

From **inkpot** to **iPad** – towards an educational centre of excellence

Celebrating 30 years of education at the University of Venda

Where we are Creating future leaders



### Univen - world class education in a culturally rich ambience

Few places in the world offer one a conducive educational environment for the development of body, mind and soul.

This happens at the University of Venda, also called Univen, where in a semi-rural and semi-urban area one has access to the comforts and attractions of both urban and rural environments.

Univen is situated in the fast growing town of Thohoyandou - meaning 'head of an elephant' - in Limpopo, one of the most picturesque provinces of South Africa, on the southern side of the Soutpansberg Mountains.

Where does one experience world class education on the doorstep of one of the world's most popular game reserves, the Kruger National Park? At the University of Venda.

The university draws its cultural strength from the Venda, Tsonga and Northern Sotho cultural elements that have for generations been interacting and producing new cultural dynamics in their immediate environments.

### HOW DID IT ALL START?

The University of Venda was established as a branch of the University of the North on 18 February 1981, one of the last universities to be established in South Africa.

In terms of the South African Black States Constitution Act of 1971 (Act No. 21 of 1971), university education was specifically excluded. The university had a student population of 177 who had completed their first of year study at the University of the North.

To rectify the situation, the then Parliament of the Venda homeland promulgated the University of Venda Act, 1981 (Act 19 of 1981) on 6 November 1981. The government made no settlement or establishment grant available for the erection of buildings and the purchase of essential equipment for smooth operation of a university.

Univen opened its doors in 1982 in the buildings on the grounds of the Dimani Agricultural High School in the Tshivhase territory.

Like other historical black universities in South Africa, Univen was established to serve black people, particularly Venda speaking people. It was intended to be a Venda homeland institution to train and upgrade teachers' academic qualifications, to provide an educated elite with managerial skills necessary for the emergence of entrepreneurs who could establish manpower needs to assist the development for the Venda homeland in the fields of agriculture and business – "shumela Venda - work for Venda".

Venda was also a developing state which needed administrators and civil servants. By then civil servants were recruited from the ranks of the teaching profession. It was felt that specialised training in Law and Public Administration was required for the orderly functioning of the state and society.

The development of Venda is also reflected in the enormous growth in education since its 'independence' in 1979. The enrolment for standard ten rocketed from 338 in 1979 to 3 202 in 1982.

#### The origins of "Vendaland'

Vendaland was the last northern frontier to be brought under colonial rule in the 1890s. Independent chiefdoms were subjected to a new mode of operation since the penetration of the colonial system. Two to three decades before the colonial subjugation, the region was deeply penetrated by missionary enterprises of the Germans and Swiss.

The Bantu Authorities Act of 1959 played a critical role in matters of governance of the interior and later the affairs of homelands. The white establishment of the National Party designated the region a 'homeland', a 'home' and the land for the exclusive use of the 'land' for the Venda people. Ethnic construction and mobilisation found room to flourish with state support. This implied that Venda people would not have access to any land in the republic as their 'home'.

The Ramabulana polity which bought into the National Party vision of a separate but equal ideology was quick to convert the region into an 'independent homeland' under the political and economic jurisdiction of the apartheid system. The apartheid policy saw the flourishing of institutions separated by race and ethnicity. The neighbouring region in the southern part of the province in the Capricon District under the Mamabolo polity, provided land for the building of the University of the North or Turfloop as it was called, today known as the University of Limpopo, in the early 1960s.

From the moment of inception the University of Venda struggled to justify its status among the established similar institutions in South Africa and in the neighbouring states.

However, in 2002, the Department of Education in South Africa mandated the institution to transform into a comprehensive university that offers career, academic and vocationally focused programmes. Univen has not looked back since.

#### The pioneering years

"In 1980 I was in my office and I got a letter from the director-general for the presidency, Reverend Ndou. He said Ramano Patrick Mphephu wanted to see me. The University of the North wanted to meet the cabinet. We called all the ministers. I chaired the meeting and the president told them [that] we wanted a branch university. We were thinking of a branch University. Turfloop was also organising a branch university at Gazankulu."

Dr Nemudzivhadi, Venda government

More and more students from Vendaland faced frustrating situations of admission and regular boycotts far from home. This led to the formation of a pressure group to form a branch of the University of the North in Thohoyandou. Some students who studied at the Bantu Normal College in Pretoria were the nucleus that solidified this idea.

After this cabinet meeting, a delegation from the University of the North visited Venda. The president of Venda read a speech that was prepared and left the chambers while members deliberated on the idea. Nemuzhivhadi says in Venda, once the King has spoken, you do not oppose. So the President read the speech and left.

"The atmosphere was charged with expressions of 'ndaa, ndaa, ndaa' an expression denoting 'yes, yes, yes' in Tshivenda," says Nemuzhivhadi.

#### Some influential Venda government officials in the establishment of Univen

A task team to look at the logistical issues around the establishment of the University of Venda was established at Sibasa on 19 September 1980.

The team consisted of Prof JC Steenkamp, Chairman, Minister ERB Nesengani, Mr JN Ndwambi, Mr EE Maimela and Mr MH Nemudzivhadi of the Venda government, Prof MER Mathivha, Mr JT Makhado, Mr JH Conradie and Mr JF Grove.

Demarcating the geographical location of the proposed university emerged as one of the central issues that the task team had to grapple with in the pioneering years.

Many within the Venda government had identified a vacant piece of land on the Punda Maria road leading to the Kruger National Park. However, they were overtaken by a white trader who intended establishing a brick making project and the officials had to look elsewhere.

But around 1972, the Venda department of Education had established the Dimani Agricultural School next to the Venda College of Education. The idea

was to relocate the school to a different site to accommodate the University of Venda's operations.

The second challenge was the funding of this project. The Venda government accepted but this was no mean feat for a state that depended on the South African state to provide funding for higher education.

The Venda government had to garner support from elsewhere, for example, a loan from the Development Bank of South Africa. Univen was not supported by the apartheid government in the same manner as other South African institutions of higher learning.

The University of Venda operated as a branch of the University of the North from 1980 till 1981. Its status as a branch of the University of the North changed when the Venda government passed the University of Venda Act (Act 19 of 1981).

However, lecturers from the University of the North continued helping with curriculum development, intellectual assistance such as assessments of projects and the provision of part-time lecturers.

"To all the children of the Republic of Venda, I say, tertiary education you have for long cried for is within reach, make use of all the facilities thereof and enrich yourselves intellectually, socially and culturally."

> Venda Minister of Education, Mr ERB Nesengani

The majority of students were enrolled for Literature and Arts, Management Sciences and Law and Mathematical and Natural Sciences. The bachelors qualification was configured with a number of modules or courses. The different disciplines took shape as time went on.

The Sciences stream offered the generic Bachelor of Science degree. The bachelor's qualifications formed the basis of most qualifications with some diplomas in education.

Around 1985, the faculty of Agriculture was established. Prof Van Ree benchmarked with the Universities of Pretoria, Turfloop and the Witwatersrand. Then followed the faculties of Health Sciences in 1988, Environmental Sciences in 1995 and Graduate and Integrated Studies in 1999.

In 1986, most qualifications offered honours and the generic masters and doctoral degrees. The programmes have been continually reviewed to meet current standards.



Dr MH Nemudzivhadi



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Statue of the late Chief Minister of Venda PR Mphephu

#### The winds of change

The intention of the apartheid planners was to make a Bantustan institution, primarily serving the population of the Venda Homeland. Other ethnic groups from the surrounding areas were to be admitted only after a quota of Vendaspeaking people had been filled.

The majority of staff was white -

The Vice Chancellor and Principal was white

The Registrar Academic, the Registrar Finance, the Registrar Administration were white

The Director Personnel, the Director Public Relations and Development were white

The Assistant Director Technical Services, the Assistant Registrar Finance, the Assistant Registrar and Planning were white

The University Librarian was white

All heads of departments and deans of faculties were white

Only a few junior lecturers and teaching assistants were **black** 

The strong winds of change started in September 1992 when the Council – the highest governing body - started taking decisions which made life difficult for both staff and students. The Council expelled the white Vice Chancellor, Prof du Plessis, suspended the Registrar Academic and the Director Public Relations.

The situation on campus was tense. There was a serious boycott by staff, followed by a march to the government to demand the resignation of the Council.

Community based structures such as the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Azanian Peoples Organisation, the Parents Committee,

the South African Council of Churches, the South African National Civic Organization and many other external structures were approached to intervene.

In 1993 a meeting, later called the Broad Transformation Committee, decided that the Council should be dissolved and the Committee would become the interim governing structure.

Its mandate was to see to it that a new transformed Council is put in place and that all other existing campus structures be transformed. A commission of enquiry was established and suspended staff members, except the Vice Chancellor and Principal, were brought back.

After the Council dismissal of Prof du Plessis, a search team was established which led to the acting leadership of professors Philip Moyahabo Moila and Elias Lukhaimane for 13 months when Dr Ndoro Vera came in. Prof GM Nkondo became Vice Chancellor and Principal while Vera became his deputy. They were interviewed by the broad Transformation Committee in 1993-94.

They initiated complete change within the university. The Broad Transformation Committee was disbanded in 2000 to make way for the Institutional Forum.

With the advent of democracy in 1994, and with a new leadership at the helm, Univen embarked on a process of accelerated transformation. The new Vice Chancellor addressed the low research output, almost unemployable graduates and putting the university on the international map.

Management was also faced with the challenges of linking the university to the socio-economic condition of its own environment, without which Univen would not survive the rationalisation of tertiary institutions in South Africa envisaged by the national government.

In 2005 an international and institutional development office opened its doors in Tshwane. The aim of the office was to coordinate, support, and promote international and institutional development efforts throughout the university.

The middle of 2005 marked a crisis that left the institution with a leadership vacuum – without a vice-chancellor and a deputy vice-chancellor. The Council appointed an interim management team under the leadership of Professor Jim Leatt to take charge of the university's affairs.

The mandate of the new team was to help the university reach consensus around academic direction, heal the divisions among the institution's community and to revise the institutional operational plan for ministerial approval and implementation.

It was during 2000 and 2005 when centres and institutes were created to serve as sources of income generation, to complement academic activities in the schools and to best respond to local and international needs. Univen's budgeting process recognises schools and departments not in terms of costcentres only, but also as centres of income generation.

#### Communicating the changes

Strategies to improve the communication process, fundraising and developing effective marketing were put in place.

Univen Radio was established in 1997. The Capricon Univen newsletter rolled off the presses, followed by Nendila, the university's monthly newsletter.

Since 1995 Univen assemblies were conducted to inform staff members about new campus developments. Today the Vice Chancellor's Forum is a popular twoway communications forum.

Today Univen uses modern information technology systems throughout the organisation.

Univen is certainly a leader in institutional transformation.

At the 2012 Higher Education South Africa fellows exchange programme Univen was applauded as a bastion of transformation.

The programme, called the Higher Education and Leadership Programme, assists education institutions with leadership and management challenges.

Univen participates in the programme by sending fellows to other institutions to gain insight in 'how other people manage well'.

## **STRENGTH IN ITS LEADERS**

s an institution crafted within the historical South African social environment, Athe university has evolved to be an independent tertiary learning and research institution. Its strength is in its leaders who have contributed immensely to today's forward thinking Univen.

#### University leadership through three decades - 1981 to 2012

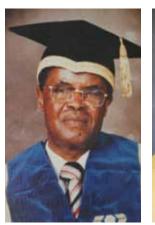
Through 30 years the leadership of the university benefitted from a range of leadership styles. Some have left legacies that have changed the university immensely. The first vice chancellor, the late Prof TL de Koning was an academic and an entrepreneur.

The university has had four vice chancellors and principals - Professors de Koning, P du Plessis, GM Nkondo, and Peter Mbati. It also saw three acting vice chancellors during thirty years - Dr N Vera, Professors MP Moila, EK Lukhaimane and Dr Jim Leatt.

In the same period, five chancellors served the university - Messrs ERB Nesengani, Z Mutsila, Walter Sisulu, Cyril Ramaphosa and Kgalema Motlanthe. Despite the enormous infrastructural backlog, Univen has produced some of the best graduates now serving both the private and public sectors in the country.

Students have always been exposed to the derived ideologies of the liberation movements, albeit in their fragmented status. From its early years, staff members were drawn from various backgrounds in South Africa, but by 1994 they were increasingly recruited from other African countries and from overseas.

This mix of staff from diverse backgrounds created a unique atmosphere and a fertile environment for new ideas and capacity for change. This is undoubtedly enhancing its mandate of serving the region. As an institution that was neglected by the racial state during the apartheid era, capital injection is needed to balance the higher education landscape.



First Chancellor Mr ERB Nesengani



Kgalema Motlanthe

Founder Vice Chancello African Deputy President & Principal Professor de Koning



Vice Chancellor & Principal Professor Peter Mbati.



The first Vice Chancellor & Principal Professor De Koning and the first Council Chair, Mr Burger.

#### **The first Council**

The first Council members were - Mr AJ Burger, Chairperson, Prof TL de Koning, Principal, Mr HJ Kirsten, Dr JBZ Louw, Mr S Makhuvha, Mr EE Maimela, Prof PC Mokgokong, Mr TC Potgieter, Prof RL Smith, Mr JP Ramabulana and Mr DP Wepener, Assistant Registrar.

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*Front* - Prof F van den Bogaerde, Unisa, Mr AJ Burger, Chairperson, Mr ERB Nesangani, Chancellor, Prof TL de Koning, Rector and Dr MJ Madiba, Unisa. *Back* - Mr J de Malan, UNITRA, Prof GT Hauptfleisch, Rand Afrikaans University, Mr TDG van Schalkwyk, University of Stellenbosch, Prof W Modinger, Qwa-Qwa, Prof JMW le Roux, University of Pretoria and Prof M Shear, University of the Witwatersrand. *Absent* - Prof PC Mokgokong.

#### The second Council

The second Council consisted of Prof PC Mokgokong, Chairman, Prof PW du Plessis, Principal, Prof VN Ralushai, Vice Principal, Prof JC Aucamp, Prof T van Ree, Dr JP McCutcheon, Mr SJ Bothma, Mr G Engelbrecht, Mr HJ Kirsten, Mr JS Kruger, Mr KB Magwaba, Mr TN Makuya, Mr MS Muloiwa, Mr PK Netshia and Mr P Oosthuizen, among others.



*Front* - *Mr MS Muloiwa, Prof PW du Plessis, Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof PC Mokgokong, Chairman, Prof VN Ralushai, Vice Principal, Mr H Kirsten. Middle* - *Mr PK Netshia, Prof JC Aucamp, Mr CJ Crause, Registrar Admin, Mr NJ de Beer, Registrar Academic, Prof T van Ree, Mr KB Magwaba. Back* - *Mr TN Makuya, Mr SJ Botma, Mr G Engelbrecht, Dr JP McCutcheon, Mr P Oosthuizen, Mr JS Kruger. Absent* - *Mr D Rust, Registrar Finance.*  After Prof Du Plessis' era, Council started searching for an institutional head. The university appointed Dr Ndoro Vera and Professor MG Nkondo as principal and deputy respectively. Appointments made in the first decade of the post-apartheid era saw the institution getting closer to the former liberation movements that were in government and rejecting the apartheid era entities

such as the Bantustans. The late Mr Walter Sisulu, a former Rivonia trialist and Robben Island prisoner, replaced Mr Z Mutsila as chancellor. He was succeeded by businessman Mr Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, a former student of Mphaphuli High School, a former secretary of the National Union of Mine Workers and a former secretary of the African National Congress.



Former Chancellor, Mr Z Mutsila



Nationalists and former chancellors, the late Dr Walter Sisulu and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa



University Registrar, Mr NJ Matidza, Dr N Vera (Deputy Vice Chancellor), Mr C Ramaphosa, (Chancellor) Prof MG Nkondo, Principal and Prof VM Mzamane (Fort Hare - Principal) (Mid-1990s):



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Front: Prof DR Thakathi (Deputy Principal ) and Prof Nkondo (Principal), Back: Mr NJ Matidza (Registrar) Mid 1990s.



Vice Chancellor & Principal du Plessis and Chancellor Mutsila



Prof V Ralushai (Deputy Principal 1993-1994) and Prof EK Lukhaimane (Acting Deputy Principal 1994)



Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic Prof MM Ramogale and Vice Chancellor and Principal Prof GM Nkondo





Dr Ndoro Vera, former Deputy Vice Chancellor and Principal



Former Council Vice Chair Justice Yvonne Mokgoro



Former Principal Dr Jim Leatt



Vice Chancellor & Principal Prof Peter Mbati



Council Chair Ms Shirley Mabusela



Professor TJ Mariba, Chairman of Council 1991-1993



Prof Eskia Mphahlele (Chair of fifth Council in 1993-1997)



Professor MP Moila (Acting Principal 1993-1994)



Prof N B Pitjana (Chair of sixth

Council in

1997-2001)



The present Council



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Chancellor Kgalema Motlanthe welcomed for a graduation ceremony

#### Student leadership

Throughout its existence, the university's student base has always played a very active role. Today the Student Representative Council is represented at the highest level of decision making.

To enrich students' experiences, teaching is now complemented by student development programmes and services that stimulate learning, while enhancing their wellness. Departments and centres like Student Affairs, the Centre for Quality of Life, the Centre for Student Counselling, Social and Academic Development and the Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture Unit facilitate student development.

The current leadership has consolidated the gains of the institution by embarking on a massive infrastructural development. It is also leading the way to position Univen as a fully comprehensive university, serving the needs of the communities it operates in and the country as a whole.

#### The post-2008 leadership



From left - Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic: Prof Xikombiso Mbhenyane, Deputy Vice Chancellor Operations: Dr Jannie Zaaiman, Registrar Mr Khuliso Nemadzivhanani and Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Peter Mbati.

#### The 2002 student leadership



Leshabana Leofi Philip and KS Hlonyana

#### The 2005 student leadership







The 2012 student leadership

RO Lamola





ME Nefuri



Mafulo Mudau

Shonisani Masutha

Andani Mathelemusa

### THE INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGE

N ever before in the history of South African tertiary education have so many resources – both human and capital – been injected into such a worthy cause – the positioning of the University of Venda.

With the multimillion Rand government support for infrastructural development - enhanced by the university's self-generated funds, already in place - the renovation and expansion of this national educational asset is firmly on track. The present university leadership has embarked on capital campaigns to raise funds for especially infrastructural development.

However, much more assistance is needed to ensure that Univen, a national centre of excellence, plays its rightful role as the centre of tertiary education for rural and regional development in Southern Africa.



The face of infrastructural developments - 1981 to 2012



Revolutionising the face of Univen from 1981......to the present era in 2012.

From these humble beginnings in the Dimani Agricultural School, 30 years later, the Deputy President of South Africa and University Chancellor, Kgalema Motlanthe officially opened the New Life Sciences Building in May 2012 as one of the hallmarks of the major government-supported reform projects on campus.

#### Developing infrastructure for a university of the future

The infrastructural development on campus happened in three phases - the inherited Dimani infrastructural structures, the intervention of the Development Bank of South Africa during which the A and D block lecture halls, the Mathematical and Natural Sciences building as well as the auditorium were developed. The third phase can be seen as the post-2008 government-driven recovery initiatives, culminating in the current multi-million Rand infrastructural development.

#### The first phase

The inherited structures of the Dimani Agricultural School, currently C-block that houses the School of Human and Social Sciences.









The computer laboratories constitute the first generation of the Univen premises

The Univen Bookshop underwent some renovations and was initially part of the Dimani Agricultural School premises



The Office of the Dean for Human and Social Sciences was also part of the inherited Dimani School structure

#### The second phase

The major source of funding for the university's second generation of infrastructural development was a loan from the Development Bank of South Africa. The Venda government supported the Univen initiatives through grants,

however, not to the same extent as those to other institutions of higher learning in South Africa. In the last ten years massive infrastructural development has taken place through government redress initiatives and fund raising projects.

#### The university library







University auditorium in 1985



University auditorium in 1985

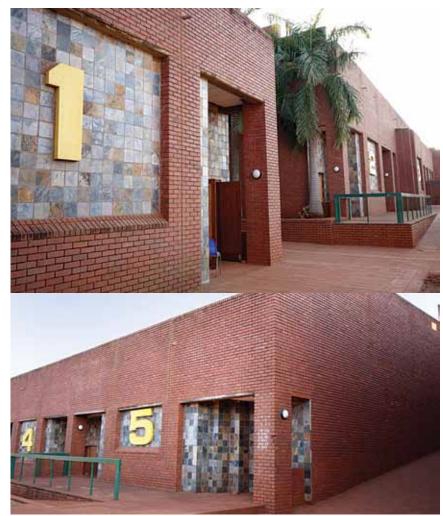


Levelling the grounds for the auditorium in 1985



Auditorium towards completion in 1986

The A-block lecture halls



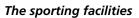
The construction of the A and D block lecture halls and the auditorium marked a break away from the Dimani premises and aligned the infrastruactural development to the needs of a tertiary institution benchmarked with other local and international institutions.

The School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences



The student residences









...and the biggests show on earth, the 2010 FIFA World Cup was also celebrated on the Univen campus.

#### The third phase - the post-2008 era

The extention to the School of Environmental Sciences building marked the beginning of the third phase of the infrastructural development, funded by the government's recovery plan for homeland tertiary institutions.





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The E-block lecture halls constitute major intiatives in upgrading and modernising the learning evironment. The halls are equiped with state-of-the-art learning facilities and accommodate an average of 250 students each.









#### The new Life Science and Chemistry building

There is general concensus that the new Life Science and Chemistry building is the foot print of Prof Peter Mbati's tenure of office. It is one of the most magnificent and well thought-through 'art-craft' buildings on campus.









The New Female Residence





#### A glimpse of things to come...

Literally no stone is left unturned to turn the Univen campus into a world-class teaching and learning institution. Whilst great strides have been taken, future developments include a Science Park, additional lecture halls, a building for the School of Health Sciences, a new health clinic, an academic community training centre, an indoor sports centre and other improved sporting facilities, four new student residences, a 24-hour study centre, an information technology centre and a new mining engineering building.

These expansions are firmly distinguishing the university as a national education asset, whilst assisting the institution to meet its commitment to the people and communities of Venda.























#### Univen, a research institute of the future

"Universities across the world are key strategic research assets for the growth and development of modern societies. Univen is no exception and will help serve as an engine that drives the regional growth and development strategies of Limpopo."

Prof Peter Mbati, Vice Chancellor and Principal.

Univen has recorded a 650 percent growth in research output from 2007. According to the latest Department of Higher Education and Training report, Univen is awarded 58,37 units for research output publications - an increase of 71 percent. The university has also been awarded two new research chairs – one in biodiversity - value and change in the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve- and one in communal land and rural entrepreneurship.

Developments on the academic side include the filling of positions to improve research output. These include research professors, senior professors, adjunct professors, professors extraordinaires, distinguished teaching professors, professors of the practice, clinical professors and teaching assistants.

The annual Vice Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Research is assisting greatly to entrench a culture of research on campus. Annually more than 200 people are awarded for outstanding research performances.







### THE ACADEMY

Univen provides world-class tuition against a background of a proudly African institution that nurtures cultural diversity and people-driven principles and that is prepared to face the challenges of the information age head-on.

The university took the forefront in terms of transformed curriculum packages in the post 1994 South African higher education dispensation. In 2003 a directorate of quality assurance and promotion was established to prepare the University for new demands. It ensures quality and promotes it in all sectors of the university, including the academic work in teaching, research and community engagement.

The years 1995 to 2000 were characterised by a vigorous process of curriculum transformation. The curriculum designed fitted well with the provision of numerous government policy documents, especially the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development of 1994, the White Paper on Science and Technology of 1996 and the Education White Paper of 1997.

During this time the schools system was developed, which became fully functional in 1996.

Univen operates eight schools -

- School of Agriculture
- School of Education
- School of Environmental Sciences
- School of Health Sciences
- School of Human Sciences
- School of Law
- School of Management Sciences
- School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences

The Quality Assurance and Promotion Directorate was set up to ensure that the university meets its planned level of quality and performs to specifications and raise the level of academic and administrative performance to national and international standards.

The directorate promotes benchmarking by establishing linkages - both local and international - in pursuit of best practice and through external peer review systems.

When established, Univen had to accommodate 5 000 students. Due to the demand for access to higher education, the university was forced to double its intake, which currently stands at about 11 000 students – the majority from poor socio-economic backgrounds. This puts immense pressure on the current infrastructure to accommodate the needs of an increased student and staff population.

Nevertheless, Univen is doing its utmost to provide students with a multitude of choices to ensure that they follow the correct academic path, according to their capabilities and aptitude.

Its academic offerings of degree, diploma and certificate programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels are responsive to the needs of the job market in South Africa's ever-changing economy and diverse marketplace.

In transforming to become a comprehensive University, Univen now offers a diversity of programmes and qualifications, both theory and application driven, with career focused diplomas and certificates.

#### **Tuition beyond South Africa's borders**

For many years Univen has provided tuition to students from beyond the country's borders.



Zimbabwean students, for example, are a substantial part of the Univen student base with a remarkable record of academic excellence. The Resident Governor in Zimbabwe, Mr C Mushowe (back) on a campus visit.

### Student profile at a glance

Region	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
SADC	52	50	185	224	320
COMESA	5	91	13	15	14
Nigeria/Ghana/West Africa	8	10	12	17	16
Other Africa	29	23	15	20	16
Asia	0	0	2	0	0
Europe	0	0	3	3	3
TOTAL	94	181	232	279	369
% Annual increase		98	28	20	32
% Total enrolment	0.90	1.62	1.97	2.56	2.43



#### From around the globe Univen has honoured people

Somewere in the world someone proudly holds an honorary doctorate from Univen.



**Dr Navanethem Pillay** - Dr Pillay is a South African top achiever and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

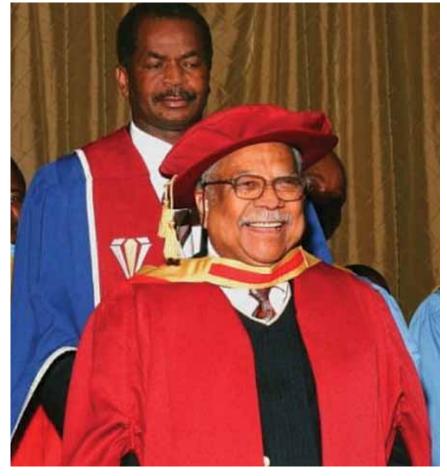
She studied law in Natal. She was the first black woman to open a law practice in the then Natal Province in the 1960s.

She was an acting judge while in South Africa and has become the first African woman to occupy the position of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Human rights are challenging issues that have not become central to a number of countries around the globe where there are abuses on a daily basis – this makes her office a very busy one. As a woman, leading the commission, the university is proud of the leadership she is providing.



**Advocate Bernard Ngoepe** - Judge of the Transvaal Provincial Division of the High Court of South Africa. Ngoepe has had an illustrious career as a lawyer fighting for human rights in South Africa.

As a judge, he made huge contributions to the development of the law in South Africa and the gallant struggles he and others on the Bench have made in improving the law and the understanding of human rights in South Africa.



**Professor Ali Mazrui** - An African scholar from Kenya based in the United States of America.

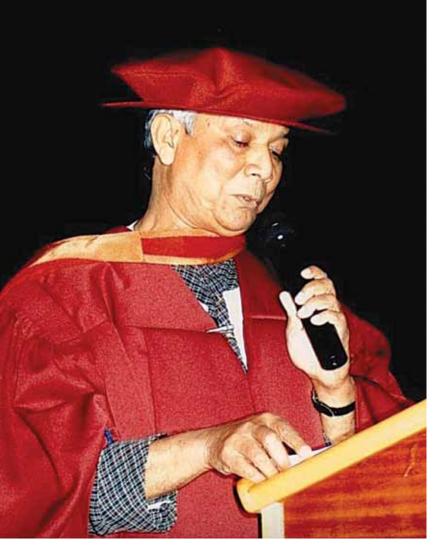
He has written many books and journal articles on the history and politics of the African continent. He is one of the Pan Africanist scholars to emerge from Africa and continues advocating for the rights of Africans across the world. Mazrui's scholarship has inspired a lot of African scholars through his varied publications.



**Joel Netshitenzhe (Peter Mayibuye)** - The African National Congress military wing operated underground since the years of banning in 1960 till 1993.

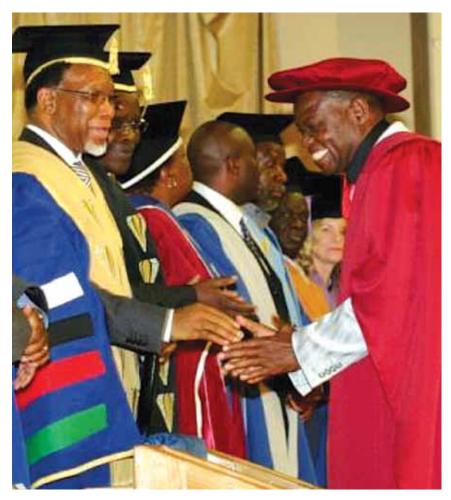
Joel Netshitenzhe, known in underground circles as Peter Mayibuye, was attached to the publicity and information committee of the ANC. As a South African with origins from Venda, the University recognised the contribution he made towards the creation of a new democratic society. As a former exile operative, he was barred from visiting his relatives and native land and could be arrested if he visited Venda during the homeland days.

He was Head of Government Communications during the Thabo Mbeki presidency. Netshitenzhe is a member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress. He is part of the ANC think tank and heads the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection.



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**Prof Mohammed Yunus** - The services of Yunus were recognised after establishing the Grameen Bank in India, one of the biggest peoples' banks in India.



**Thomas Chauke** - Thomas Chauke plays traditional Xitsonga music.

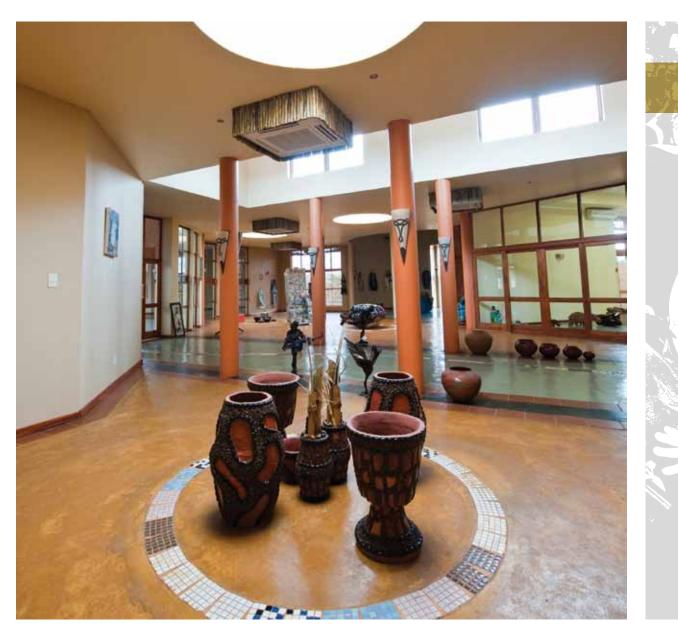
The Mathivha Centre for African Languages and Culture honoured the promotion and preservation of the Xitsonga language through his music. Although the musician has not gone far in his education, he has developed his talent through the genre of music. Through the music he plays, he has created a huge following for his type of music.

**Professor Bernard Magubane** - the South African sociologist and activist was recognised for the scholarly work he has produced.

The studies focused on theoretical and sociological explanation of the apartheid system and capitalism. His work has been useful to students of sociology, politics and history. As a former exile who returned to the country in the early 1990s, he continued writing and led the South African Democracy Trust.

**Duma Ndlovu** - the author is a scriptwriter of Muvhango, an SABC soapie.

This programme is enjoyed by many people in Venda and some parts of the country. Although it started focusing on a Venda audience, the interest has shifted to other population groups because of the multiple use of South African languages.

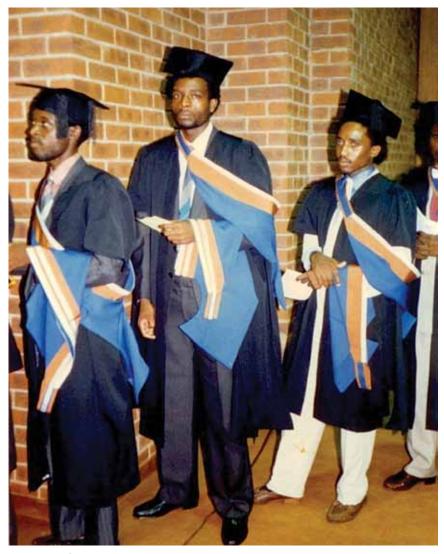


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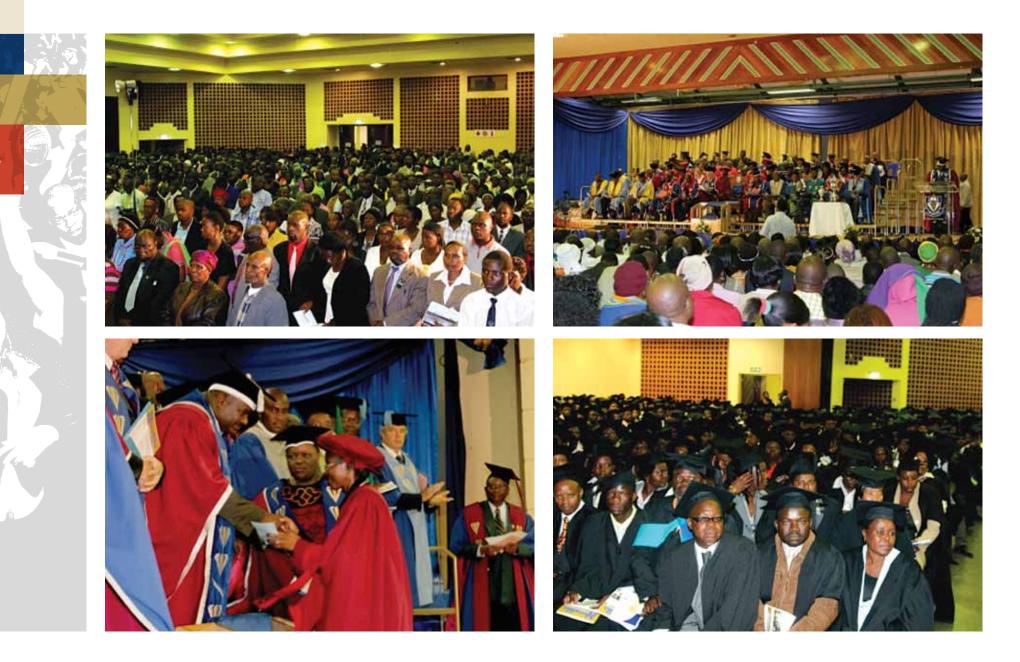






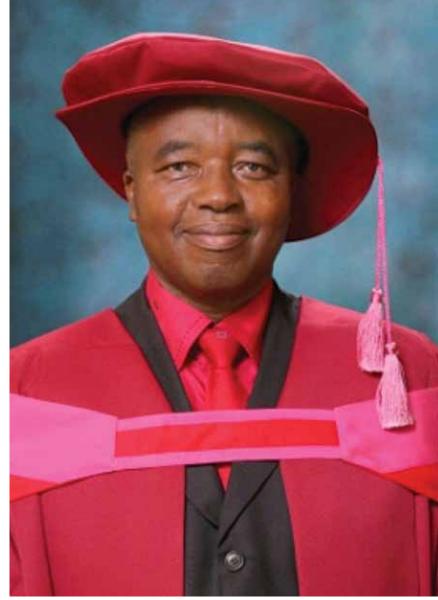
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The class of '85















#### Putting itself to the test – the Higher Education Quality Committee audit

In 2010 Univen underwent a fully-fledged audit by the Higher Education Quality Committee, a requirement that is applied to all institutions of higher learning. Auditing universities is done to benchmark their physical facilities in relation to teaching, learning and community engagement with the aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The audit found that the university met many of the necessary conditions to be successful in its endeavour to fulfil its mission. These included a committed and qualified staff and dedicated students, a management team that is providing leadership and stability and infrastructural work that is addressing some of the serious problems derived from lack of maintenance and the over-enrolment of



students. It also found that the university was establishing new forms of accountability and administrative processes to provide order and transparency to decisions and the ability and honesty required to identify internal weaknesses and the determination to address them.

The audit panel emphasised that the university requires focused state support to enable it to fulfil its role in the national higher education system, in the local and provincial contexts and to make effective its contribution to social justice and national development.

The auditing team and Univen management

### THE YEARS AHEAD

The University of Venda has undergone several changes in its thirty year existence. Built and rooted in Venda, the institution has evolved to be an international tertiary icon.

Through three decades it emerged from a 'homeland' university to a national education asset that stands its ground among its peers. Initially drawing its student base from Venda, the flow of students has shifted to cover the provinces of Limpopo and Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North-West, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Southern African Development Community region, especially Zimbabwe.

Univen has seen a phenomenal growth of its student population and produced some of the best scholars in the different fields it is offering. With the continued support of its stakeholders, it will continue to be a driving force in the economy of Limpopo, serve the communities it operates in and nurture its students to be able citizens when they enter the ever-changing marketplace of a multi-facetted, developing country on a vibrant continent.

The future bodes well for the University of Venda.



# THE RESEARCH TEAM



**Rachidi Molapo** is a graduate of the Universities of Cape Town and Western Cape. He holds a PHD in history from Western Cape. Molapo is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Venda.



**Pertina Nyamukondiwa** holds a BA and an honours degree in International Relations from the University of Venda. She is studying for a master's degree in the School of Agriculture and Rural Development.



**Kudakwashe Chingombe** holds a BA and an honours degree in International Relations from the University of Venda. He is studying for a master's degree in the Department of Development Studies.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to these individuals and the institutions they represent.

Prof Xikombiso Mbhenyane, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic for unlocking some offices for the project and all the support she offered.

Dr Nanga Lidovho and Advocate Netangaheni provided some documents on the land issues.

Mr Manna Fourie, Professor Van Ree, Mr Matidza, Mrs Mashimbye and Dr Nemuzhivhadi, among others, for their willingness to be interviewed.

The late Mrs Norah Machaba for information from the research for her master's thesis.

Mr Maumela and his team of the Media Centre and Mr Joel Vele and his team of Information Technology Services for technical support.

Mr Kathu Mphidi located vital documents in the library.

Ms Welheminah Mabogo of Communications and Marketing has been helpful in identifying some information.

Gordon Harris Photographic Services in Pretoria provided some photographs. Mr Bali Makhado, Mr Dominic Mokoena, Ms Grace Mutsila and Mr Robert Mabilo gave some of their personal photographs.

Since the establishment of the University of Venda many individuals made outstanding contributions to its wellbeing.

Men and women of stature would have wished to share the thirty year-celebrations with the university community, but death has robbed us of these illustrious sons and daughters.

Their contributions are etched in our memories and their legacy is too strong to be shaken.

Institutional histories deal with scores of individual experiences. It is not possible to mention the experiences of each individual, but important is to see the turning points in the history of the institution that reflect on those individual experiences.

Univen acknowledges the important role that the third Council under leadership of Chairperson, Mr MJ Malatji played during 1989 to 1991 – a very turbulent period for the University and the country. The university regrets that it was not possible to get any photograph of Mr Malatji to use in this publication.

The community, members of staff and students and the Department of Development Studies have all provided a platform for me to leap into uncharted territories of historical inquiry. This is not and will not be the last word on the history of the University of Venda.

For all those individuals who had a hand in this project I would like to say, A vhari tshilele. Ndaa!

Rachidi Molapo





University Road, Thohoyandou, Limpopo Private Bag X5050, Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, 0950 Tel: +27 15 962 8000 Fax: +27 15 962 4749 Email: info@univen.ac.za

> Produced by Junxion Communications 2012 Editor - Ben Rootman



