



# Vice-Chancellor and Principal declares 2020 Academic year officially open

The University of Venda Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni officially opened the 2020 academic year during the ceremony which took place on Thursday 06 February 2020 in the Auditorium.

"Your academic journey has just begun, the progress of completing your studies and courses you have chosen would largely depend on how you conduct yourself. Always remember that, the prize of success is hard work and dedication," said the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni.

He welcomed UNIVEN class of 2020 and recognised the 2019/2020 SRC leadership. "I am particularly impressed with the calibre of the young men and women who represent you in the SRC." He mentioned that the UNIVEN SRC leadership has demonstrated a good level of understanding and maturity in handling difficult issues and dealing with serious challenges facing the higher education system. "As University management, we are committed to work with the SRC and University staff in general to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning."



Dr Nthambeleni further told new students that success in life does not come easy. "All your dreams can come true, if you have the courage to pursue them. You have now become the sole author of the next chapters of your story. You have the opportunity to determine the direction and the pace at which your story should go." He encouraged first year students to make a vow to themselves that they are going to complete their studies within the minimum stipulated time for their respective degrees because most of them have passed Matric with good grades. "We expect you to do very well in your chosen fields of study." Dr Nthambeleni told students and staff to make UNIVEN proud through their contributions, especially by being hard working, innovative, and ethical in their conduct.



UNIVEN students and staff members listening to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Nthambeleni during the Official Opening of 2020 Academic Year

Dr Nthambeleni also spoke about the issues regarding infrastructure. He indicated that there are several infrastructure and maintenance work that are currently underway on campus. He said these infrastructural projects are meant to provide much-needed facilities for student accommodation, teaching and learning spaces for staff and students. "We managed to complete a number of infrastructure in 2019." He further encouraged students to take good care of the University's facilities entrusted to them.

He concluded his opening address by informing the audience that, last year (2019), UNIVEN bid farewell to its 2014-2019 Council. The University is in the process of constituting a new Council and related governance structures.

"As some of you might be aware, the term of our Chancellor, the former President of the Republic, Hon Kgalema Motlanthe, also came to end last year and we are currently in the process of replacing him." He thanked the Hon Kgalema Motlanthe for his selfless service to this University. "We will in the right time prepare a befitting farewell function for him."

**"Always remember that, the prize of success is hard work and dedication"**

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# UNIVEN warmly welcomes first entering students



Some of the first entering students listening to speakers during the Official Opening of the 2020 Orientation

On Monday, 03 February 2020, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) held its Official Opening of the 2020 Orientation Programme to ease the transition and familiarise first entering students with Campus and University life. The Official Opening of Orientation took place in the University Auditorium.



In his official opening address, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Prof Jan Crafford said that this is one of the most important days for the University to welcome students who will be with the University for the coming three (3) to four (4) years, except if they will be doing their postgraduate degrees here at UNIVEN.

"You have successfully passed your matric and you are now members of a selected group of the South African population that only contributes less than five percent of the population of the country. It is therefore important to remind you that the University has only one source of income, which is student fees which are being paid by either NSFAS, sponsors, family members or bursaries. However, there is a government subsidy where the University gets a certain amount of money for enrolling a certain percentage of students while another percentage of money is given when students complete their studies on time." Prof Crafford further advised students to make use of the services offered at UNIVEN because a large amount of money has been invested in the education system to ensure that they get such services. He welcomed first time entering students to UNIVEN and wished them well in their academic journey.



In his welcome remarks, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Operations, Dr Robert Martin said UNIVEN prides itself with a good service that it offers to its students and for delivering its mandate of teaching and learning, research and community engagement in a professional manner, not only for South Africans but also for students from other countries. Dr Martin advised first time entering students not to stay at the UNIVEN for 10 to 15 years before they could complete their studies. "Make use of the services available to assist you to complete your studies within stipulated time."



Mr Gift Chauke, UNIVEN SRC President advised first time entering students to always remember the reason why they came to the University. Mr Chauke further encouraged them to know where they are coming from and to make sure that they change the situations at their respective homes. He further advised students to take their studies serious because that is what they are here for. "Our purpose as SRC is to assist you with everything that you need, use all services available." He welcomed first year students to the University and wished them well in their studies.



Rolivhuwa Tshivhase, 18 years old first entering student of Bachelor of Science in Biokinetics said the Orientation programme was very informative because he has learnt a lot about UNIVEN and the services that are available for the benefit of all students.

"I have also learned about how to conduct ourselves when we are away from parents and guardians."

Other speakers who spoke during the Official Opening of the 2020 Orientation include:

Dr Segun Obadire: Acting Director International Relations; Prof Nancy Mutshaeni, Director: Center for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL); Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo, Director: Student Affairs; Advocate Eric Nemukula, Manager: Labour Relations from the Directorate of Legal Services; Mr Elex Moatshe, CEO of Elex Academic Bookstore; Mr Benji Ngobeni, Head of Financial Aid and Reporting; Prof Vhonani Netshandama, Director: Community Engagement and Mrs Mushoni Mulaudzi, Director: Library Services.

The Official Opening of the 2020 Orientation was followed by Schools specific Orientation programme which will be taking place until Wednesday, 05 February 2020.

*Below are pictures of other speakers:*





# Five UNIVEN students participated at the Impact Africa Social Entrepreneurship Summit



Above L-R: Ndamuleleo Nelwamondo (Honours stats); Ishmael Irawa (PhD Rural Development; Professor Netshandama (Director Community Engagement and NRF grant holder on Student Social entrepreneurship development); Justice Mukwevhlo (BSc.) Lindokuhle Zwane (Honours African Studies) and Lutendo Mutengwe (Honours Accountancy).

The summit promoted partnerships to accelerate social innovations to Africa's most pressing challenges by inspiring and connecting social entrepreneurs, changemakers, investors, and other ecosystem stakeholders across Africa. The theme centred on Collaborative finance for social innovation and how to catalyse social innovation in Africa.

The summit, which was held at the Kenya Monetary School, Nairobi from 04 - 05 December 2019, drew speakers and delegates from across the world. Amongst others were government ministers, commissioners, directors and head of departments as well as directors and managers of private multinational companies and stakeholders from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

The objectives were twofold: Firstly, to discuss the future financing models for social innovation and secondly, a framework for social innovation.

We learnt a lot about the contradiction between enterprise potential funders and prospective/existing entrepreneurs. Whereas funders seem to have a lot to invest, there are limited innovations on one hand and apparent lack of funding on the other hand. Deliberations centred around establishing the missing link and African centred solutions. Standardization was another key discussion issue. Often, funders use foreign models to administer support to African entrepreneurs in Africa. The students were excited and indicated that they were grateful for the experiences. **Some of the key reflective points are as follows:**

- Thank you UNIVEN for such a great exposure. We wish more students could get more exposure and opportunities like this.
- We got an opportunity to see the bigger picture, to network and to understand

how social entrepreneurship and the flow of money works.

- We learnt a lot about the need for a collaborative spirit: like they said, "If you want to go fast, go alone but if you want to go far, then go with others". This is self-explanatory and a vital resource.
- We have to make opportunities and not wait for them to find us.
- I learnt not to take no for an answer and that I should keep pressing until I get to my goal.

## Top 5 lessons learnt at the summit that could be useful to other students:

- 1) Just because you are locally based does not mean you cannot think globally. You must always be ready for expansion outside your territory and venture to international grounds and partnerships.
- 2) It is important to do research about your line of business, know what you represent and the social impact that drives you thereof. There are so many businesses similar to yours out there, what value makes yours stand out?
- 3) If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. It is paramount to make collaborative partnerships because if we want to sustain the impact then no man can do it alone, we need each other for even greater social impact.
- 4) There are many funding opportunities and investors out there but is your enterprise funding ready? Your proposal needs to speak to the investors' objectives and have a clear profit-making plan of action.
- 5) Money does not come alone, it is guided by rules and principles that you can't change. Does your business enterprise have value for money?

## Further reflections

This whole summit was an eye opener for me because the topics that were discussed apply for both different organizations and institutions, including our University as an institution and the projects being run in the University. One of the lessons that stood out for me was the accountability and transparency topic which was discussed in one of the break-away sessions. Accountability and transparency are something that many organizations and institutions don't have. It will be a good thing for the University of Venda to revise its policies and emphasize on being accountable and taking responsibility for every objective, which could lead to good running of the institution and its projects, so says Lutendo.

Dedication is one of the key attitudes that people need to have when they are working towards achieving a greater goal, I picked this up when I had conversations with people who are part of both the British council as well as those that are Ashoka fellows. I was inspired by the amount of dedication they all put in towards making sure that the event becomes a success. To them it doesn't matter what kind of position they hold or what's in it for them, but all that matters is that the event must happen in a successful manner. To have this kind of spirit and zeal, is something that we also need to adopt, not only as the Community Engagement Directorate, but also at the entire University community, said Justice.

Some of the outstanding achievements that stood out for me from coca cola is their newly created program that aims to fund 5 000 women by 2020. The panel gave few recommendations, amongst others was that the education systems in both countries must introduce social entrepreneurship in schools and develop design thinking from young age.

Readiness of entrepreneurs to take advantage of funding opportunities was another thorny discussion. We learnt that an individual may have an innovative idea but fail to secure funding because it is not scalable, viable or sustainable.

It was also emphasized that before looking for funding, there is a need to make sure that the business plan has a market segment which is accessible.

Students heartily appreciated the opportunity and support from the University and wished for more students to get the experience they received. A special word of appreciation to the NRF for making the participatory research project on social entrepreneurship development possible under the facilitation of Professor Vhonani Netshandama. The summit was a great opportunity for enhancing the network and possibly fish for potential stakeholders or partners.



Cross session of the impact Africa Social Entrepreneurship 2019 summit delegates

# Increase in UNIVEN NRF Rated Researchers

In 2020, University of Venda (UNIVEN) has four newly National Research Foundation (NRF) rated researchers and two renewed NRF rated researchers. It should be recalled that UNIVEN submitted 11 applications of which six were successful. The new 2020 NRF rated researchers are as follows:

- Prof Ademola O. Jegede, School of Law, obtained a C2 rating;
- Dr Nikita Tawanda Tavengwa, School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, got a Y2 rating;
- Dr Joshua Edokpayi, School of Environmental Sciences, had a Y2 rating; and
- Dr Emma Charlene Lubaale, School of Law, obtained a Y2 rating.

With the additional four colleagues becoming NRF rated, it brings the number of NRF rated researchers at UNIVEN to 29.

Table 1 gives the names and categories of our current NRF rated researchers at UNIVEN.

The University has one B3; four C1; eight C2; ten C3; and six Y2 rated researchers.

From 2013 to date, UNIVEN has lost over ten NRF rated researchers. Last year, we lost three NRF rated researchers to other institutions.

In the previous years we had also lost a sizable number of rated researchers due to retirements, contracts coming to an end, or gaining employment elsewhere.

Table 1: UNIVERSITY OF VENDA NRF RATED RESEARCHERS, 2020

No	Title	Surname	Initials	Rating	Rating category	Research Specialization
1	Prof	Taylor	PJ	B3	Internationally acclaimed Researcher	Mammalogy, Ecology, Systematics
2	Prof	Moodley	YM	C1	Established Researcher	Molecular ecology, Evolutionary genetics, Phylogeography, Microbial evolution, Genomics, Population genetics, Bioinformatics
3	Prof	Bessong	PO	C1	Established Researcher	HIV – Drug resistance, HIV genetic diversity, HIV molecular genetics, HIV and AIDS global health, Opportunistic infections, HIV/AIDS, Global Health
4	Dr	Lee	S	C1	Established Researcher	Phonetics and Phonology African languages, Phonology Tsonga language, Phonetics and Phonology Acoustic phonetics Intonation (Phonetics) Language and languages, Phonology Tsonga language, Syntax Bantu Linguistics & Language documentation Descriptive linguistics
5	Senior Prof	Ekosse	GE	C1	Established Researcher	Chemistry of clay minerals, Clay minerals, Applied, Environmental geology, Environmental health, Extraction metallurgy, Soil mineralogy, Environmental geochemistry
6	Dr	Ndogmo	J	C2	Established Researcher	Lie groups, Differential equations, Mathematical finance
7	Prof	Samie	A	C2	Established Researcher	Molecular parasitology and water related parasitology, Childhood diarrhoea and malnutrition, Immunomodulatory effects of medicinal plants, Opportunistic infections in HIV and AIDS, Infectious diseases, Opportunistic infections, HIV and AIDS - Research, Candida and HIV, Parasites



ABOVE: Dr Tavengwa, Senior Professor GE Ekosse, Dr Isaac Ndlovu and Dr Joshua Edokpayi

The renewed cases with upgrades of rating are as follows:

- Prof Muganda Ochara, School of Management Sciences moved from C3 to C2; and
- Dr Isaac Ndlovu, School of Human and Social Sciences who moved from Y3 to C3.



RIGHT: Professor Ademola O. Jegede and Senior Professor GE Ekosse



## Increase in UNIVEN NRF Rated Researchers cont...

No	Title	Surname	Initials	Rating	Rating category	Research Specialization
8	Prof	Foord	SH	C2	Established Researcher	Invertebrate diversity, Spider systematics, Spider Ecology
9	Prof	Jideani	AIO	C2	Established Researcher	Food Sciences, Cereal science, Starch chemistry, Food and Nutrition, Protein chemistry, Food chemistry, Food microbiology, Medical microbiology
10	Prof	Shonhai	A	C2	Established Researcher	Cell stress and chaperones, Intermolecular interactions, Nanotechnology, Infectious diseases, Malaria - cell biology
11	Prof	Potgieter	N	C2	Established Researcher	Drinking water, Infectious diseases, Environmental health
12	Prof	Ochara	M	C2	Established Researcher	Digital Transformation (e.g. Open Government and e-Commerce), Inter-Organizational Information Systems; ICT Strategy & Infrastructure Development; and Business Intelligence & Analytics
13	Prof	Jegede	AO	C2	Established Researcher	International Human Rights Law; Climate Change
14	Prof	Gwata	ET	C3	Established Researcher	Plant breeding, Plant breeding (Genetics)
15	Prof	Maputle	S	C3	Established Researcher	Maternal health, Child health, Sexual and reproductive health
16	Prof	Mapaya	G	C3	Established Researcher	African music
17	Prof	Gitari	WM	C3	Established Researcher	Natural water and environmental chemistry, Water and effluent management, Environmental geochemistry, Environmental Re mediation, Environmental pollution, Environmental analytical chemistry, Environmental pollution monitoring, Phytoremediation, Acid mine drainage re-mediation, Abandoned mines

It must be borne in mind that the NRF evaluation and rating process is intricate and not an easy task. There is also a feedback process which ensures that applicants receive adequate information on how their rating outcome was decided based on the quality and impact of researcher's outputs over the last eight years. However, the mandate of the Directorate of Research and Innovation

remains to make research at UNIVEN a pivot around which all academic activities must revolve. According to Senior Professor GE Ekosse, Director of Research and Innovation, "Research is only complete when it is disseminated, shared and recognized as new knowledge. Rated researchers always strive to do so."

No	Title	Surname	Initials	Rating	Rating category	Research Specialization
18	Prof	Babalola	S	C3	Established Researcher	Entrepreneurial behaviour, Work ethic, Industrial and organisational psychology, Women and gender studies, Organisational Behaviour, Attitudes and beliefs, Organisational Commitment, Health behaviour
19	Prof	Makgopa	MA	C3	Established Researcher	African languages - Linguistics
20	Prof	Shateyi	S	C3	Established Researcher	Fluid mechanics, Non-Newtonian fluid mechanics, Fluid mechanics thermodynamics \ Energy systems, Computational Mathematics, Numerical Methods/ Analysis
21	Dr	Chari	T	C3	Established Researcher	Political communication, Media representation, Media ethics, Digital media, Music Theory, Popular culture & Journalism practice
22	Dr	Sigauke	C	C3	Established Researcher	Probabilistic electricity demand forecasting and solar energy modelling and environmental systems
23	Dr	Ndlovu	I	C3	Established Researcher	Prison narratives, Language and Literature
24	Dr	Mwale	M	Y2	Promising young Researcher	Animal production, Animal nutrition, Animal health, Household food security
25	Dr	Diko Makia	LB	Y2	Promising young Researcher	Applied Clay Mineralogy, Environmental Geology, Medical Geology, Geochemistry
26	Dr	Swanepoel	LH	Y2	Promising young Researcher	Wildlife management, Wildlife population estimation, Wildlife ecology, Wildlife modelling, Wildlife conservation & Agroecology
27	Dr	Lubaale	EC	Y2	Promising young Researcher	International Law, Criminal Law; Constitutional Law
28	Dr	Tavengwa	TN	Y2	Promising young Researcher	Chemical Sciences; Physical Sciences
29	Dr	Edokpayi	JN	Y2	Promising young Researcher	Environmental Sciences; Chemical Sciences; Water Resources; Environmental Engineering

# Muano Nemavhidi selected for Abe Bailey Trust and Travel Bursary

Ms Muano Nemavhidi from the School of Law, studying Bachelor of Law at the University of Venda was selected for Abe Bailey. The Travel bursary took place from the 26 November – 21 December 2019 and it started in Cape Town where everyone was informed about what was expected of them throughout the trip and created an open atmosphere for engagement and getting acquainted with the other bursars. On the 27th – 30th of November 2019 bursars arrived in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa where they were equipped with knowledge of the current state of Africa as well as the plans to transform it. From the 30th November to 21 December 2019, the selected bursars went to London then to Scotland where they did different activities including numerous sites visits.

Applicants must understand that this is a Travel Bursary which demands a different skill set from the criteria of a normal bursary. The Trustees are looking for applicants who have an ability to listen, to express an opinion, possess an enquiring mind, want to broaden their horizons and above all wish to keep learning. Successful bursars need to enjoy working with people, to exude a positivity and enthusiasm which raises the energy levels of those around them.

The Abe Bailey Trust and the Travel Bursary was established in terms of the Will of Sir Abe Bailey who died in 1940. The Trustees of the Abe Bailey Trust make funds available for travel bursaries known as the Abe Bailey Travel Bursaries. These Travel Bursaries give selected university students and university staff of Junior Lecturer status an opportunity to visit the United Kingdom. The focus of the Abe Bailey Trust is leadership development and the Trustees wish the bursaries to be awarded to persons who are academically strong and have shown exceptional qualities of leadership and service,

with a good track record not only on campus but also in a wider social context and who are able to function as part of a select and highly skilled group.

This travel bursary was founded for South African students to visit Britain and meet the following objectives to effect greater co-operation and understanding of different viewpoints and opinions among those with various language and cultural backgrounds. To encourage leadership that demonstrates open debate and mutual respect of others. To enable outstanding South African students who show exceptional leadership and a strong service ethic to experience British culture and participate in an interactive programme and examine its significance in the context of South African history. To foster enterprise, commitment and effective participation in a common future as well as to promote South African unity.

**“The Trustees are looking for applicants who have an ability to listen, to express an opinion, possess an enquiring mind, want to broaden their horizons and above all wish to keep learning.”**



Ms Muano Nemavhidi UNIVEN participant at Abe Bailey Trust and Travel Bursary



Some of the participants at the Abe Bailey Trust and Travel Bursary



# Post-graduate study should be driven by intentionality



Delegates and presenters pose for a photo

The School of Human and Social Sciences held its first progress review workshop for their post-graduate students, supervisors and promoters. The workshop took place over three days commencing Tuesday, 10 until Thursday, 12 December 2019 at 2Ten Hotel. A total of 50 participants consisting of staff members and Post-Graduate students, attended the Workshop.



When officially opening the workshop, Advocate Dr Pfarelo Matshidze, Vice-Dean of the School of Human and Social Sciences, highlighted that through the workshop, the School aims at encouraging a progressive attitude through learning of good habits and unlearning some of the bad habits generally committed by students in their research pursuit.



Sharing the purpose of the workshop, the School of Human and Social Sciences Research Professor Mashudu Mashige, expressed that the workshop aims at instilling a change in attitude in both supervisors and supervisees. "By deciding to attend the

workshop, it shows you have an intention to complete your study and that the study will make an impact in someone's life or at least a community implicated in the research", said Prof Mashige. "Candidates should not be begged to complete their studies by supervisors and promoters; it should come out of their own intentionality", continued Prof Mashige.

A three-day workshop provided both supervisors and post-graduate students an opportunity to share their experiences in the course of preparing proposals and conducting research. On the first day, students were divided into four groups in terms of the stages they are, providing them an opportunity to share experiences and challenges. Students and supervisors also engaged in a robust discussion relating to issues that should be considered to make post-graduate study effective and avoid annoying each other which leads to accusations and counter-accusations, both of which are unnecessary.



A group of Post-graduate students discussing challenges they face at different phases of their study



Some of the challenges identified in the groups relate to, amongst others:

- Supervisor/Promoter relations (including male supervisors versus female supervisors)
- Frustrations with changing topics that lead to de-motivating students
- Need for the development of interest group platforms to enhance peer relations and sharing of ideas

- Need for frequently conducting workshops of this nature in the future
- In order to enhance quality, frequent article publishing workshops should be conducted.



Feedback reports by groups to the plenary

One of the concerns raised over post-graduate studies was the lack of a sense of commitment. It was emphasized that there should be a programme agreed and committed to, by both the supervisor/promoter and the student. A call was made for bridges to be mended where relations are almost at an advanced aggravated state. As part of enhancing these relations, the School of Human and Social Sciences is finalizing a booklet which will soon be published, amongst others, post-graduate students will be required to sign an agreement with their supervisors and promoters.

During the workshop, the challenge of technology was discussed in the view of the effects of the 4th Industrial Revolution. It was agreed that opportunities should be taken to better research development through the use of technology in the 4th Industrial Revolution.

The workshop involved several presenters sharing skills in the writing of proposals as well as writing up dissertations and theses. The bane of plagiarism and wanton disregard for ethics in research were also discussed.

The workshop was also attended by the Traditional Healers' chairperson, Mr Masia who presented on the importance of Indigenous Knowledge systems.



Chairperson of the Traditional Healers Association, Mr Masia

Post-graduate students benefitted a lot from the workshop and in their feedback, it was expressed that the student ownership of the process becomes important, and that supervisors' comments should be taken into consideration and implemented in full if the study is to be successful. As portrayed by Nelisiwe Mondlane, a Masters of Arts student who believes that "the workshop was helpful to the students as it relates to our research projects and provided guidance. It will be important to hold such workshops in the future as it helps to improve student progress in their research projects"



Delegates receiving presentations during the workshop



# Preparing UNIVEN Researchers to become National Research Foundation Rated Researchers

University of Venda under the auspices of the Directorate of Research and Innovation (DRI) organised a half day workshop to prepare researchers who are interested in becoming NRF Rated. The workshop took place at UNIVEN Research Conference Centre on the 16th January 2020. It was facilitated by the NRF Director of Reviews and Evaluation - Ms Joyce Olivier, who was assisted by the Professional Officer of the NRF Reviews and Evaluation - Ms Gomotsegang Monaise. The Research Coordinator in DRI - Dr ON Sotshangane was tasked with the organisation of the workshop.



*NRF Director of Reviews and Evaluation (Ms Joyce Olivier) making her presentation and responding to questions from prospective applicants during the workshop*



*Director Research and Innovation (Senior Professor GE Ekosse) addressing UNIVEN potential applicants for NRF rating*

In his opening remarks, the Director Research and Innovation - Senior Professor GE Ekosse, gave the history of growth of NRF Rated Researchers at UNIVEN from 2008 – 2019. In 2008, UNIVEN had only one Rated Researcher. With regular annual growth, in 2019 there were 29 UNIVEN NRF Rated Researchers. This number would have been about 40 had it not been for deaths, resignations and retirements. Importantly, Rated Researchers contribute immensely to university core business particularly in academic leadership, postgraduate supervision, journal articles publications, and related research outputs released through various dissemination outlets. It is disappointing though that the

number of Female Rated Researchers at UNIVEN has not increased from four over the years. That notwithstanding, there is an on-going Customised NRF Assisted Project in which staff in DRI are working with UNIVEN female researchers in assisting with their career growth and development.

The NRF Director of Reviews and Evaluation, Ms Joyce Olivier, spoke extensively on the NRF Rating and Evaluation System. She highlighted the processes and procedures to be adhered to and pointed out common pitfalls which should be avoided by prospective applicants. The workshop had an interactive session in which UNIVEN

researchers asked many questions on aspects of how to become rated. Attendees were encouraged to complete their applications online for the 2020 NRF Evaluation and Rating submissions which is closing on the 31 January 2020 internally. She pointed out that all people affiliated with NRF recognised institutions, whether permanently employed researchers/academics or fixed term contract researchers are eligible to apply for evaluation and rating. Prospective applicants are advised to develop a clear focus and avoid supporting predatory publishers. More information is available at <http://www.nrf.ac.za/rating>



*Group Photo of Participants of the 2020 NRF Evaluation and Rating Workshop*



# South African Publicly Funded Technologies Exhibition and Science Forum

The Directorate of Research and Innovation's Office of Technology Transfer, attended the 2019 Innovation Bridge and Science Forum South Africa (IBSFSA) from 04– 06 December 2019 at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) International Convention Centre. The fifth Science Forum was merged with the Innovation Bridge (IB) technology matchmaking and showcase event held under the theme **"Igniting conversations about science for innovation with impact"**.



DVC Academic: Prof Jan Crafford giving presentation on the role of collaborative university partnerships in achievement of SDGs during the 2019 IBSFSA

Prof. Jan Crafford addressed one of the sessions on the role of Collaborative university partnerships in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs,) on Friday, 06 December 2019. Prof Crafford indicated the need for building research partnership for relevant research and creating opportunities for students. This session was earmarked to play a key role in shaping future policy design, especially for the preparation of new decadal plan, that is a 10-year-plan, for science, technology and innovation in South Africa.

Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Honourable Dr Blade Nzimande visited University of Venda's stall to see the state and progress of technologies developed by UNIVEN. He also delivered the opening address of the IBSFSA and announced that this is a special event as more than 100 publicly funded technologies were able to showcase to potential partners and investors. The Minister said that science and innovation is everywhere within the rich and poor. The Minister has also announced during his address that South Africa will be hosting the 2021 World Science Forum. He added that IBSFSA 2019 is a roadmap to the prestigious event.

Participation in this event enabled the University of Venda's Office of Technology Transfer to have ignited conversations about science for innovation with impact. During this event, UNIVEN exhibited 11 technologies as compared to four technologies exhibited in the 2017 Innovation Bridge. Amongst other attendees were industries, academics, students, international innovators, public and private technology development funders and aspiring entrepreneurs.



University of Venda showcasing their products during the 2019 IBSFSA



Dr. Kerry Faul, Head of National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO)

The University of Venda's Office of Technology Transfer with the support of the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) made possible for

UNIVEN students, staff and researchers to have this opportunity to enable researchers to exhibit technologies emanating from UNIVEN research and development.



SABC Morning Live presenter Sakina Kamwendo interviewing Dr. Phil Mjwara, Director General of the Department of Science and Innovation

The 2019 IBSFSA was broadcast live on SABC 2 and SABC News Channel 404 on 05 December 2019 from 06:00 to 09:00. The broadcast assisted with enabling researchers and exhibitors to exhibit their products live on national TV. The focus was to ensure commercialisation of research to benefit the broader society with local technologies generated from publicly financed research and development showcased to secure partners to convert these technologies into products and services that impact the lives of ordinary people.



Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande's visit to the University of Venda's stall No. 68



Department of Science Innovation, DDG Mboneni Muofhe, Director: International Relations, Dr Obadire and DVC: Academic Prof Crafford visit to UNIVEN's stand

# The University of Venda signs a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Hubei University of Technology

Hubei University of Technology in China, visited the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in 2018 with the intention of establishing a MoA. This was an extension of a previous MoU signed between the Limpopo Province Premier's Office. Several meetings were held both in China, at UNIVEN and the Premier's office, Polokwane. The proposal was considered through the Legal Services Directorate and it was agreed that the cooperation agreement be signed.

The signing ceremony for the Hubei University of Technology (HBUT), China and UNIVEN took place at the Holiday Inn, Johannesburg Airport on 05 December 2019. Present at the signing ceremony were Prof Jan Crafford, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who signed on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, UNIVEN; Mr Walter Segooa, Acting Deputy Director General for International Relations, Premier's Office, Limpopo Province; Mr Ndivhuwo

Phathela, Director International Relations, Premier's Office, Limpopo Province; Mr Tao Hong, Director General, Hubei Provincial Department of Education, China; Prof Liu Defu, President, HBUT; Prof Ye Chaocheng, Dean School of International Education, HBUT, China and others.

The ceremony was officiated by Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations, UNIVEN. According to the signed



Prof Jan Crafford, DVC Academic UNIVEN and Prof Liu Defu, President HBUT signing the MoA



Prof Jan Crafford and Prof Liu Defu after the signing

agreement, the two institutions will jointly establish Limpopo Institute at UNIVEN which will offer Bachelors and Masters programmes. The programme to be offered by the Limpopo Institute in English language would be jointly designed and the curriculum jointly approved soon. Both partners agreed that there would be further meetings for the implementation plan for the MoA soon.

**"According to the signed agreement, the two institutions will jointly establish Limpopo Institute at UNIVEN which will offer Bachelors and Masters programmes."**



Some of the Participants at the MoA signing ceremony



# Tshiolioli scoops the 2019 UNIVEN best overall award

On Thursday, 06 February 2020, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted the Annual Vice-Chancellor's Student Academic Excellence Awards for the academic year 2019 top performers. This awards ceremony took place at the University Auditorium.

Mr Tshinanne Edward Tshiolioli, who is the best student in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences for first level, also became the overall best student for the academic year 2019. "I feel very honoured and excited. I am highly motivated and vow to always do better than I did in the previous year. I vow to be amongst UNIVEN graduates who proudly lifts the UNIVEN flag even higher," said Tshiolioli.

Tshiolioli mentioned that, believing in himself and having time to introspect his strengths and weaknesses was key to his success. "Knowing myself and managing my time effectively and efficiently got me to where I am at this point," he said.

He said that he has set a target for himself for the academic year 2020 to do his best to retain the overall best performing student award at UNIVEN. "I believe there is no limit, so I have set myself for a straight up trajectory," he said.

According to Prof Nancy Mutshaeni, Director of CHETL, the Vice-Chancellor's Student Academic Excellence Awards started in 2013.



Hard work pays: Mr Tshinanne Edward Tshiolioli holding two trophies and certificates for his outstanding performance in the academic year 2019



L-R: Director: CHETL, Prof Nancy Mutshaeni; Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Bernard Nhambeleni; Best overall student, Tshinanne Edward Tshiolioli and Deputy Vice chancellor: Academic Prof Jan Crafford.

She explained that, the decision came in 2011 after Students proposed to Senate that annual academic excellence awards should be introduced for undergraduate students at all levels and to date, this has been an annual ceremony.

"The purpose of these awards is to encourage students to work hard in achieving their goals, which is to pass with excellent marks for them to be employable," added Prof Mutshaeni.

A total of 48 students walked away with awards for being the best in their respective schools and levels of study.

**"The purpose of these awards is to encourage students to work hard in achieving their goals..."**



Prof Nancy Mutshaeni, Director: CHETL briefly outlining the background of the Vice-Chancellor's Student Academic Excellence Awards



UNIVEN best performing students for academic year 2019



# UNIVEN participates at the Science Forum at CSIR

The Innovation Bridge (IB) Technology Matchmaking and Showcasing Event and Science Forum South Africa (SfSA) provided Africa with an "open science" event, similar to forums convened with great success elsewhere in the world. The forum provided for all interested parties to ignite conversations about science, which has held over four successful events to date with over 3000 delegates attending each year.

The SfSA Science Forum took place at CSIR ICC, Pretoria between 4 and 6

December 2019. The forum organised by the Department of Science and Innovation hosted the USA-SA Higher Education Network where the topic: 'Role of collaborative University partnerships in achievement of SDGs' was discussed by panels including Prof Jan Crafford, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), University of Venda (UNIVEN); Prof Stephanie Burton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Postgraduate Education, University of Pretoria (UP); Prof Nthabiseng Ogude, Dean Mamelodi Campus, University of Pretoria

(UP) and Charleen Duncan, Director Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, University of Western Cape (UWC). The discussion was moderated by Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations, UNIVEN.

The session was attended by participants from different works of life including delegates from USA and other countries. The presentations centered around Entrepreneurial university's role in achieving SDGs; Community engagement projects at HDI university; Collaborative

work at the Mamelodi campus; the international engagement, collaboration and university partnership in achieving the SDGs. Questions and comments followed after the presentations. The panel agreed that universities have an important role of providing leadership and direction in the attainment of the SDGs. It is therefore, important for universities to produce a high-impact, cross-cutting research through multi-disciplinary teams and approaches using appropriate technology and innovation.



Above: Charleen Duncan, Director Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, UWC (right); Prof Jan Crafford, DVC Academic (middle) and Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations UNIVEN (left), during the programme



Above L-R: Prof Jan Crafford, Charleen Duncan, Prof Nthabiseng Ogude and Prof Stephanie Burton

## UNIVEN participates in USA-SA HE Network strategic workshop at UP

The US-SA Higher Education Network (US-SA HEN) was established to provide a vehicle for encouraging exchange and interaction between higher education institutions in South Africa and the United States. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)'s University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) US-SA Higher Education Network is an ongoing initiative in response to the needs in the South African higher education community (and in the world). The initiative advances strategies to facilitate growth of doctoral candidates in South Africa and creates exchange opportunities for faculty, staff and students in the collaborating institutions and institutions in both USA and SA.

The strategic workshop took place on 03 December 2019 at the Graduate Centre, University of Pretoria. The session shared success made by the network, highlights of the projects funded under the network, impact of network outcomes to research, policy and practice on SDG implementation. The US-SA HEN strategic meeting focused on

funding and sustainability for the network; redesigning university around the students; social impact; differentiation and articulation; the STEM and HDI partnerships. The Network discussed other possible funding through submission of proposals to funding agencies both nationally and internationally. Prof Ahmed Bawa, CEO USAf, Prof Jan Crafford, DVC (Academic) UNIVEN, Prof Kyle Farmbry, Rutgers University, Dr Whitty Green, Deputy Director General, DHET, Ms Tshembani Khupane, Technology and Innovation Agency (TIA), Mr Bheki Hadebe, Department of Technology and Innovation (DSI) representatives and many others were present at the workshop and they all gave their input.

The US-SA HEN was established based on the needs of the research community. It has organically evolved over time. This network, as with other networks, such as the SA-UK, SA-Sweden, SA-Japan networks is critical for developing the SA Higher Education (HE) system, especially in terms of staff, teaching and programme development.



Participants at the US-SA HE Network strategic workshop in Pretoria

It is important to ensure that there is flexibility in the system, and the partner institutions will drive the project at the operational level. This meeting is critical to map the way forward, grow the network and allow flexibility at all spheres. The

department is fully committed to this network as well as other networks, especially on HDI development and strengthening. A meeting is scheduled with the 8 partner universities early in 2020 with the objective of mapping a way forward.



# UNIVEN Sport and Recreation Unit participated in the IBSF Goal Ball international tournament in Ghana

The University of Venda (Univen) Sport and Recreation Unit under the Student Affairs Department, participated in the International Goalball Tournament organized by the International Blind Sport Federation (IBSF) from 12 – 16 December 2019 in Ghana, Cape Coast University Sport Hall. The Tournament was organized by the Cape Coast University in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Ghana, National Sports Authority of Ghana, and National Paralympics Committee of Ghana.

The Tournament was graced by participation of two (02) international clubs (University of Venda – South Africa and Team Nigeria), one (01) national club (Team Ghana) and Host Club (Cape Coast University) with a total of 47 participants inclusive of players, coaches, technical officials and facilitators. UNIVEN had a total of 10 delegates, comprising of one (01) member of staff (Mr. N.P Mugwedi -Sports Administrator) and nine (09) students (five females and four males), who travelled to Ghana to form part of the prestigious Tournament.

The Tournament was preceded by the coaching seminar and workshop aimed at training and empowering goalball referees, scorers and judges. The workshop was facilitated by two representatives from the International Blind Sport Federation (IBSF), Mr. John Potts (from USA) and Mr. Alexey Baryaev (from Russia). On behalf of UNIVEN, Mr. Ndiafhi Percy Mugwedi (Sports Administrator), Ms. Windy Roselyn Mthombeni (SRCC Chairperson) and Mr. Themba Baloyi (Team Coach) attended the workshop and were awarded two certificates for coaching and refereeing during the awards giving ceremony. All other players who participated during the



UNIVEN delegates displaying certificates at the end of the workshop

Tournament were also awarded certificates of participation at the IBSF Tournament. The team was also given a new match ball for use during training and competitions.

UNIVEN female goalball team played and won two games during the Tournament while the male team won a final game through walk-over due to the opponent failure to honour the game on time and as such IBSF rule was applied. However, the team played and lost a consolation game against Team Ghana. Both teams displayed outstanding performances and were crowned the African Champions. On the right are the results of the Tournament:



UNIVEN Goalball team posing for a picture at the Tournament

Category	Fixture	Results
Female	Team Ghana (08) vs UNIVEN (13)	UNIVEN Won
	Cape Coast Univ (02) vs UNIVEN (12)	UNIVEN Won – knock out
Male	Cape Coast Univ. vs UNIVEN	UNIVEN Won -walk over
	Team Ghana (15) vs UNIVEN (11)	UNIVEN lost consolation game



Delegates attending the IBSF coaching and refereeing workshop



Mr. Ndiafhi Percy Mugwedi with Facilitators who handed over certificates to UNIVEN delegates



The purpose of the Tournament was aimed at developing and promoting the Goalball Sport in Africa under the umbrella of International Blind Sport Federation (IBSF). The Tournament also exposed students to practical application of rules during the game and hands-on experiences of the goalball tactical and technical aspects of the game.

"I feel humbled that the International Blind Sport Federation (IBSF) identified and invited UNIVEN Goalball team of male and female among other universities in South Africa to form part of the 2019 International Goalball Tournament in Ghana, Cape Coast University. The invite follows UNIVEN's goalball outstanding performance during a tournament played mid-year (2019) in South Africa in Stellenbosch wherein UNIVEN was crowned champions". said Mr Ndiafhi Percy Mugwedi – Sports Administrator.

UNIVEN Goalball team has over the years produced outstanding results which is in support of the University's Strategic objective of enhancing the quality of student life outside the class room. It is pleasing to acknowledge that the Sport and Recreation Unit continues to achieve its mandate guided by the University Strategic Plan

through increasing the number of students participating in adapted sports.

"On behalf of the delegation, I would like to thank the University Management for granting us the opportunity to promote the University of Venda brand and its values through sport, particularly using goalball as an adapted sport for students living with various forms of disabilities. It is worth noting that goalball is the first sporting code at UNIVEN to compete and display great performance at an international level". added Mugwedi – Sports Administrator.

The International Blind Sport Federation (IBSF) has mandated the University of Venda to partner with other universities that play goalball in South Africa such as Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town and University of Limpopo in growing the popularity of goalball as an adapted sport and especially in establishing a well structured and functional goalball federation. The Sport and Recreation Unit will continue to support and monitor goalball team to embrace the University values and its mantra in creating future leaders through sport participation.



## UNIVEN students participate in exchange programme at DHBW, Germany



Mr Tsundzukani Marima and Mr Petros Molele in Germany

The Baden-Württemberg-STIPENDIUM scholarship was awarded to two students Mr Tsundzukani Marima, Master's in Political Science and Mr Petros Molele, Masters in Agriculture for exchange programme at the Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg (DHBW), Heidenheim, Germany from 27 September to 21 December 2019. The students were able to study International Business programme for the period of 3 months. The students were hosted by Prof Sabine Moebs, International Business Department (DHBW); Ms Brigitte Ilg, Director International Relations and Ms Ingrid Lange, International Relations Officer (DHBW). The International Business programme at the DHBW brought together students from different countries for academic and intercultural engagement activities.

The students said, "It has been our wish to visit Germany. Staying there for a longer duration is the most beautiful thing that has ever happened in our lives. We love the environmental conditions of Germany, it's safety, beautiful infrastructure, easily accessible transport, and quiet. Life is pretty busy in Germany as in most of the Western world. But in general, there is quietness anywhere you go. We learnt a lot and made good friends during the period."

The programme is governed by the partnership agreement signed between UNIVEN and DHBW in 2017. About six students have benefited from the scholarship in 2019 alone, three from UNIVEN and three from Germany.

## Vhonani shares her experience as a UNIVEN first time entering student



"I Believe that I have made the right decision by choosing to study at the University of Venda (UNIVEN)," these were the words from Vhonani Serongwa, a first time entering student of Bachelor of Science in Biokinetics while sharing her experience during admission and registration processes for academic year 2020.

This Bachelor of Science in Biokinetics student said that she chose UNIVEN as her first preferred institution of higher learning to further her studies because it is closer to her home and also looking at the fact that due to financial constraints, she won't afford to study at any institution that is located far away from her home.

"From the rumours that I have heard, I was expecting to face a lot of challenges before I can be admitted at UNIVEN, but my experiences proved me and the rumours wrong. I received the SMS immediately after the Department of Basic Education released the 2019 matric results. The SMS explained that I have been admitted at UNIVEN to register for the degree of my first choice. The SMS indicated the dates on which I was expected to come to the University to register. Indeed, it was not that difficult because I did not have to queue for admission" she explained.

## We would like to hear from you!

Nendila is your communication channel.

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