen, Dean of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (UFS), who

delivered a keynote address and eminent scholars in the field of horticulture; Prof Umezuruike Opara (SASHS), Soil Science; Prof Rattan Lal (SSSSA), crop production; Mrs Desiree van Heerden (SASCP) and weed science Mr Leonard Oberholzer (SAWSS).

The Univen was represented by a delegation of three postgraduate students, one fourth year student, and three staff members. The congress had concurrent sessions that included crop modelling, hort physiology, soil fertility, weeds, crop Agrometeorology, Hort Production/Cultivation Practices, Soil Physics, Hort Indigenous/ Medical Plants/ Crop Protection/ Rural Development, Hort Physiology, Soil Biology, Hort Nutrition / Water Management/ Production Practices/ Hort Post-Harvest, Soil Biology, Soil Physics, Soil Genesis/ Classification and Mapping, Hort Indigenous/ Medical Plants and Soil Technology.

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"A dynamic environment moulds the future"

Univen and the Evangelische Lutheran University of Applied Sciences sign Memorandum of Understanding

The University of Venda participated in a joint summer school at the Evangelische Hochschule (Lutheran University of Applied Sciences), Nuremberg. The Lutheran University of Applied Sciences and UNIVEN have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which included joint summer school and exchange of staff and students. Four students from various departments and two staff members attended the summer school on: "Violence and Violence Prevention in South Africa and Germany." The workshop took place from 02 to 07 December 2018 in Nuremberg.



Dr Allan Mabasa and Prof Vhonani Netshandama with colleagues from Nuremberg

The call for applications was opened on UNIVEN website for interested students to apply. The four students were selected based on merit and their previous involvement with the theme of the workshop. The Selection was jointly facilitated by the Community Engagement and International Relations Directorates. The programme was jointly funded by the Lutheran University of Applied Sciences, Community Engagement and International Relations Directorates.



UNIVEN students in Nuremberg: Mr Tshedza Sikhwari, Ms Michelle Ramugondo, Mr Wisani Nwankoti and Ms Dimphoo Mashile

The Evangelische Hochschule is a Christian university, with a Christian culture and perspectives. However, students from other religions are welcome to study at the University. UNIVEN delegation was welcomed to Nuremberg by Dr Helene Frau Wagner, Deputy Vice-Chancellor International Relations. The UNIVEN team also met with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Städtler-Mach during one of the seminars. The team visited Beratungsstelle des Frauenhauses, Frauenholzstr, which was an NGO that offers accommodation and shelter to the abused women and children and shelters people who live in the streets.



Participants at the Documentation Centre of Nazi Party Rally Grounds

The summer school focused on deliberative dialogue about community-based violence and prevention in South Africa and Germany. The study trip included several field visits for academic purpose at non-government institutions, NPOs and Historical monuments. It focused on sessions such as intervention for violence against women, inter cultural learning, Ubuntu to Martin Buber and violence prevention in South African and German schools. The programme contained presentations by students and professors from both universities, public seminars, and site visits. The team which was led by Prof Vhonani Netshandama, Director Community Engagement comprised of Ms Mashile Dimphoo, Master's student, Human Resource Management; Ms Ramugondo Michelle, Master's student, African studies; Mr Sikhwari Tshedza, Master's student, International Relations; Mr Nwankoti Wisani, Master's student, African Studies and Dr Mabasa Allan who is a Lecturer in the Department Social work.

The students visited the Documentation Centre of Nazi Party Rally Grounds where they learnt the way Nazi Party conducted violence against the Jews and how the global world retaliated to the formation of World War Two. They learnt that Language is a powerful weapon that promote violence.

The participants acquired variety of skills and learnt a lot with regards to the German cultures. They learnt how to interact and live with people of different cultural backgrounds. They learnt the importance of time management and punctuality as they noticed that Germans are always punctual. The deliberative dialogue between UNIVEN and German Students was very productive. Students managed to interact and share various sentiments on the prevention of violence in South Africa and Germany.



Some of the participants at the Summer School

UNIVEN and the University of Amsterdam (UvA) students collaborate in undergraduate research projects



Dr Yves van Leynseele (left) and Prof Vhonani Netshandama (right)

Through the collaborative effort between Dr Yves van Leynseele, a Lecturer at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands and Professor Vhonani Netshandama, Director Community Engagement, 34 students (17 students studying towards the Bachelor programmes in Regional and Urban Planning and Human Geography from the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and 17 University of Venda (UNIVEN) students from across disciplines, conducted community-based research covering four themes. This collaboration was titled 'Small Enterprise Development, Food Security and Land Usage in Vhembe' and took place between 20 and 29 January 2019.

The themes that were covered included the effects of Supermarketisation on Spaza shops (Tuck shops) in Vhembe; Buying fruits at Tshakhuma Fruit market: An exploratory research on decisions of fruit purchasing; Rural Versus Peri- Urban Food Security; Research on food security in peri-urban and rural areas of the Vhembe District in the Limpopo province in South Africa; Land use and land production.



Participants posing for a photo with Prof Netshandama (far left)

Both student groups were grateful for the opportunities. They improved their skills for designing and conducting independent field-based research and showed the ability to collaborate with their peers on synthesizing and presenting key findings. The two coordinating lecturers are committed to organising this joint research practical again in the next academic year.



Teams comprising of students were provided platforms and support to work together to elaborate and improve their research proposals and plans, collect data, analyse and prepare reports and PowerPoint presentations for assessment.

Amongst others, students were evaluated on the basics of applying research process, and transversal skills such as: Effective communication, Problem analysis; Team work, collaboration, cooperation, problem solving and critical thinking.

After 10 days, students reflected on the lessons learnt and gave recommendations for future research themes.

The following are some of the feedback received from UNIVEN students who participated in the programme:

"Students expressed that, "there was teamwork, during time of work, they would do that together, if it was time to play and refresh, they would do that together as well. Some said that they benefited from their style of approach to research, they highlighted that it was a great experience for them. "I got an exposure of analysing DATA using SPSS and I have also learned a little bit of Dutch language and other cultural lifestyle of Netherlands, moreover I have created friendship with them whereby we will still exchange research ideas or skills." Others explained the collaboration to be fruitful



because through this collaboration, they have distinguished that research approaches of the Netherlands and South Africa are comparable.

"I felt privileged to be part of the research project and interact with other students from different spheres of learning both the UNIVEN and UvA students. Other experiences included interactions with community members from different areas in the Vhembe district which allowed students an opportunity to improve their communication skills and to learn more about food security in this area.

"I am now more aware of the things in my own community that I took for granted and my research skills have also improved and as

a young researcher I believe an incorporation of my research skills and the ones I learnt will make me a successful researcher in the near future."

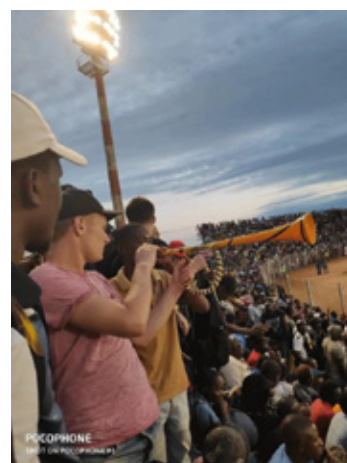
Some said there were many areas in which they have learnt from this project and expressed that it was interesting because they have also imparted knowledge between UNIVEN and UvA students as well, including the communities they engaged with. "From the first day I had a privilege to interact with other students both from UvA and UNIVEN. I had a chance to learn more about the Venda culture and the type of food they eat. I also learnt how principled the Dutch are."



Some of students who participated in the research projects posing for a photo



Other group that participated in the research projects posing for a photo



Students watching soccer at Thohoyandou Stadium between Black Leopards and Orlando Pirates

Univen BSc student scoops 2019 SAAB Award



Mr Dakalo Muthogo (middle) being congratulated by the SAAB President Prof Paul Hills (Stellenbosch University) and the Co-Chair of the Local Organizing Committee Prof Annah Moteetee (University of Johannesburg) after receiving his award during the Gala Dinner

The Department of Botany in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences participated in the Joint Congress of the 45th Annual South African Association of Botanists (SAAB). The congress was held at the University of Johannesburg from 08 to 12 January 2019. The 2019 SAAB conference was a joint conference held in association with the African Mycology Association (AMA) and the Southern African Society for Systematic Biology (SASSB).

During this annual conference, Mr Dakalo Muthogo, a University of Venda (Univen) BSc Honours student in the Department of Botany has received an award for the Best Poster in Ecology/Plant Conservation session. His award is comprised of a certificate and cash that were handed to him during the gala dinner on the final evening of the conference. The Department of Botany highly appreciated the award that reflects what they strive for, that is to create future leaders even in research.

Univen was represented by a delegation of 11 postgraduate students and three staff members. Some of the students presented their research work orally while others presented their posters. The conference had several sessions that included Invasion Biology, Ecology/Plant Conservation, Ecophysiology/Physiology/Biotechnology, Mycology, Systematics/Taxonomy, and Ethnobotany/Medicinal Plants.

The conference was well attended by delegations from universities across the country. It was also graced by the delivery of plenary lectures from international eminent scholars in the field of plant sciences like Prof Pieter Baas (Leiden University), Prof Jeff Doyle (Cornell University), Prof Luke Harmon (University of Idaho), and Prof Elisabeth Wheeler (North Carolina State University).



University of Venda SAAB 2019 delegation

Univen Chemistry PhD student crowned the best poster presenter during the SACI Conference

Thirteen postgraduate students from the University of Venda (Univen) presented posters during the 43rd South African Chemical Institute (SACI) Conference that took place in Pretoria from 02 to 07 December 2018. This conference was organized on behalf of SACI by SACI Northern Region comprising of the following institutions; University of Venda, University of Limpopo, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University,

Tshwane University of Technology, University of Pretoria, CSIR and NECSA. During this conference, Ms Humbelani Netshifhefhe, a Univen PhD student in Chemistry was announced as the best poster presenter and walked away with the Best Poster Award.

The conference was graced by a total of 324 delegates coming from no less than fifteen nationalities, among these were

delegates from Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Malawi, and many more. 144 poster presentations were delivered at this conference. Out of 174 delegates who registered as students, 56% were women while 44% were men.

Ms Dakalo Mugwena, Ms Dorcas Tlhipi, Ms Anita Nkuna, Ms Nani Tshilande and Mr Raymond Tshiluka also represented Univen at the conference by giving oral presentations. The conference was also attended by the 2016 Nobel Prize winner in chemistry, Sir Fraser Stoddard who gave a lecture titled 'Serendipity Stokes Discovery, disrupting established industries.'



Ms Humbelani Netshifhefhe receiving the best poster award



Mr Raymond Tshiluka (left) and Ms Dorcas Tlhipi (right) giving their oral presentations



Univen delegates who attended the SACI conference posing for a group photo

UNIVEN participates in EXAKT4YOU innovative workshop

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted the EXAKT4YOU BarCamp and Hackathon Challenge from 18 – 22 February 2019 at Porche Villa Hotel and Conference Centre, Muledane. EXAKT4YOU is a project funded by Baden-Württemberg Foundation. The following are partners on the project: Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg (DHBW) Heidenheim, Germany, Nelson Mandela African Institution for Science and Technology (NMAIST), Arusha and the Institute for Finance Management (IFM), Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Prof Sabine Moebs the project coordinator from DHBW, Germany was present during the workshop.



Dr Ndanduleni Bernard Nthambeleni, Vice-Chancellor and Principal delivering his welcome speech

The workshop was declared open by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Ndanduleni Bernard Nthambeleni. In his welcome speech, he reiterated that the University is in support of the effort in providing opportunities for our students and staff. The Vice Chancellor applauded the project and highlighted the necessity of such projects in enhancing and empowering the UNIVEN community.

"I learnt that two UNIVEN students were on a semester exchange programme to DHBW, Germany last year on International Business programme. Another PhD student will be leaving in June 2019 for another programme in Germany. Three of your students from DHBW will be hosted from July to December 2019 for one semester exchange programme in the School of Management Sciences. These are very exciting development for us and we strongly believe in expanding our agreement even further to other Schools and departments", he said.

He encouraged the participants to make the best use of the opportunity and participate fully. The Workshop kicked off on Saturday 16 February 2019 at the UNIVEN Research Conference Centre during a special opening ceremony which featured entertainment by the UNIVEN Arts and Culture Society. The opening was followed by a tour of Thohoyandou and Sibasa. The participants also went to the Kruger National Park on Sunday, 17 February 2019.



Prof Dr. Sabine Moebs, EXAKT4YOU project coordinator, DHBW, Germany



The workshop also had two special lectures on: 'Production of purification system for vaccines in Africa' by Mr Alessandra Kitschmann and Prof Nico Blessing and 'Business Planning, What is it and how to write it?' by Prof Sabine Moebs.

This one-week staff and student innovation workshop focused on solar power, water power and medical devices in rural areas. Participants presented and promoted the use of mobile technologies in Africa, technologies to support doctors, nurses and care giving family members, the conservation and digitalisation of rural power supply. During the BarCamp and Hackathon students worked in international and interdisciplinary teams for the whole period. Subsequently they presented their results which were either an applicable solution or a workable prototype and depending on the subject, results were either newly-developed software, a device, a machine etc.

Some of the outcome of the one-week staff and student innovation workshops between Germany, Tanzania and South Africa included digitalisation in the area of Health, Solar heater, strategy to bring back doctors to rural areas, and an online health donor application.

One of the ideas by a UNIVEN student Nohlanhla Somhlahlhlo a first year BSc student who collaborated with Mr Streif Jan-Marco a Mechanical Engineering student from DHBW on a parabolic solar cooker/heater won the first position in the hackathon challenge. The workshop was organized by the UNIVEN Directorate of International Relations with support from Baden-Wuerttemberg Foundation. The Steering Committee meeting (SCM) agreed that the next workshop will be held at the Institute for Finance Management (IFM), Tanzania, in the second semester 2019.



Participants at the workshop pose for group photo with the Vice chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Dr Ndanduleni Bernard Nthambeleni.

#EXAKT4YOU

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New Director of Univen's Department of Information and Communication Technology



The University of Venda has appointed Mr Sam Khoza as the Director Information and Communication Technology with effect from 01 February 2019. Before joining UNIVEN, Sam Khoza worked as Group ICT Manager at Foskor overseeing the ICT department, Director: Cooperate Information Management at the City of Tshwane, Director: ICT Architecture and Integration

at the Department of Public Service and Administration. He also worked in various Government Departments including the following: Land Affairs, Housing, Minerals and Energy. Mr Khoza obtained his Master's degree in Information Technology from the University of Pretoria 2004.

The University of Venda welcomes Mr Khoza in this challenging position.

UCLL, Belgium exchange students arrive at UNIVEN



The University of Venda (UNIVEN) received an exchange student from the University College of Leuven-Limburg (UCLL), Belgium who arrived on 7 February 2019. He will participate in one semester exchange programme with the Department of Food Science and Technology, School of Agriculture. Mr Lucas Frans-Matthias, undergraduate and third year student from UCLL, Diepenbeek, Belgium will be working under the supervision of Prof Afam Jideani, in the Department of Food Science and Technology from 7 February – 30 June 2019.

Also, UNIVEN received on 13 February 2019 the following students: Ms Lydia Ciola, Ms Jessie Terium and Ms Jade Bernaerts

from the Faculty of Teachers' Education from UCLL, Belgium. The students will be conducting their teaching practice at the Tshishonga Primary School, Thohoyandou until 15 May 2019 under the mentorship of Prof Mudzielwana, Dr Shonisani Mulovhedzi and Mrs Rendani Makhwathana from Department of Early Childhood Education. The students were welcomed to the University by the Directorate of International Relations. The collaboration between UNIVEN and UCLL Belgium, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Belgium Campus, Pretoria started in 2011, and it has grown in leaps and bounds over the years.

Linnaeus University, Sweden exchange students arrive



Exchange students from the Linnaeus University, Sweden arrived on 23 February 2019 for their programme at the Department of Advanced Nursing under the supervision of Ms Friddah Mathevuhla. The students are Edith Berg and Johanna Gustafsson Vragard from the Institute of Health and Welfare Science, Linnaeus University, Belgium.

The students will be working at the clinic in Thohoyandou for the next 6 weeks. UNIVEN have renewed the existing MoU with the Linnaeus University which covers staff and student exchange and joint projects. Our students and staff from the Advanced Nursing Department have participated in the similar exchange programme in 2017 and 2018.

A new Director Community Engagement has been appointed for the next 5 years



The University of Venda has appointed Professor Vhonani Olive Netshandama as a Director Community Engagement with effect from 01 January 2019. Professor Netshandama is a trained mental health nurse and the first Director of Community Engagement (CE) at UNIVEN, since 2009. During the first five years, she facilitated the community engagement policy and strategy, launched several CE programmes and coordinated some from respective schools. She initiated and nurtured several IKS programmes and has been instrumental in LGBTIQ research and advocacy at UNIVEN with collaborators from other universities.

In the subsequent years, Professor Netshandama focused on capacity development and on CE oriented scholarship and educational experiences for undergraduate students, including international exposure. Professor Netshandama is the 2016 winner of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Distinguished Woman in Science award. She continues to mentor junior staff members and students, particularly women and girls at UNIVEN and beyond. Students organisations under her mentorship include ENACTUS, Vhamaandafhadzi, SheReings, etc. She is active in Transdisciplinary post graduate supervision and continue to provide experiences and support undergraduate student leadership development and critical cross-fields competency such as problem solving, critical thinking, team work, etc. She is currently awarded an NRF grant to develop a programme to develop a socially entrepreneurial and innovative culture at UNIVEN and THOHoyANDOU town. She is currently the Deputy Chair of South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF): An organisation representative of university staff responsible for a broad typology of community engagement expressions in Higher Education.

Professor Netshandama is grateful to the collaborative effort of colleagues and students at UNIVEN and is looking forward to a rejuvenating 2019 and beyond.

Univen's Human Resources Department has a new Director



The University of Venda has appointed Mrs Uanda Ndou as new Director of the Department of Human Resources with effect from 01 February 2019.

Before joining UNIVEN, Mrs Ndou worked as HR Executive for the Nyavi Nyavi Group, HR Head for FNB Connect, FNB Loans and FNB Core Technology Solutions.

She also worked for Anglo American Platinum, Gauteng Department of Finance, Gauteng Department of Health and Lifeline SA, University of Pretoria Centre for the study of AIDS. Mrs Ndou holds a Master's degree in Industrial Psychology from Potchefstroom University (currently North West University). She is registered with the following professional bodies: SABPP, HPCSA and COMENSA.

UNIVEN hosts Visiting Scholar from Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe

Dr Chrispen Murungweni, Senior Lecturer and the Director Livestock Research, Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe is visiting the School of Agriculture, University of Venda (UNIVEN) for his contact leave from 10 February – 4 March 2019. He was placed in the Institute for Rural Development (IRD), working with Prof Joseph Francis, Director IRD. He met colleagues in the Department of Animal Science and paid a visit to the Teaching and experimental farm at the School during the period. It is strongly believed that his experience in student placement as a Coordinator would help reshape Work Integrated Learning (WIL) across all Departments.

The Director International Relations welcomed and introduced him to the Institute on his arrival. It is hoped that he will be instrumental in the process of renewing the existing MoU, cement a community-engaged research programme, write joint proposals with colleagues in the School and develop programme on how to actualise a travelling seminar with his university in the new year.

We would like to hear from you!
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