



UNIVEN Online Recruiting System Assistance

Univen embracing learners' challenges during the applications process



Ntsako Chabalala from Hluwuka High School in Hlanganani Circuit, applying online at the University of Venda ICT Lab, and his wish is to study LLB in 2019.

Following its commitment to serve a diversified constituency, UNIVEN has embraced challenges faced by learners from different communities, including the most deep-rural schools. With the introduction of the online application system at UNIVEN, several challenges faced by prospective students were identified; amongst others, lack of IT infrastructure at their schools as well as lack of information and know-how. Whilst some learners are still transitioning from the traditional hard-copy application system, some teachers and schools do their best to assist these learners to apply online using school facilities. All these happened before the closing date for 2019 applications for admission and hostel accommodation which was on 28 September 2018.

Having noted such challenges, the University of Venda made available ICT facilities to learners who arrived on campus to hand in their hard copy applications during the month of September. Instead of these learners just submitting the forms, a team from Student Administration as well as Information Technology Services Directorate and

Schools Liaison Section of the Department of Communications and Marketing offered their time to assist these learners to translate their application into online immediately. More than two hundred learners were assisted daily and assuring them that their applications were received and processed. The queues at Student Administration were slowly getting longer daily closer to the deadline of 28 September 2018.

One major activity for the Schools Liaison team is to visit selected schools, especially those situated in the rural communities to encourage them to consider enrolling for the programmes of their choice with UNIVEN and to assist them with online applications where possible. A total of 87 schools were visited this year, and the team believes the exercise does pay off for many of these learners.



Schools Liaison Officials assisting Raduvheni Uadivha who is applying to the University of Venda through the online system.

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2018 Heritage Day Symposium

The 2018 Heritage Day Symposium promotes intergenerational learning



An aerial view of Marude Secondary School learners, AIME UNIVEN student mentors, Univen staff and delegates from Dzomolamupo during the discussions.

On Tuesday, 16 October 2018, the University of Venda (Univen) hosted the 2018 Indigenous Knowledge System Heritage Day Symposium in association with AIME UNIVEN, Marude Secondary School and Dzomolamupo. The event was held at Univen Sports Hall under the theme 'Creating Intergenerational learning spaces'. It was a fun-filled, lesson/activity packed environment which allowed learners opportunities to interact with elders in a university learning environment.



Giving the welcome address and purpose of the day, Director Community Engagement, Prof Vhonani Netshandama acknowledged and showed gratitude to the elders who came in numbers moreover to Dzomolamupo. She also highlighted to the learners that even though they will not be in school for most of the day, they are still going to learn.

She explained that the Heritage Day Symposium is aimed at educating learners about eco-mapping, nature conservation and preservation respectful manners and Ubuntu as well as indigenous entrepreneurship development and career choices. She advised the pupils to know themselves and where they are coming from so they can be able to know where they are going. She also emphasised on the need to respect elders, culture and nature. "These two are very important and they make us who we are, who we become, is the direct outcome of what we do everyday" said Prof Netshandama.

The four echo mapping themes were Mikhwa (manners), food and health, Mupo

(nature conservation) and Mulalo, Lufuno and Ubuntu. For each table there were sub-themes of the echo mapping themes that elders used to give lessons to the learners. Each table comprised of a balanced number of elders and learners.

The learners engaged in the discussions with the elderly people assigned on each table for the sub-themes. Learners later presented what they have learnt during those discussions. This was the session in which learners were answering questions that were asked based on the sub-themes.

Learners were taught about the importance of interconnectedness of human beings and all living beings and the power that they have within themselves to protect and change the universe for the better. The big question was also how to make IKS sustain life. In her closing remarks, Prof Netshandama urged all the learners to show respect to their parents and elderly people. She told elderly people to also teach the young ones about their culture while they are still alive.



Patrick Mashvha, a Grade 12 learner from Marude Secondary School said that he has learned a lot from the 2018 Heritage Day Symposium. He thanked the University for caring about their future and for seeing the need to provide them with the much-needed career guidance at all times.



Marude learner demonstrating U losha in Tshivenda – a form of greeting done by females. Behind them is Mutuli, Musi and mavhele, which were used to demonstrate u sinda – How maize was processed to form mealmeal.



Marude learner demonstrating U losha in Tshivenda – a form of greeting done by men.

Who we become, is the direct outcome of what we do everyday

A pilot project indicates success in chickpea production by local farmers in South Africa

Following the successful Chickpea Farmers Field Day that was hosted by the University of Venda (Univen)'s School of Agriculture at the Experiential Farm on 12 September 2017, a pilot project aimed at chickpea production indicates to be a resounding success.

According to Prof Easton Gwata who is the HOD in the Department of Plant Production at Univen School of Agriculture, after 10 years of research on the adaptation of the crop to the local agro-ecological conditions in Limpopo, the School planted a chickpea crop in May 2017 and invited local farmers to a farmers day that was designed to showcase the crop in the field. He said farmers expressed a huge interest in the crop. The Economic Development Department (EDD) which was represented at the event, decided to participate in the project by facilitating the up-take of this 'crop technology' by local farmers so that the crop can be produced locally.

In March 2018, the Deputy Minister of the EDD, Mr Madala Backson Masuku visited Univen to participate in a Policy Dialogue with the local farmers and presented 200kg x 2 bags of chickpea to be used as seed by the farmers.

"In early May, 2018, we conducted a practical training for the farmers on how to grow the crop," said Prof Gwata. The training was carried out in the field at the School of Agriculture. The farmers planted the crop during mid-May, 2018 as instructed. In September, 2018, Nendila team visited some of the farmers to assess the crop (see pictures below). The crop was produced successfully at nearly all the farms.

This crop is produced mainly for human food and animal feeds. It improves soil fertility through a process called biological nitrogen fixation. In addition, the grain of chickpea is traded on international markets as dry grain or canned beans, thus generating household income for farmers. This legume crop is cultivated in the winter months after the main summer crops have been harvested. However, it is a new crop for farmers in Limpopo Province. There is no commercial production of the crop in South Africa at present. Local industries in South Africa import the crop mainly from Canada and East Africa. The other countries that produce chickpea include Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Morocco, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Australia and Brazil.

Chickpeas have spread their culinary influence across the world. They also come with a range of potential health benefits. They are particularly high in fibre. Studies have shown that people with type 1 diabetes who consume high-fibre diets have lower blood glucose levels and for people with type 2 diabetes, higher fibre intake can improve their blood sugar, lipids, and insulin levels. In addition, chickpeas are also a good source of plant-based protein and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Furthermore, they are rich in vitamins and minerals. They help to stabilize blood sugar levels.

With all these benefits and success in production, it is anticipated that many more emerging local farmers will grow the crop next season. Univen has once more demonstrated that it can respond effectively to local issues as well as positively impact the communities.

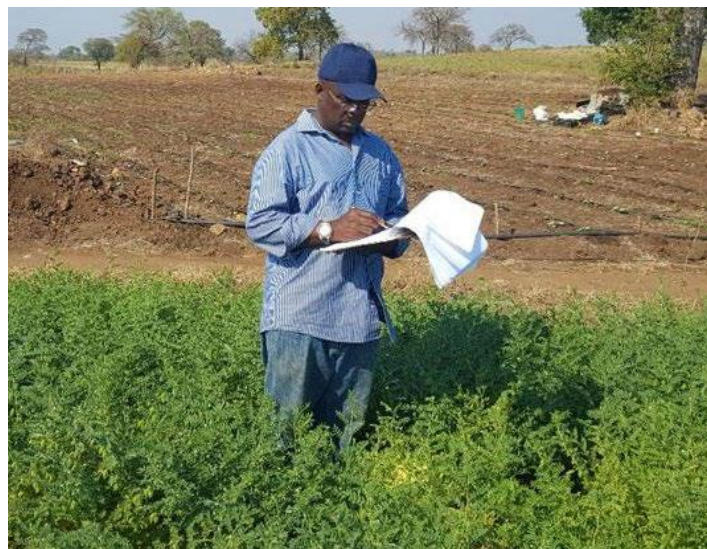


Amongst the 10 farmers that participated in the pilot project was Mr Ramathikhithi Mmbangiseni Wayne of the Ramathikhithi Orchard in Mphephu Village. He highlighted that due to chickpea's richness in proteins, he will continue farming it and market it especially in the flour and baking industries. Mr Ramathikhithi said that one of the challenges he encountered was getting a hold of the inoculants to keep the plants healthy as well as not knowing which insects are most likely to damage the crops.

Mr Ferguson Mugwedi of Dovheni Agricultural Primary Co-operative is a cattle and crop farmer. Mr Mugwedi highlighted that the chickpea is the easiest crop to farm because it doesn't require a lot of fertilizers and all he did was to irrigate it and then it started to grow fast without any sign of challenges. Just like Mr Ramathikhithi, he hopes to cultivate it more and find a market for it since it is a rare crop in South Africa that is currently being imported from other countries.



The other farmer who took part in the pilot project was the recipient of the 2017 Best Female South African Farmer, Irene Livhalani Madima of Rembander Agribusiness in Tsianda Village. Her farm income is sustained by cash crops throughout the year but she also grows mangoes and litchis mostly. She expressed the opinion that the chickpea was a peculiar crop to her and she is still learning more about it. Her biggest challenge was her method of irrigating the crop. She ended up opting for flood irrigation. She also observed that some birds are interested in the crop.



Prof Easton Gwata in a chickpea farm at Dovheni village (Vhembe District, Limpopo Province).

Chickpeas have spread their culinary influence across the world. They also come with a range of potential health benefits.



Prof Easton Gwata and Mrs Irene Madima in a chickpea field at Lwamondo village (Vhembe District, Limpopo Province).



The current chickpea crop that was produced by Mr Mugwedi at Dovheni village (Vhembe District, Limpopo Province).

AgriSETA and Univen School of Agriculture aim to improve productivity of animals in communal areas

Agriculture is an important primary component of the South African rural community and national economy. It is the major factor in rural economic growth and development. However, there is a need for necessary programmes to support agriculture so that it plays a distinctive role in broadening the economic and social options of rural and urban people through primary and secondary contributions, and consequently in improving the quality of life.

On Tuesday, 09 October 2018, The University of Venda (Univen) School of Agriculture, Department of Animal Science held Capacity building for sustainable livestock production system for communal and emerging farmers. The capacity building programme was held at Tzaneen, in the Runnymede Cluster 1. Forty-one (41) Livestock Farmers attended this capacity building programme that aims to improve productivity of animals in communal areas because this will help livestock farmers to harness their full potential, which may lead to improved food security and quality of life in the province.



Prof Joseph Baloyi, Head of Department of Animal Science in the School of Agriculture highlighted that the major constraints faced by these farmers include lack of proper livestock management skills and also lack of knowledge on challenges affecting livestock enterprise. He mentioned that the primary objective of the project is to contribute towards sustainable livestock production enterprises in the communal and emerging sector of the Mopani and Vhembe districts, Limpopo Province.

The Limpopo Department of Agriculture saw a need to start and facilitate community engagement project. This project entails academic training of livestock farmers in nutrition, livestock breeding, reproduction, animal health care and entrepreneurship in order to empower communal and emerging livestock farmers to achieve continuous improvement of profitable production and marketing of livestock.

Through the sponsorship of AgriSETA, the project was carried out by University of Venda in collaboration with Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDoA). In 2014, a baseline survey on farmer training needs on livestock production systems in Mopani and Vhembe Districts were conducted to identify knowledge gaps in livestock production of the communal farmers. In 2017 a feedback of the outcomes from the baseline survey was reported in Greater Giyani, Greater Letaba, Greater, Maruleng and Phalaborwa local municipalities of Mopani district. Training programmes on winter feeding of ruminants were organized by Department of Animal Science from University of Venda from 25 September 2018 to 09 October 2018 at a central place in each municipality.



Dr Masiza Mikasi from Univen School of Agriculture conducting the training



Ms Mmamolatlato Ramato, from Lekgwareng in Tzaneen is one of the livestock farmers in the area where the training took place. She owns a herd of cattle and goats. Ms Ramato was happy to be part of the training and she thanked Univen and AgriSETA for providing this training to them. She said that she learned a lot from the training and she felt it was time to execute what she has learned.



Mr Addy Baloyi, Deputy Chairperson of Runnymede Cluster one (1) Livestock Farmers Association also thanked AgriSETA and Univen for providing training to the livestock farmers in their area. He wished that the farmers who attended can also educate other farmers who couldn't make it to the training. He said these kind of trainings empower them as livestock farmers and advised that the trainings should also be rendered to all livestock farmers throughout the country.

Other areas that have already received trainings are Lulekani (Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality), Hoedspruit Service Center, Hlohllokwe village (Tickline, Ga-Sekororo) Shikhumba (Greater Giyani Municipality), Bonn village (Greater Tzaneen Municipality) and Mohlele village (Greater Letaba).

To date the University of Venda provided training to about 200 emerging farmers around Mopani District Municipality.



Livestock farmers from Tzaneen local municipality and Academic members of staff from Department of Animal Science, Univen posing for a group photo after the training.

The 2018 Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programme



Univen Staff Members and honourable speakers.

Be under your own influence and fight substance abuse

The University of Venda (Univen) Campus Health Clinic recently hosted the 2018 Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programme. The event took place at the University's Sports Hall. The event was aimed at fighting against the use of substance abuse by the youth under the theme "Be under your own influence".



The Director Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo gave a welcome address. He acknowledged the number of guests present from different institutions and colleges such as Vhembe TVET College, MT Umbrella, Tshilidzini hospital, Correctional Services and Dr Luphuwana Nesengani, a Psychiatrist from Hayani Hospital. Mr Tshikhudo encouraged students to stand firm and fight against the abuse of substance when faced with the problems and challenges.



The Department of Health's Dr Nandipha Luphuwana Nesengani, a Psychiatrist at Hayani Hospital addressed the audience under the topic 'Alcohol and Substance abuse by youth'.

Dr Nesengani said that previous studies conducted show that the use of substance such as alcohol, nicotine and cannabis are the most used drugs locally. The risk factor of the substance abuse can lead to genetic, social and environmental factors such as peer pressure, boredom and low academic aspiration or performance.

The substance abuse comes with different side effects in the brains. She mentioned that drugs can damage parts of the brain such as the prefrontal cortex, limbic system, brainstem and thalamus. Dr Nesengani highlighted the danger of using substance and she gave an example that the use of drugs can lead to Euphoria, intoxication, blackouts, withdrawal (autonomic hyperactivity) and dependency. In her conclusion, she said that alcohol and substance abuse have negative effects on personal social, health and economic costs.



Correctional Services Ambassador, Mr Ernest Tshabalala gave the message of support. Mr Tshabalala spoke about his heartfelt compelling story that touched the students and staff members.

"I was a young vibrant student, dedicated to my studies when I went to university," he said. He told the audience that life changed immediately when he went to tertiary institution and got mixed up with wrong people who he thought were friends. Mr Tshabalala did not want to get mixed up with wrong peers at the university, but peer pressure took away his focus. He ended up been addicted to substance abuse which kept him away from classes as he will be drinking with friends. He encouraged students to never put themselves under pressure and to never allow anyone to persuade them to do what they don't want to do.

"Be under your own influence, accept the situation that you are facing and do not try to fit in where you don't belong because you will end up getting mixed up with wrong people", he said.

The risk factor of the substance abuse can lead to genetic, social and environmental factors such as peer pressure, boredom and low academic aspiration or performance.



The SRC Minister of Safety and Security, Mr Yanda Ntlaku told the audience that students should always be under their own influence. "Substance abuse is a problem that can be solved through gatherings like this," he said. He concluded by advising the audience to never rely on drugs as a way of dealing with their problems but to use the facilities that are available at the university.

ANCYL takes over Univen Campus



The newly elected Univen SRC President Tsundzukani Hakamela (right) with Tshildzi 'Major 1' Mashau (left)

The African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) under the leadership of Tsundzukani Hakamela attained the highest number of votes and took over the campus from the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) after running the campus for three years.

Hakamela who is in his 3rd level of BA Development Studies, extends his gratitude to everyone who took part in the 2018/2019 elections moreover those who voted for the ANCYL. He said that amongst the projects he hopes to deliver during his term, is to ensure that physically challenged students get access to free laundry because of their physical impediments.

ANCYL walked out victorious with 3 314 votes with 8 seats and the EFFSC were runner up with 1 903 votes and 5 seats. Student Christian Organisation (SCO) had 123 votes, Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (DASO) got 38 votes, Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania got 24 votes, Azapo Student Convention (AZASCO) got 23 votes and Agang South African Movement (ASAM) got 17 votes.



UNIVEN welcomes exchange students and faculty from VIVES University College

The VIVES University College, Belgium exchange students and faculty were welcomed to the University of Venda on 1 October 2018 at the programme coordinated by the Directorate of International Relations at the Art Gallery. Students and staff who arrived from 26 September 2018 were working on Global Minds South Intensive Programme (SIP) funded by the Vilriuos government. It aims to do so through establishing a physical interaction network and intercultural engagement between selected communities to facilitate social learning and the exchange of knowledge and 'best practices' around lifestyle habits. This project is interdisciplinary in nature and it involves faculty from different departments at the Universities.



The visitors comprising 12 students and 7 faculty members were welcomed to the University by the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Jan Crafford. He showed appreciation to them for taking the time to visit our University at this period. He mentioned that he is very delighted for the trust and the mutuality of our partnership. During the SIP students will learn in the mixed interdisciplinary groups to find an answer on questions around health prevention in mental health and the good practices about health promotion and mental health.

There were a number of programmes slated to take place during the visit. The SIP group work is an interspersed with plenary sessions and interdisciplinary work which is always the key element of the programme. The VIVES students are working in partnership with Univen students in the collection of data and analysis during the programme under the supervision of the faculty in the School of Health Sciences. The programme will be rounded off on 12 October 2018 with presentation on preliminary findings at the Univen Art Gallery. Certificate of participation signed by the Acting Dean of Health Sciences, Prof Tshildzi Mashamba will be distributed to participants during the programme.

Left: Prof Jan Crafford, Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Mrs Nontlanhla Ntshona, Elke Denys, Project Manager, Ms Ellen Vandenbogaerde, Lecturer and Mr Joost Vanhaecke, Director Centre for Mental Health, VIVES, Belgium

Univen in partnership with the University of Linnaeus for over five years

The University of Venda (Univen) has been in partnership with the University of Linnaeus, Sweden for over 5 years now. During the period, staff and student exchanges have taken place in the School of Health Sciences particularly at the Department of Advanced Nursing.



Exchange students from Sweden pose with UNIVEN students

Fridda Erickson and Joannah Gustason are undergraduate students in the Faculty of Nursing at the Linnaeus University, Sweden. They have been on campus from 09 September 2018 until 28 September 2018. This was a two-week programme in the Department of Advanced Nursing under the supervision of Mrs Friddah Mathevela. The students participated in clinical accompaniment at nearby hospitals, classes and site visits and intercultural exchange programmes during the period. The visit was coordinated by the Directorate of International Relations together with the Department of Advanced Nursing.

Bela-Bela CPA and Univen research seminar for final year Animal Science students.

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) in collaboration with Bela-Bela Communal Property Association (BelaBela CPA) had on Thursday, 04 October 2018 organised a research seminar day for final year Animal Science students. The event took place at Zebula Golf Club, in Bela-Bela. The event marked the completion of the second objective of the collaboration agreement, which entails investigations into farm production challenges faced at Mahlomoholo Investments Ltd/Pty (Poultry Farm of the CPA). The students investigated the effect of in-house location (a proxy for variations in temperature) on laying performance of Hy-Line Brown chickens of different ages.



Participants at the student research seminar

Six final year students from the Department of Animal Science spent six weeks (from 08 January to 16 February 2018) on Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in Mahlomoholo Investments Ltd/Pty. Additional, during the same period they used four weeks to conducting their final year research projects at the same farm. The aim of the final year research project is to enable students to understand the why, what and how question of conducting research. Each student was allocated a layer house, three of the houses used flaps and water sprays (Type 1) whereas the other three used cooling pads (Type 2) to control room temperature and humidity. Investigations in Type 1 environmental control system looked at hens of 37 – 40, 43 – 46 and 53 – 56 weeks of age, where investigation in Type 2 environmental control system looked at hens of 20 – 23, 29 – 32 and 70 – 73 weeks of age. All hens were Hy-Line Brown.



Programme director Mr Barrington Mabuela

Mr Barrington Mabuela (Director of Mahlomoholo Investments Ltd/Pty) who was the programme director, gave highlights on the history, agricultural enterprises and achievements of the CPA, through a video. He said "it was the business approach used by the CPA (which makes it different from other CPAs) which makes it a dominant receiver of awards at provincial and national level". The recent involvement of the CPA in capacity development (in collaboration with UNIVEN) made news in (i) page 2, Internal News Letter January 2018, Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, (ii) page 1, Nendila February 2018, Newsletter of the University of Venda, and (iii) Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (<http://www.lida.gov.za/News/Latest%20News%20and%20Events/Pages/default.aspx>)



Ms Mahlako explaining the purpose of the day

Ms Jerita Mabula (The Chairperson of the CPA) gave a brief background of the journey that the CPA has travelled. "We are very proud to realise that through collective efforts we have been able to make a conducive learning environment for students, which is a feat never before imagined". The fact that they are a community structure that is able to certificate students was seen as a big achievement. She urged other CPAs' to emulate what Bela-Bela CPA is doing and also indicated that it will not be an easy journey. In conclusion, she welcomed stakeholders in attendance and invited for full participation in the proceedings of the day.

On the purpose of the day message, Ms Kgabo Mahlako, WIL coordinator, Department of Animal Science, UNIVEN said "today is aimed at sharing research findings from experiments which the fourth year students have conducted during their work integrated learning at the CPA poultry farm". She further said amongst us we have promising scientists who worked tirelessly on their research projects to find out if what was perceived as possible production challenges associated with egg production were indeed challenges the farm should be concerned about.

Each of the students was allocated 10 minutes to present the research findings, which included the topic; background; material and methods; results and discussion and the conclusions. The research findings will be submitted to peer reviewed journals, hence they will not be discussed further.



Students presenting their research findings

To contextualise and sum up the findings of the students work, Mr Justice Netshipale clarified that the performance parameters at various stages (weeks of production) as reflected on the expected normal laying production curve should be understood in that context and be used for comparison with observed data for similarity; and locations (three zones per layer house) are expected to differ in temperatures because of the convective forces and the proximity to the cooling system in the house. Mr Netshipale also presented a summary of student findings by making a comparison between the performances of laying hens of different ages in two cooling systems. Mr Netshipale chaired the questions and answers session.

In his complement message to the students, Mr Stephan Botha (of Eggsper Eggs, a business partner of Mahlomoholo Investments Ltd/Pty) said "the students had ensured that biosecurity measures were adhered to" by insuring that biosecurity protocols were followed at the farm entrance and entrances of layer houses. The students did not only minimize the risk of Avian influenza to the farm, but also contributed towards national Avian influenza control.



The collaborating institutions (The CPA and UNIVEN) acknowledged contributions from Mr Lesley Mashiloane (LDARD, with microphone), for devoting Tuesday the 2nd October for preparing students for presentations and voluntarily capturing the minutes of the proceedings.

Towards the conclusion of the day's work stakeholders had an opportunity to make recommendations. Stakeholders also proposed future work and research for the collaboration.

Mr Nicholas Magada from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Regional office in Polokwane, proposed a vote of thanks.

Continued from previous page.



The CPA committee and its partner Mr Botha (second from left on back row)

LEFT: Presenters, CPA committee & the manager of Eggspert Eggs during the research seminar day. Presenters front row from left: Shumani Khuguvhila, Kgomoiso Maholola, Zwanga Singo, Phuluthelo Netshipale, Murunwa Makhamedzha and Pfuluthedzani Sibanda.

UNIVEN bids farewell to the University of Warwick exchange students and staff



Students and teachers posing for a photo

The Directorate of International Relations held a farewell function for the exchange students from the University of Warwick, UK on Warwick in Africa (WiA) project. This initiative is a joint project between UNIVEN, University of Warwick and the District Department of Education. The exchange provides opportunity for volunteer teachers from the University of Warwick to teach

English, Science and Mathematics at the identified schools around Vuwani Science Resource Centre. The programme started in 2013 with the aim of increasing pass rate in English, Maths and Sciences at the identified schools. This year six Warwick students worked at Ratshikwekwete, Kolokoshani, Edison Nesengani Secondary Schools around Vuwani area from July to September 2018.

The lead teachers and principals from the three schools commended the efforts of the students and expressed their joy for the improvement they have brought into the teaching of Mathematics and English at their various schools. They also wished that the programme could continue a bit longer. They expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the University in contributing to the improvement of the standard of education at secondary schools in the Vhembe District. The students were encouraged to keep their networking contacts and stay in touch with

each other even beyond Warwick in Africa project. The farewell function took place at the Vuwani Science Resource Centre on 6 September 2018. The three participating schools were represented by Mr Matumba from Kolokoshani, Mrs. Tebogo Maba, Edison Nesengani and Mrs Daphney Sadiki from Ratshikwekwete. The Warwick students also expressed their appreciations and promised to visit again in the future. The programme was coordinated by Mr Hulisani Sithagu from the Director of International Relations.

Decolonisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education Provision Workshop



On Wednesday, 17 October 2018, the University of Venda (Univen) hosted the Decolonisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education Provision Workshop at the University Auditorium. The workshop aimed at creating robust discourse issues pertaining to the decolonising of Higher Education, particularly about the University of Venda. The discourse was graced by the presence of Prof Sandile Songca, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning at the University of Zululand.



Decolonisation may be a mirage without first entrenching Africanization

As the guest speaker, Prof Sandile Songca, DVC Teaching and Learning, University of Zululand made mention of the values that can help define Africanism. He urged the audience to read more about Africanization and decolonisation. He highlighted the need for due regard to be accorded to the issue of language in higher education. Prof Songca called into question the notion of transformation which has for so long massaged the issue of colonialism. In his view, reforms to higher education cannot be spoken of without a dismantling of colonialism. This is because the pillars of colonialism are still alive and well in higher education institutions. He noted that such dismantling is not sufficient, the next step is Africanization and this is in fact extremely crucial. In further questioning the language policies in South Africa's institutions of higher learning, Prof. Songca noted that the continuous use of English as a medium of instruction is a reflection of the depth of how colonised our minds continue to be. He underscored that decolonising the curriculum was not sufficient. Decolonisation of the industry and working environment remained critical otherwise the gains of a decolonized curriculum would be redundant. Prof. Songca also shared content of one of the papers he authored and called on the University of Venda community to engage with it critically with a view of taking the debate further about decolonisation.



In his opening and welcome address, the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Jan Crafford challenged students to first understand what decolonisation means and what it entails. He further advised them to create deeper conversations around the term decolonisation. Prof Crafford further indicated the necessity for students to engage with content that has local relevance. In Prof. Crafford's view, contextualisation of higher education remained crucial in so far as discussions of decolonisation were concerned.



Giving the purpose of the day was Dean of the School of Law, Annette Lansink who highlighted that the debate on decolonising the curriculum, though awakened by recent student protests, goes back in history. Notably, already in 1972, the African Association of Universities identified and formulated a new philosophy of higher education that focused on Africanization of higher education. The University of Venda, already, in the 1990's spearheaded initiatives such as the Black Perspectives Conference and a compulsory module on African Civilisation. Dean Lansink also made the point that the African curriculum must respond to the imperatives of social relevance and overcome the dependency on Western countries. However, she emphasised that the idea of African roots and reclaiming of Africa's past should not be based on pre-determined categories and meanings as African identities (like all identities) are contingent and not fixed a-priori.

She explained that the decolonising of the curriculum means freeing the mind and emancipating colonised knowledge. Dean Lansink also explained that internationalisation and decolonisation are not contradictory to each other but are in fact intertwined and in fact if anything, to her, internationalisation should be Africa focused.

The University of Venda, already, in the 1990's spearheaded initiatives such as the Black Perspectives Conference and a compulsory module on African Civilisation.



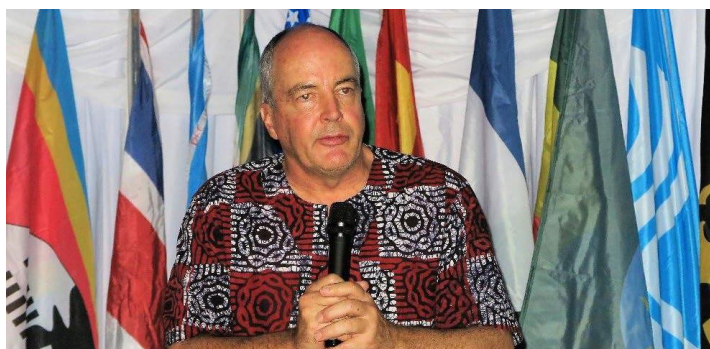
Ms Zama Mopai, a Lecturer in the Department of Jurisprudence and Comparative Law presented on customary law. She highlighted the need for customary law to take centre stage, not just in higher education but all spheres. She explored the possibility of entrenching customary law in all law modules as opposed to making it a standalone module. Ms. Mopai also underscored the tendency to leave customary law on the fringes of South Africa's Legal system and questioned whether decolonization in fact demands that customary law be given priority in various spheres including teaching and learning as well as judicial decisions.

Mr Joe Malinga, a PhD candidate at the School of Human and Social Sciences, noted that we can't speak of Africanization when, in fact, we can't exactly place our identities. He called this an identity crisis. To Mr Malinga, getting to grips with the notion of "Africanism" and underlying values such as "Ubuntu" remains crucial in the decoloniality debate.

After both presentations, there were table discussions coordinated by Prof Vhonani Netshandama and three rapporteurs. The discussions at the table were guided by themes including the meaning of decoloniality, Africanization, the values that the University of Venda should aspire to be in so far as decoloniality is concerned and the role of teachers and students in the decoloniality debate. The round-table discussions were extremely robust and each table gave feedback through individual representatives.

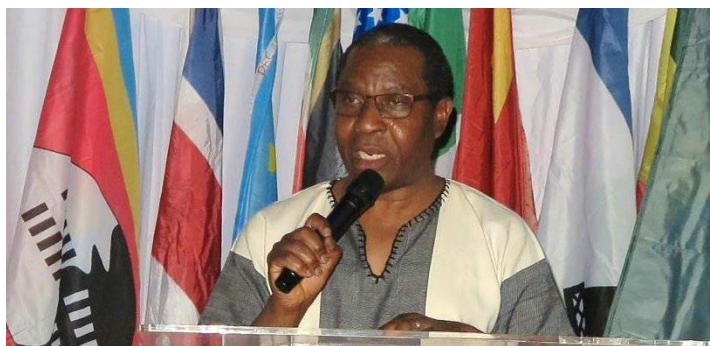
Internationalisation becomes a high priority in contemporary South African higher education

Internationalisation has become a high priority in contemporary South African higher education. The University of Venda (Univen) has responded by establishing environments for internationalisation events since 2016. Internationalisation evening is conceived as platform of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into teaching, research, community engagement and service functions of the University. The event is jointly organized by the Directorate of International Relations, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and the Univen International Student Union (UNISU). The core function entails discourse in internationalisation, presentations, performances (drama & dance), cultural food tasting, cultural attire and art exhibition. This year's event was held during the Heritage month at Univen Sports Hall on 19 September, 2018.



Prof Jan Crafford, Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal during the event

Prof Jan Crafford, the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, during his opening speech said that "highlights of the year is when we have internationalisation event." He stressed that the 'University of Venda don't only tolerate diversity but celebrate diversity because we understand very well the importance of diversity.' Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations expressed gratitude to both staff and students who convened at the event to promote internationalisation and cultural diversity in the University.



Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations during the event

Unpacking the purpose of the event, Dr Obadire stressed that diversity is an incubator for intellectual growth and innovation. He gave an insight on how diversity in South Africa has contributed immensely to research output and progress in science as students looked at academic challenges from different perspectives. He mentioned that Univen recognizes the contribution of those intertwined processes to one of the important objectives of higher

education graduate employability. He also alluded that recognizing the significance of a substantive international student body allows for cross-fertilization of ideas and intellectual exposure which are proponents of development in learning.' He submits by stating that one of the central themes of transformation in higher learning education is diversity therefore, the concept should be encouraged between and within groups in every society.



Ishmael Iwara, President of UNISU/Secretary General International Student Association of South Africa and other participants during the programme.



Mr Ishmael Iwara, in his capacity as the President of the Univen International Student Union (UNISU) and Secretary General of the International Student Association of South Africa (ISASA) joined efforts with international communities in South Africa and beyond to salute Univen for spearheading internationalisation agenda. He stressed that the level of diversity and cultural mix at the University is a contributing factor for groups across the globe to immigrate without fear of social exclusions.

Mr Iwara specifically applauded the students, especially the nationals who have integrated well with the international students at the University.

Mr Ndbezinhle Soganile, a Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems who facilitated an empirical exercise on the concept of diversity stressed that people should learn how to appreciate their diversities and strive to work in unity because working together enhances great achievements. He noted that the essence of the exercise is to synthesise the understanding of diversity, the level of diversity, and possible measures to promote diversity at the University of Venda and beyond.



Ms Nelisiwe Ngwenya, the Univen Student Representative Council (SRC) Minister of Sports who spoke on behalf of the SRC President mentioned that it is important to showcase and support different cultures and heritage. She also said that the students should continue to imbibe social cohesion and unity in their learning. Also present at the events were Dean Annette Lansink, Prof Vhonani Netshandama, Prof Ademola Jegede, Dr Emma Lubaale, Dr Simangele Mavunda, Ms Fatima Peters and many other staff members.

Student Entrepreneurial Week (SEW) Roadshow

Students are encouraged to take part in entrepreneurship programmes

On Monday, 8 October 2018, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted the 2018 Student Entrepreneurial Week (SEW) Roadshow at the Life Sciences building foyer. The roadshow is an Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) initiative that is brought to students by Universities South Africa (USAf) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This Student Entrepreneurial roadshow is aimed at encouraging students to become entrepreneurs and to develop concept ideas in to business opportunities.



Mr. Dene Botha, Managing Director of Pride Factor Life Academy addressed the students during the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE). Mr Dene is an entrepreneurial life coach who encourages the students to put their mind and focus towards starting a legacy. He urged students to become members of Life academy to access weekly lessons that are carefully structured. He further expressed that this inspirational curriculum includes life-enhancing aspects such as passion, persistence, direction, respect and improvement. Mr. Dene advised students to have a desire to be the employers not the employees.



Dr Norah Clarke, Programme Director of Entrepreneurship Universities South Africa (USAf) and Department Higher Education and Training said that she is pleased to see how students embrace this Entrepreneurship Roadshow. She further advised students to grab this opportunities while they are still at tertiary institutions instead of waiting until they graduate. The roadshow comprises of one day interactive workshop and pitching of idea competition with the prize worth R10 000.00 that has been organised by Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE).



Thembelihle Nkosi, Co-Founder of R&L Productions and also the Co-Founder of Reform Africa Group, a South African TV Presenter, Entrepreneur, Model and a brand ambassador for some of South Africa's leading brands addressed students on finding a way to navigate through their dreams. She advised them that the road to their dreams is not always easy to navigate. As a Future Leaders Ambassador at Lead SA, she helps shape the mindsets of South Africa's youth. She plays a very important role for Future Leaders, as they discuss humanitarian projects. She concluded by telling the students that being a brand influencer is a career on its own and told them to never be afraid to chase their dreams until they are achieved.



An aerial view of the attendees and a speaker.



Motivational speaker, Mr. Fred Bohashu, founder and director of Bunang Baswa.



Collection of students pitching their business ideas.

Being the author of two inspirational books and an energetic facilitator, he spoke about creativity and being hardworking. He motivated students to never lose hope. His talks dwelled much on motivating, encouraging and coaching the students to never give up on their business. Mr Bohashu told students to believe in their passion and to establish businesses to maintain their legacy instead of a lifestyle. Fred further said that a delay is not a denial, "let them reject you so that you can start your own."



Students with the most promising Business Pitch receiving the cheque of R10 000 sponsored by Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE).

UNIVEN Enhancing Recruitment Campaigns

Univen continues to build relationships with local school principals and circuit managers with the aim of enhancing recruitment campaigns

The University of Venda Schools Liaison Office joined hands with Malamulele East Circuit as part of "Apply before the closing date" campaign. Two separate sessions were held targeting school principals and grade 12 learners respectively focusing on the importance of applying to the University of Venda before the closing date. The event took place at Jilongo High School at Malamulele on Wednesday, 26 September 2018.

The Assistant Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Justice Lebopa, held the first meeting with principals from 11 secondary schools falling under Malamulele East Circuit. "The main reason to host this meeting was to promote good relationship between Univen and school principals under this circuit, especially when it comes to encouraging grade 12 learners to consider enrolling for the programmes of their choice with the University of Venda in order to achieve their future goals".

"Principals play a very important role in advocating learners to consider our University in their applications. It is unfortunate that many of our learners do not take advantage of our own local institutions when they apply, but when things do not go their way, they want to consider us as the last resort, and unfortunately by that time, they are late to get admitted at these institutions", says, Univen Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Takalani Nyelisani. "We will continue to build good relationship with our principals and educators to remind our learners of the great opportunities provided by our University in the course of their future dreams", continued Nyelisani.

"It is important to have a good relationship with our local schools as this will help our learners to apply for admission while there is still enough time," said Univen Assistant Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Justice Lebopa when addressing school principals in the presence of Malamulele East Circuit Manager,



Some of the grade 12 learners from Jilongo High School at Malamulele East Circuit who attended the "apply before closing date campaign" on Wednesday, 26 September 2018".

Mr Moses Ndouvhada, who chaired the session and appreciated the efforts being done by Univen in this regard.

"We use this opportunity to provide information about available bursaries that learners can apply for and that they shouldn't be discouraged to apply to the universities because of their family background. It is

important for us to participate in the Apply before the closing date campaigns for the purpose of sharing information with learners because some of the learners at schools visited, indicated that they didn't apply to the university because they can't afford tertiary education, some of them didn't even have an idea about NSFAS", added Mr Lebopa. The

Schools Liaison Office managed to visit 87 schools as part of "Apply before the closing date" campaign this year.

After addressing the principals, Mr Lebopa held a career guidance session with grade 12 learners from Malamulele circuit to encourage them to apply before the closing date of 28 September 2018 at Univen.



Front row from Right is Univen Assistant Schools Liaison Officer Mr Justice Lebopa followed by Malamulele East Circuit Manager Mr Moses Ndouvhada and school principals and circuit administration officers.

UNIVEN officially welcomes new staff members



The University of Venda hosted the New Staff Induction Programme from 26-28 September 2018. Day one of the induction was held at the University's Council Chambers on Wednesday, 26 September and was followed by two more days at Jericho Lodge on Thursday and Friday.



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Operations, Dr Robert Martin presented on some of the departments that are under his division and some of the goals set that he is keen to change. Dr Martin mentioned some of the things that are yet to be achieved. "We need individuals and colleagues who want to give rather than take," said Dr Martin.



Adv. Eric Nemukula, Manager Employee Relations presented on Employment

Relations and Policies. He explained that the role of Legal Services is to attend to grievances and complaints launched. His role primarily entails conducting investigations into complaints and grievances referred to the Directorate of Legal Services. He indicated different types of misconducts and how they are acted upon as they occur.

The Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Jan Crafford addressed new staff and spoke about the University's plan to be in the top 10 best Universities in South Africa. He elaborated on how a University's academic success is ranked based on the number of doctoral degrees produced. Prof Crafford showed that currently in the country Univen is number 15 out of 26 institutions of higher learning and is ranked number 75 in the top 200 Universities in Africa.

Part of the plan to meet the end goal of being in the top 10 Universities in the country is to improve the quality of the curriculum by decolonizing, Africanising and contextualizing it. Prof Crafford also made mention of the need to infuse entrepreneurship within curriculum which will address the issue of graduates being unemployed after graduation. Amongst other solutions was the need to be very innovative in research for it to be quality and not just quantity and to come up with a performance management system.



Presenting on behalf of the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Senior Prof Base Khoza was Dean of the School of Law, Dean Anette Lansink. Her presentation dwelled much on some of the values that Univen has. She emphasised on the quality of teaching and learning that Univen upholds. Dean Lansink elaborated on the level of community engagement and involvement as well as the partnership that Univen has in its name thus leading to one of its value of internalisation.



Mr Tinyiko Sibiya, who is the Risk Officer presented on the functions of his office and why they are important for the University's survival. He mentioned that their role is to reduce operational loss and surprises and to enhance decision making just to name a few. The advantage of the office is to be able to identify risks and try to manage them before they emerge and improve deployment of capital or resources.



The Director Human Resources, Mr Justice Manenzhe presented on the conditions of service. He explained the conditions of service and highlight some of the benefits for employees of the University which come in the form of incentives. He also mentioned issues of misconduct. Mr Manenzhe also talked about different types of leave. He also mentioned the provident fund, remission of fees as part of Univen employee benefits.



Senior Professional Nurse Mr. Edward Dongola from the Campus Health Clinic presented on the Campus Health services and procedures. He said the mandate of the Campus Health Clinic is to render comprehensive health and wellness services on Primary Health Care principles, HIV/AIDS programmes and Emergency Care services, supporting the Institutional Mission. He gave a brief overview of some of these services rendered at the Campus clinic which are; Primary Health Care Services, HIV/AIDS Services, Ambulance Care Services and Peer education project.

Day two and three of the programme were held on 27 – 28 September at Jericho Lodge just outside Thohoyandou, where other departments and University officials continued to make presentations. Staff development opportunities; Performance Management; Benefits and Processes; Information Technology (IT); Supply Chain Services and Procedures; Library Services; Facilities Management Services; Protection Services and Auxiliary services, were explained in detail.

The Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning team (CHETL) made presentations on eLearning at Univen, University Teaching and Assessment: Theory and Practice, Developing a learning guide for students, Student Counselling and Career Development, services for students with disabilities at Univen, as well as evaluation practice and personal or professional portfolio development.



New academic staff, organisers and presenters pose for a photo at the end of day three

UNIVEN participates in US-SA HE meeting at ASU, Boone

The University Staff Doctoral Programme (USDP) focusing on Mountain Research is a collaboration between the University of the Free State (UFS), Appalachian State University (ASU), Montana State University (MSU), Colorado State University (CSU) and the University of Venda (UNIVEN). The project is part of a bigger programme, the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP), which is funded to the tune of over R6 million by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and the higher education departments of United States (US), dubbed the US-SA Higher Education Network.

Like other USDP projects that are funded in line with the principles and goals of the UCDP, the project involves the training of 10 South African academics (referred to as USDP scholars) through collaborative supervision involving supervisors from both SA and US. To provide multidisciplinary doctoral training to young academics based at historically disadvantaged universities who will promote mountain research in the future through co-supervision. The USDP scholars are expected to complete their doctoral degrees within a period of four years.

The Steering Committee meeting was held at ASU, Boone between 3 and 8 September 2018. The representatives from each partner universities were in attendance both in person and via ZOOM at ASU, Boone. The delegation was welcomed to ASU by Prof Darrel Kruger, Provost and Executive Vice-Chancellor. The meeting was coordinated by Prof Jesse Lutabingwa, Professor of Public Administration and Associate Vice-Chancellor, Office of International Education and Development, ASU. Also present were Prof Geoffrey Mukwada, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, UFS who is the project leader; Dr Jared McDonald, Senior Lecturer, Department of History and Vice Principal Qwaqwa Campus, UFS; Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations, UNIVEN; Dr William Schumann, Director of the Centre for Appalachian Studies; Prof Peter Taylor, SarChi Chair on Biodiversity Value and Change in the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve, UNIVEN (via ZOOM); Dr Ralph Clark, Director Afromontane Study Unit, UFS (via ZOOM); Mr Cornelius Hagenmeier, Director International Affairs, UFS (via ZOOM); Mr Kanego Mokgosi, Senior Officer Internationalisation, UFS; and Prof Delwin Benson, CSU (via ZOOM). The project planned to have quarterly Skype meetings and an annual general meeting. The meeting agreed that partners should identify relevant academics to serve as supervisors for the scholars on the project. The ASU agreed to find supervisors for five of the scholars and both MU and CSU will find supervisors for the remaining five candidates. The meeting also agreed that the scholars should plan their first visit to the US between October and November 2019. ASU promised to provide a number of relevant workshops for the scholars during their visit to the USA. It was also mentioned that the scholars are free to publish their articles in the DHET accredited journal by ASU: Appalachian Studies.



L-R: Dr Williams Schumann, Director of the Centre for Appalachian Studies; Dr Jared McDonald, Vice Principal Qwaqwa Campus, UFS; Prof Geoffrey Mukwada, Professor of Geography, UFS; Prof Darrel Kruger, Provost and Executive Vice-Chancellor; Mr Kanego Mokgosi, Senior Officer Internationalisation, UFS and Dr Segun Obadire, Acting Director International Relations



Delegates with Prof Jesse Lutabingwa, Associate Vice-Chancellor, Office of International Education and Development, ASU and Prof Neva Specht, Dean School of Education.



Delegates with Dr Katherine Ledford, Lecturer in the Appalachian Studies

An important recommendation that came out of the committee meeting relates to the Academic Leadership workshop which is commencing in November 2018 at UFS, according to the USDP Grant Plan. To capitalize and benefit fully from this event, it was duly recommended that resource persons/facilitators should come from partner institutions, an arrangement which also provide participants with the opportunity to meet and iron out any obstacles that could hinder the successful implementation of the project. According to the Grant Plan, young academics, apart from USDP scholars will benefit from the planned leadership training.

Apart from the committee meeting, there were several other meetings and information sharing about the USDP project and possible exchange programmes held with the following faculty at ASU: Dr Neva Specht, Dean School of Education; Dr Katherine Ledford, Lecturer in the Appalachian Studies; Dr Sandra Ballard, Humanities; Dr Kathleen Rayman and Dr LaShanda Sell, Nursing Faculty; Dr Richard Rheingans,

Chair of Sustainable Development; Mr Christopher Lytle, Director Education Abroad; Mr Tom Hansell, Media department; Prof Jefferson Boyer, Sustainable Development and many others. The delegation also attended the symposium on the 40th anniversary of the Centre for Appalachian Studies, 45th anniversary of the Appalachian Journal and 50th anniversary of the WL Eury Appalachian Collection held at the ASU campus.

UNIVEN well represented at the 2018 IEEE Open Innovations Conference

The University of Venda's Department of Business Information Systems under the School of Management Sciences attended the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) 2018 Open Innovations Conference at the University of Witwatersrand, Braamfontein, Johannesburg. The conference took place from 03-05 October 2018. The University of Venda delegation was led by Prof Nixon Muganda Ochara, the School of Management Sciences Research Professor who was also the Chair of this first International Conference on Open Innovations themed 'Re-Creating Society through 'Disruptive' Digital Innovations''. Close to 100 delegates took part in the conference with representation from the following countries: South Africa, Namibia, USA, Sudan, Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Angola, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.



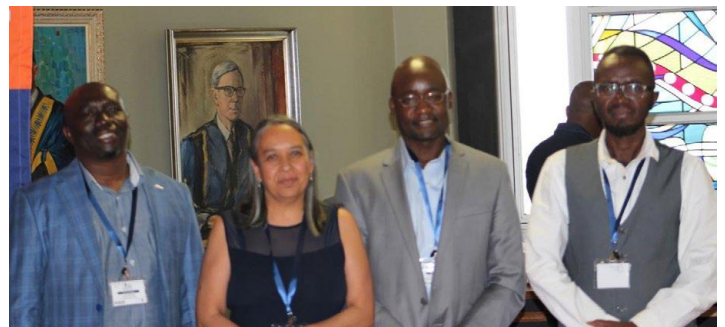
L-R: Nancy Odhiambo (PhD Student-Business Information Systems); Naziya Patel (Masters Student-Business Information Systems) and ICT Support Staff Member at University of Venda; Najiyabonu Patala (Masters Student-Business Information Systems); NGAP Junior Lecturer at University of Venda; Prof Nixon Ochara.: Research Professor- School of Management Sciences; Vhutshilo Macheque (Masters Student-Business Information Systems).



Najiyabonu Patala (UNIVEN): Presenting her paper on 'Adoption of Cloud-Cyber security: Challenges and Perceptions within Rural based Colleges- A case of Vhembe TVET College' at the IEEE Open Innovations Conference 2018



Naziya Patel (UNIVEN): Presenting her paper on 'E-learning Adoption in Rural-based Higher Educational Institutions in South Africa' at the IEEE Open Innovations Conference 2018. Prof. Hossana Twinomurinzi, Session Chair from UNISA is questioning the presenter.



The 2018 Open Innovations conference was graced by Dr. Happy Sithole, the Director – Center for High Performance Computing, CSIR (left); Dr. Lucienne Abrahams (second left), Conference Co-Chair and Host (University of Witwatersrand); Dr. Omondi Orondo (third left), of Acclaim Consulting (USA) and MIT alumni and Prof. Nixon Ochara (UNIVEN). The next conference is scheduled for the 2-4 October 2019 in Cape Town. Updates on the hosting institution will be made available on www.africaopen.org.



Vhutshilo Macheque presenting his paper on 'Design of Unbounded Rule-Based Expert Architecture for Selection of Software Development Methodologies' at the IEEE Open Innovations Conference 2018.

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