



Adv Gumbi confers 2666 certificates, diplomas, and degrees during Autumn Graduation Ceremonies



UNIVEN Chancellor, Adv Mojanku Gumbi conferred a total of 2 666 certificates, diplomas, and degrees during the graduation ceremonies which took place over four days in seven sessions. The graduation ceremonies took place from 14 to 17 May 2024. Out of the total number of 2666 graduates, 38 were the PhDs who graduated only in this Autumn graduation.

In her congratulatory address, UNIVEN Chancellor, Adv Mojanku Gumbi apologised to graduates on behalf of her generation for not making this country one of the best in the past 30 years. In 1994 the country was pregnant with hope. Unfortunately, along the way, some people became greedy, some became liars while others became thieves. She told graduates that it is unfortunate that the country that they are going to walk into is not a country that South Africans have hoped for. She said UNIVEN is trying to fix the things that her generation could not achieve in the past 30 years. When talking about the shoes that she has donated, Advocate Gumbi mentioned that this donation is not just a gesture of ubuntu and the celebration of 30 years of democracy, it is also because she wanted to show graduates that there is hope. The hope of entrepreneurship. The hope for graduates to create jobs for many unemployed people. She said a young man and a woman from Free State Province decided to manufacture Modern Mbadada shoes. "One woman from Mpumalanga Province crafted the shoes called Mama Kea and the last one being a young Black man from Limpopo who designed Bathu." Adv Gumbi said these young people saw that the country is faced with challenges of unemployment and decided to create opportunities for themselves and employed others. She said she is doing this because this University is trying to channel graduates into the entrepreneurship space. "We can get this country revived in the next 30 years. Once in your lifetime, you need to stand for something irrespective of challenges. Let us do the right things for once. Make sure that the next 30 years are better than the previous 30 years of democracy. When you walk out here (referring to the graduation hall), tell

yourself that you are going to do better than my generation." She congratulated graduates, parents and guardians and advised them to go and cast their votes on 29 of May.

"Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it." Those are the words of Malcolm X echoed by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni acknowledging that it might had been a long and exhausting, but certainly a rewarding journey for graduands. Prof Nthambeleni echoed these words during the University's 2024 Autumn Graduation ceremonies.

"Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it."



Ms Rivingo Berverly Phakula (middle on the photo above) emerged victorious as she is the UNIVEN overall best performer and won the Senate Medallion.

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Autumn Graduation PhD Graduates

Prof Nthambeleni continued to report to the parents, graduands and the community at large that the success of a University is measured by the standing of its academics, researchers, and the quality of its outputs, inter alia graduates and the research it produces. He said there is a direct correlation between the quality of the staff and the quality of the outputs. In other words, you cannot expect to produce good research outputs and quality graduates if your staff is below par.

In the new rankings report of Times Higher Education for 2024 that was released on Tuesday, 14 May 2024, the UNIVEN has performed very well in the new ranking category of South African universities at the age of 50 and below. UNIVEN has been ranked number four, number one being UJ, UKZN, NW, UNIVEN and DUT."

He mentioned that in the same report of Times Higher Education, the UNIVEN has also improved its global/world ranking and is now in the top 300 universities in 2024 moving from top 400 in 2023.

"All of this is happening because we have invested a lot in promoting and encouraging our staff to further their studies and acquire higher degrees. This investment is paying off as we are witnessing an increase in the number of permanent staff with PhDs. The quality of our academic and research staff is also evident in the increase in the number of our rated researchers, which has grown exponentially from only 12 in 2012 to 46 in 2024. It is precisely because of this quality that our University is gaining recognition nationally and internationally for its rigor and scholarly outputs." When speaking about the Best Performing Student Awards, Prof Nthambeleni highlighted that UNIVEN strives to produce graduates that are locally relevant and globally competitive and to effectively achieve this mission, this University needs partners from different industries and business entities.

He expressed his profound appreciation to all donors and sponsors for sponsoring awards to UNIVEN's best performing students. Prof Nthambeleni further appreciated the support that UNIVEN has received from Forever Resorts South Africa. Two weeks before graduation week, he signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Forever Resorts South Africa and through this partnership, ten graduates with BCom Tourism and Hospitality Management will be placed at different resorts throughout the country for a period of 12 months.

He also expressed appreciation to MEDILAC and Ekurhuleni Artisans and Skills Training



Graduates seated at University Auditorium, ready to celebrate



UNIVEN Choir

Centre, subsidiaries of TEFLA Group for placing 17 graduates from the University of Venda for 24 months. "I am glad to announce that these graduates have already started their internship programme from 01 May 2024 until 30 April 2026.

On the same note, the Vice Chancellor and Principal recognised the selfless leadership and the generosity of the Chancellor of the University of Venda, Adv Mojanku Gumbi. He said as our country is commemorating 30 years of democracy this year, the Chancellor bought 180 pairs of sneakers from her own pocket that she distributed to 30 female graduates in six sessions of the 2024 Autumn graduation ceremonies.

"On behalf of our graduates, management, and staff, I want to thank you Chancellor for your caring, exemplary leadership." He expressed his profound gratitude to the Chancellor.

It is in this graduation where the Honourable member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Finance, Dr Joe Maswanganyi graduated Doctor of Philosophy (Political Science).

Dr Edward Mafadza, CEO of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Management.

The audience also witnessed the Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Ms Nomalungelo Gina graduating Masters in Public Management. During this Autumn graduation, six University staff members were conferred with doctoral degrees. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal also announced

that one of our Campus Security personnel, Mr Emmanuel Naledzani was conferred with a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture. While Ms Lydia Ramatsea who is also a Campus security personnel, received her Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

The current Secretary General of SRC, Mr Ngelekanyo Maduwa was conferred a Bachelor's degree in Public Management from the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law.

As he concludes his welcome remarks, Prof Nthambeleni expressed that he is confident that these graduates embark on their life's journey after being academically equipped to cope with the demands of the modern sophisticated challenging world that they are about to enter.

UNIVEN Senior Managers reach the final milestone of their leadership development training journey



UNIVEN Senior Managers posing for a photo after GIBS handing over of certificates ceremony

The University of Venda through the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria, undertook a training for its Senior managers on Leadership Development programme that aims to ensure that there is proper capacity building for employees to safeguard a seamless process of succession management. The leadership and management development programmes were developed in collaboration with various institutions that are already in the space of leadership, management, and executive management development programmes.

The programme came to conclusion through the handing over of certificates, graduation that took place at GIBS Campus in Johannesburg on Wednesday, 22 May 2024.

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) Registrar, Dr Joel Baloyi as the keynote speaker during the graduation ceremony at GIBS campus elaborated on the phrase "Non scholae sed vitae discimus" which translates to - "we learn for life and not for the classroom," a phrase that emphasises practical education rather than just mastering literature.

Leadership education should focus on preparing leaders to tackle the complex scenarios faced by society and organisations in today's VUCA and BANI worlds. The University Registrar underscores that leaders must have vision, understanding, clarity, and agility, as well as the ability to think in different boxes simultaneously and generate integrated solutions that impact present problems and consider long-term sustainability. He mentioned that this requires agile thinking, decision-making, strong teams, integrated thinking, and value alignment.



Dr Joel Baloyi

Dr Baloyi maintained that traditional problem-solving paradigms, such as design thinking and systems thinking, are no longer sufficient. He indicated that universities must also address issues related to access to higher education, such as academic exclusion, student financial aid, quality assurance, regulatory requirements, and good governance. He cited that the Gordon Institute of Business Science, a world-class business school, is a prime example of a world-class institution that has a strong reputation for excellence.



Dr Takalani Dzaga

Dr Takalani Dzaga, Director Marketing, Branding and Communication shared the leadership development programme journey from the participant's perspective, emphasising the importance of a human-centered approach, fostering a culture of learning, and promoting ethical conduct. He highlighted the distinction between leading and managing people, accenting the importance of emotional intelligence, delegating responsibilities, and ensuring psychological safety.

He said the training also highlighted the importance of being positive, communicating for impact, and conducting performance reviews more frequently. Dr Dzaga also spoke about the design thinking principles, encouraging colleagues to follow acceptable standards to solve complex problems. Collaboration was also emphasised, particularly the promotion of collaboration rather than competition. He stressed that the value of the investment in the training would soon be realised and committed to the University Executive Management to ensure the successful implementation of the University Strategy, using the skills acquired through the training.



Dr Sannah Mativandlela

Dr Sannah Mativandlela, Director Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance pointed out that the UNIVEN Leadership Development Programme aims to improve higher education performance and student outcomes by addressing challenges and complexities. She stated that as Senior



Lorraine Morris, Dr Phillia Vukea and Dr Joel Baloyi during handing over of certificates

Managers, the programme enhances leadership skills and expands knowledge within the University's strategic objectives. Dr Mativandlela highlighted the importance of learning-in-action assessments to assess one's competence and excellence. She alluded that the programme aims to foster a deep understanding of the University's mission, values, and long-term objectives among departmental leaders.



Some of the members of The GIBS team..



Prof Morris Mthombeni



Kalleho Tsotsotso

On behalf UNIVEN, Mr Matamela Matibe, Training and Development Practitioner (on the photo above), expressed a vote of thanks. In his remarks, he expressed profound gratitude and extend a heartfelt appreciation on this momentous occasion of the graduation ceremony for UNIVEN Senior Managers who have successfully completed the Leadership Development Programme at the prestigious Gordon Institute of Business Science. Mr Matibe said that he has learnt that senior managers should not be defined by their titles, position and status-but humility, honesty and 'Vuthu.' He expressed appreciation to GIBS team for having played a vital role in making this Leadership Development Programme a success. "Your guidance, wisdom and support have been precious in shaping the minds and capabilities of our university's future leaders. Your commitment to excellence and dedication to nurturing talent have not gone unnoticed," Mr Matibe highlighted.

On behalf of GIBS Jayshree Naidoo when facilitating the programme, expressed a deep appreciation to UNIVEN for choosing GIBS to offer this training to its leaders and hoped for a continued healthy relationship between GIBS and UNIVEN.



Lathasha Subban



Jayashree Naidoo

"Your guidance, wisdom and support have been precious in shaping the minds and capabilities of our university's future leaders. Your commitment to excellence and dedication to nurturing talent have not gone unnoticed,"

NJM Foundation donates 200 food parcels to UNIVEN students



On Tuesday, 28 May 2024, the NJM Foundation donated 200 food parcels to unfunded University of Venda (UNIVEN) students. The ceremony took place at the UNIVEN Sports Hall.



The Director Marketing, Branding and Communication, Dr Takalani Dzaga said UNIVEN is excited to host this important event where NJM Foundation provided the support to UNIVEN students. He expressed the University's profound gratitude to NJM Foundation for the generous contribution which will enable UNIVEN students to achieve their potential. Dr Dzaga highlighted that many students are supported by the NSFAS but there are still many students who need this kind of support.

"It is not possible for students to excel in their studies if they sleep on an empty stomach. For this University to continue producing the best graduates, we need funders like NJM Foundation to support our students because this will assist the University to achieve its mission."



NJM Spokesperson, Mr Lucky Tshilimandila highlighted that the NJM Foundation is donating because they know that students need this kind of donation. He mentioned that the NJM Foundation is donating to the University which will later identify deserving students who will be the beneficiaries of this funding.



UNIVEN SRC President, Mr John Ndaka thanked the NJM Foundation for this donation. He appreciated the donation of the food parcels. Mr Ndaka made a call to other foundations and organisations not to donate and disappear but to continuously donate to students. He encouraged students to go out in numbers and vote.



The Head of Student Governance, Mr Andisani Mathelemusa appreciated the NJM Foundation for choosing UNIVEN students. "We know that this is a temporary solution to our challenges, but it will go a long way." Mathelemusa urged other donors to donate to students as well. He wished students best of luck in their examination.



Mr Tonny Rachoene thanked NJM Foundation on behalf of students. "We salute NJM Foundation for their generosity and we wish them the best in their future endeavours. It takes a village to raise a child." He told the beneficiaries of these donations that he hopes that the donations will assist them to achieve their goals and pass their examination.



Mr Jones Maphalaphwa said the NJM Foundation has extended the helping hand to students who were faced with a harsh reality. As the Chairperson of the Foundation, he said he saw a need to donate to students. "The decision to support UNIVEN students is to create the future for this country. We want to empower our youth especially those who are taking education seriously. We are investing in the future of our beloved children." He concluded by mentioning that this is a reminder that each one of us has a role to create a brighter future for this country. "Never underestimate the value of your education," he told students.



Limpopo MEC of Health, Dr Phophi Ramathuba expressed the appreciation and recognition to UNIVEN for allowing them as government to come and witness what the NJM Foundation has done for students. She thanked the donors for this donation. "The University is a theatre for grooming you to be a better person. No student should remain hungry, no one deserves to sleep on empty stomach. The gift of giving is a difficult one. People always want to receive and never give." She thanked the donor for his generosity without expecting anything in return.



When giving a vote of thanks, the Director for the Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning (CHETL), Prof Lindiwe Mulaudzi thanked NJM Foundation for their generosity. She briefly shared with the audience, the initiatives of Thoho-ya- Nzie project. She wished students a successful examination.

Ten Tourism Management students to benefit from the MoU between UNIVEN and Forever Resorts South Africa



Mr Eugene van Jaarsveldt and Prof Bernard Nthambeleni

Forever Resorts South Africa agreed to host 10 of the University of Venda Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) degree in Tourism Management students as a pilot initiative this year and this is demonstrably highly commendable consideration, and the University is proud by its motto for creating future leaders. The 10 students, enrolled in honours programmes will embark on their Work Integrated Learning (WIL) journey from July to December 2024.

The University of Venda led by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Forever Resorts South Africa led by its Managing Director, Mr Eugene van Jaarsveldt. The signing ceremony took place on Tuesday, 07 May 2024 at Warmbaths Forever Resort. This MoU signing ceremony marks the inauguration of the WIL programme between Forever Resorts and the University of Venda.

The Executive Dean Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, Prof Modimowabarwa Kanyane in his message said it is with great significance that this occasion highlights a pivotal moment for the University, notably the Department of Tourism and Hospitality within the Faculty of Management, Commerce, and Law. The inception of the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) degree in Tourism Management dates back to the year 2002. Originally, an evident void existed within this programme, specifically the absence of a practical element essential for exposing students to authentic work settings.



Prof Kanyane

Prof Kanyane indicated that by introducing WIL into our curriculum, the primary aim is to strategically motivate students to pursue potential careers to foster economic innovation and growth on local, national, and international fronts to be ahead of the curve. WIL substantially elevates students' prospects of securing employment, as graduates who have undergone work-integrated learning are highly sought after by prospective employers due to their prior industry experience and connections.

On behalf of the University of Venda, Prof Nthambeleni stated that he is privileged and honoured to witness this important moment and milestone in the history of our University and Forever Resorts South Africa. He said the University of Venda has long been a beacon of hope, a place where dreams take flight, and futures are shaped. Furthermore, Prof Nthambeleni stressed that the University stands tall as a testament to the power of education to transform lives and empower individuals to make a positive impact in society. He finally mentioned that our partnership with Forever Resorts is not only transactional but goes beyond the exchange of money towards contributing to the transformation of our society.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of Forever Resorts explained that this memorandum symbolises more than just a formal agreement. It represents a shared commitment to excellence in education and professional development. He further said that through this collaboration, "we are laying

the foundation for innovative initiatives that will enhance learning opportunities, foster academic growth and empower individuals to reach their fullest potential." He continued to say "As we embark on this journey of collaboration, let us keep in mind the transformative impact our combined efforts can have on shaping the future of education and workforce development. Together we have the opportunity to break new ground, inspire positive change and make meaningful contributions to society.

"We are laying the foundation for innovative initiatives that will enhance learning opportunities, foster academic growth and empower individuals to reach their fullest potential."



Mr Andrew Mathebula

When welcoming the guests the Training and Development Executive, Mr Andrew Mathebula highlighted that the signing

ceremony marks a pivotal moment as we come together to solidify a partnership that holds immense promise for both institutions and the broader community, more specifically Forever Academy, affectionately known as "The Hub of Knowledge."



Mr Botwe Kraziya

UNIVEN Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Mr Botwe Kraziya as he expressed a vote of thanks said the University is about providing an education that empowers.

He said when he first met with Dennis he asked him 'how can we have mutually beneficial activities that enrich both our organisations, which align with both our strategies? The signing of the MoU between these two institutions was an answer to the question. Mr Kraziya continued to express that this Work Integrated Learning will ensure that our graduates are relevant and marketable in the work environment. He concluded his talk by mentioning that this MoU is a clear indication that UNIVEN and Forever Resorts share similar interests and values.



12193 Grade 12 learners from 156 Vhembe District schools benefit from the 2024 UNIVEN Careers Exhibition



The University of Venda (UNIVEN), in partnership with the Careers Exhibition and Information Association (CEIA), successfully hosted the 2024 UNIVEN Careers Exhibition for the Vhembe East District from 6 to 10 May 2024. This significant event took place at the University Research Centre Parking and aimed to provide invaluable career guidance, exhibition and opportunities to the high school learners of Vhembe East District.

The exhibition saw an impressive turnout of 12 193 grade 12 learners from 156 schools across the Vhembe District. These learners were given a unique opportunity to explore various career paths and engage with representatives from various institutions and organisations.

The exhibitors' lineup was extensive and varied from universities, universities of technology, private and public colleges, showcasing the breadth of opportunities available to the learners. In addition, other stakeholders from the private sector, parastatals, and public sector departments were present, alongside organisations offering financial support for further education.

One of the highlights of the exhibition was the provision of on-the-spot online application services. This initiative allowed learners to apply to their preferred programmes right

on campus for the University of Venda, streamlining the application process and making it more accessible. This immediate application capability was particularly beneficial for students who may not have easy access to online resources at home.

The Careers Exhibition not only provided a platform for learners to gather information but also offered interactive sessions wherein internal experts and professionals from internal departments and four faculties shared their insights and experiences, inspiring learners to make informed decisions about their educational and career paths.



UNIVEN Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Mphinyana Nemasitoni, emphasised the

University of Venda dedication to youth empowerment through education and career guidance, which was clearly demonstrated throughout the careers exhibition. He remarked that the event was not only about presenting information but also about creating an engaging and supportive environment for the learners. The University's proactive approach in collaborating with various stakeholders ensured that students had access to a comprehensive range of resources and support systems."

Overall, the 2024 UNIVEN Careers Exhibition was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impact on the attendees. It highlighted the University's dedication to fostering educational and professional development in the Vhembe District and beyond. The event undoubtedly played a crucial role in guiding many young minds towards a brighter and more informed future.



A talented Univen Physics Master student from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture selected to attend the prestigious 2024 Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Germany



Ms Modjadji Rebecca Letsoalo

The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAF), as the official partner of the Lindau Foundation and with funding from the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), nominates young scientists from South Africa annually to attend the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings. The meetings are a forum for young scientists from around the world to engage in-depth with Nobel Laureates on research and overall career management aspects.

Ms. Letsoalo is one of the eight young scientists from South Africa selected by ASSAF (Academy of Science of South Africa) and the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings to participate in the 73rd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting dedicated to Physics, which will take place from 30 June to 5 July 2024.

Ms. Modjadji Rebecca Letsoalo is a young woman, from Sebayeng Village around Ga-Dikgale in Polokwane. She obtained a Bachelor of Science in Physical Sciences in

the year 2020 and Honours in Physics (cum laude) in the year 2021 from the University of Limpopo. She enrolled for a Master of Science in Physics, at the University of Venda in 2022 focusing on Material sciences (Microsystems technology). She recently submitted her Master thesis and is currently waiting for the results. She's currently a Physics Comment magazine assistant for SAIP (South African Institute of Physics), and a Science communicator at Inkubeko Youth and Science Center, Bridging the gap between the scientific community and the general public, and promoting a more informed and scientifically literate society.

In her research, Ms. Letsoalo was investigating on Hydrothermal synthesis of nano-scaled pure, Sn, and Zn-doped Co₃O₄ structures and their gas-sensing applications under the supervision of Dr. Katekani Shingange from MINTEK and Prof. Eric Maluta from the University of Venda. The project aimed to develop nano-enabled Co₃O₄-based

gas sensors for the detection of various gases in the agriculture and food industry space. The experimental development of the nanomaterials was coupled with theoretical studies through computational calculations for a better understanding of the interaction between target gas molecules and the nanomaterials.

Ms. Letsoalo has Won the South African Women in Science Awards (SAWISA 2023) under the DSI Ndoni Mccunu Masters fellowship category and was 2nd winner for student/Post-doc oral presentation at the 9th South African Conference on Photonic Materials in 2023 at Skukuza rest camp in Mpumalanga for her masters work.

The FSEA is very proud of the student and her supervisor and the Department of Physics who has prepared her in her science journey and we wish her all the best in her future career and we know we will hear more great achievements from her.

ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter opens for 2024 academic year



ABASA UNIVEN student chapter is in collaboration with SABPP, Department of Accountancy, and ABASA Limpopo Representatives

On Friday, 10 May 2024, the Department of Accountancy, together with the Association for Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA) Limpopo Education Committee, organised a welcome session for the newly appointed interim board members of the ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter. The session was held at the University of Venda (UNIVEN).

Apart from introducing the ABASA UNIVEN 2024 interim board, the session also sought to enhance the board members' collaboration with the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) members. Such a collaboration will provide insight into the possible career paths for BCOM in Accounting general and BCOM in Accounting Sciences for UNIVEN students. This event is in line with several Faculty of Management Commerce and Law's Strategic Objectives (SO), including the following:

- To enhance student well-being and success (SO1).
- To strengthen the engagement of students, staff, and community stakeholders (SO3).
- To develop an entrepreneurial culture (SO6).
- To strengthen the University's local, regional, and international profile and visibility (SO15).



Dr Arthur Reynolds from the Department of Accountancy

ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter's Special Guest, Dr Arthur Reynolds, a senior lecturer at the University of Venda, thanked the UNIVEN ABASA Interim Board for the invitation as a special guest. Dr Arthur Reynolds challenged students to explore different career paths within the accounting profession. He encouraged students to follow career paths that align with their interests. Students must pursue scarce accountancy specialisations that will guarantee employment at the end of their studies and ensure they will be happy with their work.

During his speech, he also advised students to continuously learn starting at a younger age as this will set them apart from other graduates in future. "In 2019, when I secured employment here at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), I was competing with other potential candidates who were CA(SA)s, but my doctorate in Accounting set me apart from others, and I ended up getting an employment here", said Dr Arthur Reynolds when emphasising on the importance of continuous learning. When concluding, Dr Reynolds advised the students to use vocational work opportunities as these could be opportunities to learn about the cultures and working environment of their potential employers. He encouraged students to pursue postgraduate and professional qualifications, such as the PGDA/CTA, SAICA, ACCA, CIMA, SAIGA, and SAIPA. Dr Reynolds told the students that UNIVEN is working on Postgraduate (CTA), ACCA, CIMA, SAIGA and SAIPA accreditation. He believes that these accreditations will be a game changer for UNIVEN students.

Also present in the event was Mr Peter Munyai, the ABASA Limpopo Representative, 'An Associate of General Accountant South Africa AGA(SA),' and Founder and Managing Director of Zone Incorporation, a firm specialising in Taxation and Accounting Advisory Services. He awarded prizes to students who answered his questions correctly as a way of motivating them.

He also encouraged students to recruit other students who are in the accounting stream to join ABASA as this could be a better opportunity for students to guarantee traineeships/internships at the end of their studies as ABASA has signed a MoU to

partner with FASSET to provide internships to ABASA members after completion of their undergraduate studies.

Mr Peter Munyai supported Dr Arthur Reynolds's recommendation regarding vocational work opportunities as this could be opportunities for students to create a good impression on their future employers, which might result in a better chance of finding employment at the same company after completing their studies.

He continued to assure the UNIVEN Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law (FMCL) Faculty Chairperson that ABASA not only

focuses on advancing black accountants in terms of employment, but it also encourages advancement in black entrepreneurship.

The Chairperson of the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, Mr Vusi Karabo Mokoena, thanked the ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter for the invitation. In his speech, he mentioned that he is grateful for the good work that ABASA is doing specifically for UNIVEN students, as they are being equipped with mindsets of being employers rather than employees. He believes that UNIVEN students will be great future leaders with these mindsets.



Mr Peter Munyai, ABASA Limpopo Education Committee Representative and UNIVEN FMCL Chairperson Mr Vusi Karabo Mokoena



Department of Accountancy Representatives L-R: Mrs Caroline Tshikhovhokhovho CA(SA), Ms Rendani Tshinavhe, Mr Ambani Tshikhovhi CA(SA) and Mr Casios Ayimahanonne Ungedzani (UNIVEN Academic Trainee from PwC).

Accountancy students receive practical tips on navigating the job market successfully



Some of the students and stakeholders during the Career Exploration Day

On Monday, 27 May 2024, the University of Venda's (UNIVEN) Internal Audit and Risk department in collaboration with the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law (Department of Accounting) held the Career Exploration Day at Lecture Hall 1 of the Education Building. The aim of this Career Exploration Day was to introduce students who will be graduating next year (2025) to the diverse opportunities and career paths available after completing their studies as these young professionals transit from academia to the professional world.

Through this Career Exploration Day and by interacting with professionals from different fields, students have gained a deeper understanding of the industries they can explore. They have learned about job roles, responsibilities, and growth prospects. These students have established connections with industry experts, potential employers, and fellow students because networking is crucial for building professional relationships and accessing hidden job markets. Various organisations sent representatives who provided personalised advice on career planning, skill development, and industry trends. Students have received practical tips on navigating the job market successfully.



Students were given an opportunity to visit the exhibitors' stalls that focused on resume writing, interview preparation, and soft skills development. These students left the stalls being empowered and better equipped to compete in the job market next year. There was also an opportunity for students to sign up for free membership with some of the professional bodies present and already start reaping some of the benefits of affiliation.



Some companies that participated in the expo offered students tips on how to apply for trainings, internships, graduate programmes, or full-time positions. This event was a bridge between academia and employment.



Stakeholders from various companies delivered their presentations. Participating stakeholders included UNIVEN's Human Resources department represented by Takalani Tshidada and Lucette Muila; Sello Malatsi represented the Southern African Institute of Government Auditors (SAIGA); Kenneth Ugoda represented the Limpopo Provincial Treasury; Thifhelimbilu Rathogwa represented FASSET; CHAPU was represented by Sisana Khoza and Jerminah Mamabolo; Timothy Mokobodi represented the Institute of Internal Auditors South Africa Limpopo Region; Advent Sedibane and Ellen Mabitsela represented Motlanalo Inc; Sekgala Mokobane represented the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA) while Thapelo Hlapa represented the Auditor General South Africa.



The Director of School of Law, Prof Lonias Ndlovu spoke about the movement of students from academia to a professional world. He told attendees that most people are saying accountants that are trained in South Africa are highly preferred or regarded as the best. Prof Ndlovu indicated that there are various career paths in the finance field and students should decide as early as possible on which career direction to take. He said that the journey in accounting needed people who are ready for continuous professional development. "Do not stop studying, always aim to empower yourself and to improve your skills and qualifications."



In her vote of thanks, Director Internal Audit and Risk, Mrs Diana Makwarela thanked students and stakeholders for availing themselves to this Career Exploration Day.

The Internal Audit and Risk directorate had planned this day as the month of May is Internal Audit Awareness month to raise awareness around the profession and the positive impact which auditors and accountants make to organisations around the world.



The programme was directed by Mr Takalani Thabo.



In his opening and welcome remarks, a Senior Lecturer: Accountancy, Mr Liberty Maunzagona thanked the exhibitors for investing their time on UNIVEN students. He advised students to make use of this Career Exploration Day and gather as much information as possible.



An exploratory meeting on the partnership between African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) and the University of Venda through the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture



Prof. Natasha Potgieter (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture at UNIVEN)

The African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) and the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture through the Department of Earth Sciences held their first meeting on the ARM/UNIVEN partnership. This partnership aims to identify areas of mutual benefit and importantly create opportunities for mining and geoscience students of UNIVEN. The meeting was held on the 8th of May 2024, at the UIGC Lecture Hall at the University of Venda.

The delegates from ARM, Faculty members from the Department of Earth Sciences, and the Mining and Environmental Geology students were in attendance. When welcoming attendees, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture, Prof. Natasha Potgieter, welcomed the initiative and the progress made so far by both the Department of Earth Sciences and ARM. She further shared the vision of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture which is guided by the University Strategic Plan 2021-2025, and how such partnership aligns with the faculty's vision of the engineering programmes that will fall under the School of Engineering and the Built Environment.



Dr. Busi Tshabalala, Group Executive Human Resources at ARM



Mr Benny Boshelo, Executive Cooperate Affairs at ARM.

The Group Executive responsible for Human Resources at ARM, Dr Busi Tshabalala, opened her talk by thanking her team for the initiative in establishing this partnership. In her talk "Message to Young Talent," Dr. Tshabalala reminded the students to be focused on their studies and work hard so that they can achieve their academic objectives and make a meaningful contribution towards community development. She applauded the Faculty and UNIVEN for being student-centered and mentioned that ARM would extend opportunities to the students by selecting the best talent, endeavour to support them, and offering them employment.

The Executive Cooperate Affairs of ARM, Mr Benny Boshelo, thanked UNIVEN leadership for their commitment and the drive to create future leaders. He further said UNIVEN is recognised in the mining industry not only by the UNIVEN graduates who are employed in the mining industry but also by those who have successfully established consultancy firms that are now serving the mining industry. Furthermore, he stated that ARM is prepared to assist UNIVEN and that this should not only be looked at in monetary form but also in other forms where UNIVEN has challenges for the well-being of UNIVEN and the students.



Mr Victor Moyo, Geology Manager at ARM



Mr. Felix Mayanga, Mine Manager at ARM

Mr Victor Moyo, Geology Manager, ARM, presented the different resources and joint ventures that ARM is involved in and singled out a few relevant topics that students must consider important to succeed as geologists. In his talk, he emphasised that "attitude" is very important for one to succeed in the work environment and that this trait is taken seriously by ARM during their recruitment

process. Mr Felix Mayanga, Mine Manager at ARM, presented the different technological advances that ARM has implemented in their mines. He advised the students to embrace technology and further stated that they should take the initiative and undertake online courses on artificial intelligence (AI), as this is where the mining industry is heading. His presentation was followed by that of Dr. Amu Modau, SHREQ Manager at ARM Platinum who emphasised the importance of occupational health and safety in the mining industry.



Dr. Amu Modau, SHREQ Manager at ARM Platinum



Lebo Pasha, Organisational Development Specialist at ARM

The Organisational Development Specialist, ARM, responsible for Stakeholder Engagement, Lebo Pasha thanked the UNIVEN team and ARM team for making this meeting a huge success. She further said that ARM is committed to improving young talents' lives, and therefore, students should reciprocate by working hard.

The presentation from the Department of Earth Sciences by Prof. Milton Kataka (Interim Head of Department) provided an overview of the Department, programme delivery, and the challenges.



Group picture of UNIVEN and ARM representatives

Campus Health Services organises the First Men's Health Conference



Male staff and students who attended the Men's Health Conference

The South African National Integrated Men's Health Strategy 2020-2025 is a framework for action to work towards the goal that will ensure that South African men and boys are supported to live a long and healthy life. This strategy aims to deliver a comprehensive and integrated package of care for South African men and boys.

It is for this reason that from 21 - 23 May 2024, the University's Campus Health Clinic conducted a Men's Health Awareness Campaign at the School of Law Parking. The purpose of the campaign was to further ensure that men and boys receive treatment, care, and support services for chronic conditions as needed, to build the evidence base for improving men's health and promote healthy lifestyle to the University Community.

During the campaign, screening and testing for different conditions such as blood pressure and blood sugar, cholesterol, TB, STIs, Cancer, HIV, BMI were conducted by Campus Health Clinic staff and Centre for Biokinetics team. Dentists from Tshilidzini Dental Department also rendered their services. The total number of 650, comprising of 155 male students, 95 male staff members and 400 female students accessed these services.

On the last day of the Campaign, 24 May 2024, the first Men's Health Conference was held at the University Auditorium, promoting a healthy lifestyle. The conference aims to empower and support men and boys to improve their own and each other's health and wellbeing under the theme: 'Build your Tray the Healthy Way and be The Hero Again'. The event was attended by both male university staff and students and was supported by officials from the Department of Health.



Mr Edward Dongola

In his welcome address, the Acting Head of Campus Health Services, Mr Edward Dongola expressed that every man and boy child should be supported to live a healthy lifestyle. He encouraged men to seek advice when they have challenges and to consult at the nearest health facilities near them when they don't feel well. "With this conference, we wanted to show that the health care facilities are not for females only, they are there for everyone," he said.



Dr Joel Baloyi

In his message of support, the University Registrar, Dr Joel Baloyi said there is a need to remove the societal stereotype and norms of men suffering in silence. He expressed his support for this conference.

Various stakeholders delivered their presentations, advising men on how to live a healthy lifestyle. These stakeholders include Pharmacists - Ms Rhandzu Ndleve, and Mr Johannes Tsati from Tshilidzini Hospital who spoke about drug-to-drug interaction; the Local General Practitioner, Dr Ernest Nangammbi who spoke about Prostate cancer; Prof Pascal Bessong spoke about the causes of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) while the Dietician from Tshilidzini Hospital, Mr Justice Mugeru spoke under the topic of the only capsule men need. More than 500 male staff and students attended this conference.



The Pharmacists from Tshilidzini Hospital Ms Glory Ndleve and Mr Johannes Tsati, delivered a comprehensive presentation on Drug-to-Drug Interaction, covering what drug interaction is, effects of drugs on the liver and who and where to report adverse reaction symptoms (ADRs). During presentation Ms G Ndleve said: "Drug to drug interaction occurs when two or more drugs interact with each other in a way that affects their effectiveness, safety or both. She further said: Modern drugs are being replaced by herbal medicines especially for severe and chronic disease for their fewer side effects, better patient adherence and vast accessibility". In Conclusion they said the following as an alert to the attendees: "Never assume that because herbs or complementary medicines are natural, they are safe. Some herbs may be inappropriate for people with certain medical conditions. Always tell healthcare workers about over-the-counter medications or any herbal medication you are using. Consult/report immediately if you start to develop some reaction while you are using your medications, herbal, synthetic or both for your safety. Live responsibly for your health for you to have a long-life span".



Dr Ernest Nangammbi

Dr Ernest Nangammbi gave presentation on Prostate Cancer. In his presentation he delved deep into crucial topics like definition of prostate cancer, sign and symptoms (Waking up frequently at night to urinate, sudden or urgent need to urinate, difficulty starting or stopping urination, weak or interrupted urine flow, unexplained weight loss and lower backache) and risks factors which include old age, race, family history and obesity. He further gave detailed information about Prostate Cancer that, "the second most common disease diagnosed in me, it increases with age; asymptomatic at early age, blacks have the most incidents and have the most aggressive cancer compared to whites. Nearly 1 in 5 men will be diagnosed with the cancer and 5% of those will die of the disease". He concluded his presentation emphasising the importance of annual prostate check-ups since early detection saves life, regular exercises to maintain body weight and healthy lifestyle.



Professor Pascal Bessong

In his presentation Professor and Director SAMRC-UNIVEN Research Unit, Pascal Bessong addressed various aspects on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). He also outlined Implications of AMR. He further outlined the Antimicrobial Stewardship (Approaches and procedures for judicious use of antimicrobials; and to mitigate AMR) that includes Commitment, Prevention, Detection, Optimising Use, and Surveillance.



Staff members and some of the stakeholders who were lined up on the programme



Mr MJ Mugeru

Mr MJ Mugeru, Dietician from Tshilidzini Hospital gave presentation under the topic: "The Only Capsule you want". In his presentation he said that "Health plays an important role in a human being and need to be taken care of daily". He indicated that health is determined by one's daily lifestyle and that alone can also tell if a person will live longer or not.



Mr Tsireledzo Munzhedzi

In his word of acknowledgement, the SRC Minister of Health and Safety, Mr Tsireledzo Munzhedzi thanked UNIVEN for organising this conference. He said this conference has empowered many male staff and students.



The Legal Officer, Mr Emmanuel Masindi gave a vote of thanks.



Peer Educators

UNIVEN students secured the third place in the Huawei ICT Global Competition



The University of Venda (UNIVEN) team of three students and an instructor recently participated in the Huawei ICT Global Competition and secured the third place in the competition.

Before departing to compete at an international level in China, the MEC for Transport and Safety, Ms Florence Radzilani visited the University of Venda (UNIVEN) to meet with this team of students that was going to represent South Africa at the Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals in China. This meeting took place at the University's Student Parliament.



The Honourable MEC, Ms Florence Radzilani congratulated these champions for the job well done. She told them that they are the team that is equal to the task. Ms Radzilani said she is very much inspired by the achievements of this team. She encouraged them not to be surprised or demoralised by people asking questions, "It is because they want to help you to close the loopholes on this project." She continued to say when she heard about these achievements, she decided to take a day off from campaigning for elections and come to meet with these young people because their achievement/invention is going to help our communities.

"We give thanks to the almighty for giving them these smart minds to come up with these ideas. As government we need to embrace this innovation. You have our support. This innovation will advance the country in reducing number of accidents. We wish you all the best and we look forward to many years of celebrations on the implementation of this project."



DVC: Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin said the MEC's visit is much appreciated. He said this good news are a testament to our statement that through the Strategic Plan 2025, we want to make global impact hence we are globally competitive. Dr Martin said he is excited because for the team of students to represent Africa at an international level, it means we are doing a good job as a University. "We are an Entrepreneurial University and these student's achievements are a clear indication that we are moving towards the right direction."



When giving the background of this competition and introducing the team, Head of Mathematical and Computational Sciences Department, Dr Simiso Moyo said their duty is to afford our students opportunities. He said these students' innovation and dedication give us the hopes that they will also excel at the global level. Dr Moyo wished them success even beyond this competition.



During the 2023-2024 competition, the UNIVEN team participated in the Innovation track and successfully progressed to the regional finals. The exceptional project developed by UNIVEN students, aimed at addressing some critical challenges within the transportation sector using Artificial Intelligence (AI) modelling. Competing against esteemed universities from Uganda, Tanzania, Mauritius, Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya, the University of Venda's team emerged victorious, securing first place in the regional final with an impressive score of 94.75, followed by Ghana with a score of 88.75. The two teams, i.e., South Africa and Ghana, will represent Africa in the Global finals, scheduled to take place from 22 to 25 May in China.



ATS members (Basetsana Phahlamohlaka and Vhutshilo Maeba) delivered a presentation on the invention that has secured them the finalists spot and they were advised to also involve the end users of their invention and those involved in the legislation governing road traffic.



When wishing the team well, Director ICT, Mr Sam Khoza thanked the MEC for the visit, especially at the time when these students were looking forward to getting inputs from the government on how to improve from what they have presented at the regional competition. "We celebrate the achievements of these brilliant minds who will represent Africa in China. Your hard work, creative thinking and innovation has truly paid off. With these innovative ideas, it shows that these students are trained to be innovators and they are our entrepreneurs of tomorrow. This journey is a chance for you to learn and grow in this field. We are proud of what you have achieved." He wished them best of luck.

"We celebrate the achievements of these brilliant minds who will represent Africa in China. Your hard work, creative thinking and innovation has truly paid off."



The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, Prof Natasha Potgieter gave a vote of thanks and wished the team well. She told the team to represent UNIVEN and the rest of Africa well.

The team's instructor, Ms Tabani Njaba appreciated the support from the University community, ICT Department managers, and the Computer Science Department. "We also appreciate the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, Prof Natasha Potgieter's unwavering support," she said.



The programme was directed by Dr Nkhumbuleni Ratshitanga.

UNIVEN academics attended the two-day annual Train-the-Trainer Workshop on Educators for Entrepreneurship



UNIVEN team at the annual EDHE Train-the-Trainer workshop

This workshop was organised by the Entrepreneurship Development (EDHE) in partnership with ASHOKA and took place on 08 to 09 May 2024 at Southern Sun Hotel in OR Tambo.

The EDHE annual Train-the-Trainer workshop targeted educators and support professionals across disciplines responsible for facilitating learning and guiding future teachers under the theme 'Educators for Entrepreneurship.' A total of 18 University of Venda (UNIVEN) staff members participated in the training: 3 senior lecturers, 6 lecturers, 6 junior lecturers, 1 professor, the Deputy Dean of Teaching and Learning (Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture) and the Director (Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation, and Commercialisation).

The workshop objectives were to equip educational practitioners and teachers to develop changemaker competencies in their learners in a way that is integrated with the main curriculum; to build a network of 'changers' who creatively develop entrepreneurial minds and enable young people to thrive by being active contributors of society and develop 21st-century skills to navigate rapid change and thrive in the job market; to empower educators and enhance teaching practices in South Africa; and to equip educators and future teachers with the changemaker skills, tools, committed to creating positive impact in our society. The "Educators for Entrepreneurship" training helps the university's staff members achieve strategic objective 6 of developing an entrepreneurial culture at the University of Venda.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr Vipin Thekk, Senior Director and Ashoka's Youth Venture Change Leader at Ashoka, using a unique facilitation approach of combining

storytelling, learning from each other, and learning through videos and online exercises. On the first day of the training, Mr Thekk, along with his facilitators, focused on solutions that outpace problems in the dynamic environment. These solutions require effective collaboration between people and the ability to organise into fluid teams. This ensures that every participant in the process is set up to become a contributor, a leader, and a changemaker. He urged the participants to become changemakers in their workplace and home environment and create a world where everyone is a changemaker. He defined a changemaker as anyone who imagines a new reality, acts, and collaborates with others to bring that new reality into being for the good of all parents, students, programmers, nurses, teachers, and neighbours who step up to solve a problem or create an opportunity for the good of all. Mr Thekk introduced the participants to The Togetherness Practice, which is a changemaker's instrument for activating individual and collective potential.



Mr Vipin Thekk, Senior Director, Ashoka's Youth Venture Change Leader at Ashoka

On day two of the workshop, Mr Thekk helped the participants explore rational shifts foundational to transformational change. He demonstrated how Ashoka is helping people worldwide become changemakers using the ASHOKA U, which is about changing the frameworks and possibilities of Higher Education. ASHOKA U community of higher education leaders has spent 13 years focusing on Innovation in higher education and graduating millions of changemakers. The self-assessment tool helps educators, universities, and schools empower students, faculty, and staff with evidence-based change-making resources designed to help the institution succeed. It takes an ecosystem to raise a changemaker. To develop an implementation plan for participants who formed part of the annual EDHE train-the-trainer workshop, Mr Thekk and the facilitators divided participants into different groups to reflect on the lessons from the training and come up with ideas of how they are going to drive change in their respective institution.



Ms Tshilidzi Negota, NGAP Lecturer, Department of Psychology, with Prof Vhonani Nefshandama, Director of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation, and Commercialization

On the sidelines of the workshop, young changemaker Mtha Nazo interacted with attendees, including Ms. Tsakani Nyoni, Junior Lecturer in the Department of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Heritage Studies at the University of Venda. Ms. Nyoni shared her enthusiasm for the workshop, stating that she would share the knowledge and insights gained with her students, aiming to positively impact their lives and inspire them to become agents of change. "The Entrepreneurship for Educators Workshop was engaging. I appreciated how they designed activities that ensured we engaged and built networks with colleagues from other Universities and private sector organizations. We received presentations on how we could train the next generation of Changemakers and engaged in activities on how we would implement changemaking in our classrooms. Some of the key things to note were that the needs and demands of our economies are evolving, and there is a need to incorporate relevant skills into our teaching to ensure that our students are relevant and competitive."

Ms Nyoni further said that our teaching should help students develop problem-solving skills. "This also requires teachers to introduce entrepreneurial projects/initiatives in the classroom, as we are now training the next generation of job creators, problem solvers, and students who can influence positive change within their communities. As teachers/facilitators, we were reminded of the need to reflect on what we know/do not know and to allow ourselves to learn and grow out of our comfort zone."



Ms Tsakani Nyoni, Junior Lecturer, Department of Indigenous Knowledge System and Heritage Studies, during the interview with Ms Nazo Ashoka, Intern and Allan Gray Fellow

UNIVEN and SANEDI enter into power generation agreement



Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor and Principal (right) exchanging the signed MoU with Dr Titus Mathe, SANEDI CEO (left)

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI). Part of the agreement in this MoU is 1 million Rands fund that will benefit Physics students who will be funded from master's to PhD level of their studies. The signing ceremony of this MoU took place at the University's Education Building, Lecture Hall 1.

Prior to the signing ceremony, Head of Energy Secretariat at SANEDI, Prof Sampson Mamphweli addressed the audience on the history of electricity generation in South Africa. He said Eskom started building power stations to supply low-cost electricity. He continued to explain that, as times goes and population grew, the demand of electricity

increased and so did the Eskom activities. "This growth was mainly driven by the growth in the mining and industrial sector as well as urban development. Then there was slow economic growth between 1983 and 1993 associated with the shift in the political landscape of the country. This led to low demand in electricity as well especially in the mining sector. During this period, Eskom had to decommission, and they had to resort to mothballing some of the power stations until 1995." Professor Mamphweli continued his explanation and illustrated that, at this time, less than 13 million South Africans (40% of the population) had access to electricity. He further narrated on the fact that, Eskom then started a programme to electrify villages and townships across the country to increase access to affordable electricity.

In 2002, Eskom was restructured as a public company, Eskom Holdings Limited, and this company relied primarily on coal for electricity production until the South African government published a white paper on renewable energy in 2003. This white paper flagged the project shortage of generation capacity by 2007/8. He said they were serious delays in the introduction of renewable energy in the country until government published the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP2010-2030) that set a target of 14725 Megawatts renewable energy contribution.

When talking about challenges of security electricity supply Prof Mamphweli highlighted that loadshedding disrupts our daily life and it causes inconvenience to individuals. He indicated that, companies were closed, and people lost jobs because of loadshedding. "There is a dire need to urgently attend to loadshedding because it also aggravates socioeconomic inequalities. If we can secure the supply of energy in our industries, we could have a strong economy."

He indicated that there is also a need to open for the private sector to provide energy.

"We will soon be running the future power system using the available technologies of today." He then indicated that Eskom returned several units that were down for maintenance to service, and they have proven to be reliable, adding about 3000 Megawatts to the grid. "This is also because of the growth in rooftop solar photovoltaic from households and small businesses. It has resulted in lower electricity demand."

"There is a dire need to urgently attend to loadshedding because it also aggravates socioeconomic inequalities. If we can secure the supply of energy in our industries, we could have a strong economy."



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Corporate Services, Dr Robert Martin (on the photo above) said this event is one of the most important events of this University. The MoU between the two parties will benefit students and staff members. Dr Martin said students should not only focus on studies, he told them that they should also know that there is life after university life which we need to prepare for while we are still students. "UNIVEN is excited about this collaboration because it fits well in the Strategic Plan of this University. This MoU also resonates well with the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubation of this University. We want to teach the world on how to make impact and how to serve the world."

When announcing the areas of collaborations, CEO of SANEDI, Dr Titus Mathe said coal will be with us for the next 100 years to come. He also presented SANEDI's competitive advantages. He presented about what SANEDI wants to achieve and its objectives, missions, and visions.

Prof Bernard Nthambeleni thanked SANEDI colleagues for thinking about UNIVEN when they thought of a University to partner with. We believe this MoU will bear the intended fruits because at UNIVEN we fulfil our promises.

Prof Eric Maluta said the 1 million Rands will assist students in physics who will be funded from master's to PhD level. "The University of Venda has a plan for making the campus to be green, by starting to build a 1 megawatts solar plant, which is aimed to be 5 megawatts solar plant". The energy will also be used to assist the communities around the University.



SAF-ADAPT Teachers' Climate Change Training Workshop



Prof. N.S. Nethengwe's South Africa/Flanders Climate Adaptation Research and Training Partnership (SAF-ADAPT) Project in the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences hosted a Climate Change Teachers' Training Workshop on May 15, 2024. Funded by the Government of Flanders through the African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI) at the University of Cape Town, the workshop addressed the pressing need for early climate change education as articulated in the objectives – enhancing teachers' understanding of climate change, providing practical teaching tools, demonstrating the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

in teaching, and fostering a collaborative network of educators committed to climate change education. The workshop attracted thirty-six educators (20 females and 16 males) from Vhembe District Municipality teaching Geography and/or Natural Sciences Grades 7–10). Educators at deep rural schools were mostly selected to ensure that even the most marginalised learners receive essential climate change knowledge.

Educators went through several engaging, interactive, and practical sessions covering fundamental climate science by Mr. Mavhungu Muthige, adaptation, mitigation,

and resilience by Dr. Ephias Mugari, togetherness practice in climate change by Prof. Nthaduleni Nethengwe, and GIS applications by Ms. Grace Maponya and Mr. Dion Gumbo. These facilitators from the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences successfully provided participants with the knowledge and tools needed to teach climate change effectively, fostering a network of educators equipped to integrate climate change concepts into their curricula. Participants appreciated the interactive nature of the sessions, the expertise of the facilitators, and the practical applications of the knowledge gained and

requested for more frequent workshops, extended practical sessions, and additional resources to support ongoing climate change education efforts. Looking ahead, we plan to make this a departmental initiative and organise more workshops, develop localised teaching materials, extend outreach to local communities, and advocate for the inclusion of comprehensive climate change topics in the school curriculum from early grades. This would contribute to building a generation of environmentally conscious youths capable of addressing climate challenges effectively.

UNIVEN FC is the champion of SAFA Vhembe SAB Hollywood Bets League Stream D-2 for the second time



UNIVEN FC squad line up during one of their league games (Photo Supplied)

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) Football Club is an affiliated club under the SAFA (South African Football Association) Vhembe Region and competes under the Hollywood Bets League Stream D-2. During the 2023/24 season, the club played 24 games with an impressive winning record of 18 games, 2 draws, 4 losses and the highest goal difference of 37. UNIVEN Football Club was crowned the champions after winning the Stream D-2 League with 56 points. It will again participate in the SAFA Vhembe Group Winners and Champ of Champs Play offs which is a historic moment for UNIVEN FC in two consecutive years.

The Sport and Recreation Unit would like to thank the University Community for the support in rallying behind the team to achieve this historic victory as the defending champions. UNIVEN FC is waiting for official communication from the SAFA Vhembe Secretariat Office regarding the exact fixtures (dates, time and venues) of the Group Winners and Champ of Champs Play Offs.

University of Venda Students to Represent South Africa at the Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals in China



UNIVEN Team Captures the moment with Huawei Officials before the kick-off of the Regional Finals at the Huawei Office Park

The University of Venda (UNIVEN), through its Information Communication Technology (ICT) Department, has partnered with Huawei in implementing programmes that impart and enhance digital skills to staff and students. The University has actively participated in the annual Huawei ICT Global Competition since 2018. This esteemed event draws significant attention and participation from universities and colleges worldwide. Commencing in August and concluding in May of the following year, the competition reaches its pinnacle with a highly anticipated global final in China. The competition encompasses Cloud, Network, and Innovation tracks.

During the 2023-2024 competition, the UNIVEN team participated in the Innovation track and successfully progressed to the regional finals. The exceptional project developed by UNIVEN students, aimed at addressing some critical challenges within the transportation sector using Artificial Intelligence (AI) modelling. Competing against esteemed universities from Uganda, Tanzania, Mauritius, Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya, the University of Venda's team

emerged victorious, securing first place in the regional final with an impressive score of 94.75, followed by Ghana with a score of 88.75. The two teams, i.e., South Africa and Ghana, will represent Africa in the Global finals, scheduled to take place from 22 to 25 May in China.

Please join us in congratulating and extending well wishes to our team of three students, Basetsana Phahlamohlaka, Ronewa Muthivhi, Vhutshilo Maeba and their instructor, Ms. Tabani Njaba as they depart for China on 20 May 2024. Their dedication, hard work, and innovative spirit have brought pride to the University of Venda and South Africa. We are confident that they will continue to excel and showcase their talents on the global stage. The words of appreciation are also directed to the major stakeholders in this regard, i.e., Computer Science and Business Information System Departments, for their contributions to this remarkable achievement.

As part of motivation, Dr Nkhumbuleni Ratshitanga, Hed ICT Support Services said, "It is envisaged that this achievement will also inspire the spirit of excellence; and

"It is envisaged that this achievement will also inspire the spirit of excellence; and the Automated Traffic Surveillance will also benefit the country at large."



Ronewa Muthivhi (Student), Basetsana Phahlamohlaka (student), Tabani Njaba (instructor), Vhutshilo Maeba (Student)



the Automated Traffic Surveillance will also benefit the country at large." In his remarks, he also thanked the technology experts from the ICT Department and Computer Science who created time to guide the students in preparation for the regional finals.

Dr Simiso Moyo HoD Mathematical and Computational Sciences in his message of support said "This is a huge achievement by the students, the department, ICT and the University. We support and wish our students success in this coming event. All the best."

The University of Venda improved its standing in the Times Higher Education Young University Rankings 2024



We are thrilled to announce that the University of Venda is the fourth best university in South Africa younger than 50 years. This is according to the Times Higher Education Young University rankings. UNIVEN has been ranked 351-400 in the Times Higher Education Young University Rankings in 2024. This is an improvement as compared to its 2023 rankings. These rankings were released on Tuesday, 14 May 2024 by Times Higher Education and are for Young Universities that are 50 years old or younger. The rankings indicate the list of the world's best universities.

According to these ranking, five South African universities qualified, with UJ leading the University of KwaZulu Natal, North-West University, University of Venda, and Durban University of Technology.

The Times Higher Education Young

University Rankings are based on the same performance indicators as the flagship The World University Rankings, but the weightings have been adjusted to give less weight to reputation.

These universities are judged across all their core missions – teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook – to provide the most comprehensive and balanced comparisons available. The 2024 ranking included 673 universities, up from 605 in 2023.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni was delighted to receive the news and thanked staff members for their effort into making sure that this University achieve its goals. "We are indeed on the right path and the results of remaining locally relevant being globally competitive are evident."

Learners from Phendulani high school in Mpumalanga Province visit UNIVEN



Learners and educators from Phendulani High School in Arconhoek

Learners from Phendulani High School in Arconhoek Mpumalanga Province visited the University of Venda (UNIVEN) to gather information about application for admission and residence, bursary information, including programmes offered, and to explore and experience the University environment. A total of 105 grade 11 and 12 learners, including ten educators visited UNIVEN for a campus tour.



Mr Justice Lebopa

The Assistant Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Justice Lebopa welcomed Phendulani Secondary School learners and educators, urging them to visit the University of Venda annually to learn more about the process of enrolment and to prepare them for a bright future.



Mr Mphinyana Nemasitoni

The Schools Liaison Officer, Mr Mphinyana Nemasitoni gave an insightful presentation on the University of Venda programmes, emphasising the importance of achieving high marks to meet admission requirements. He also encouraged learners to apply early, as applications for the 2025 intake are now open.



Qhawelisho Nkuna

Phendulani High School's grade 11 learner, Qhawelisho Nkuna, expressed her interest in studying Law at UNIVEN, citing the warm welcome and good customer relations during their tour. She is planning to pass her English exam and achieve over 38 points to secure admission to her first career option.



Mr Blessing Nhlahla Ndlovu

UNIVEN alumnus and Phendulani High School educator, Mr. Blessing Nhlahla Ndlovu, organised a visit to the University of Venda to provide his learners with valuable information about the University programmes that are on offer. Mr Ndlovu, a BCom in Accounting graduate aims to inspire young people to see UNIVEN as a pathway to success. "Many of our learners are currently studying at UNIVEN, and some have already completed their qualifications and are holding leadership positions," he stated.

UNIVEN celebrates Africa Day: Culture, Knowledge, and Unity in a thrilling blend of festivities and Public Lecture



Professor Mellitus Wanyama (second from left), flanked by UNIVEN management, after delivering a Public Lecture on Africa Day

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) through the Department of International Relations and Partnerships and the Department of Arts and Social Sciences, recently celebrated the richness and diversity of Africa on its Africa Day event, which also included a captivating public lecture.

Students, staff, and community members came together in a vibrant display of culture, showcasing the continent's unique heritage and traditions. The day's events included vibrant performances, lively discussions, and thought-provoking speeches.



Professor Mellitus Wanyama

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Students, staff, and community members came together in a vibrant display of culture, showcasing the continent's unique heritage and traditions. The day's events included vibrant performances, lively discussions, and thought-provoking speeches.

The highlight of the UNIVEN Africa Day event was the insightful public lecture delivered by esteemed Professor Mellitus Wanyama, a distinguished academic from Kabarak University in Kenya. His address, titled "21st Century Skills and Cultural Perspectives for Socio-economic Empowerment in Africa," was a dynamic exploration of the concept of Pan-Africanism and its potential to unite the continent in pursuit of collective prosperity.

Professor Wanyama's lecture delved deeper into the critical role of education, innovation, and cultural sensitivity in driving social and economic progress on the African continent. His insights not only shed light on the challenges facing Africa, but also highlighted the untapped potential of the region, offering a road map for a brighter, more prosperous future.

Professor Wanyama concluded his public lecture by reminding the audience that the future of Africa lies in the hands of her people and the power of solidarity. Following the insightful public lecture, Dr. Olusegun Samson Obadire, the Director of International Relations and Partnership at UNIVEN, extended his sincere gratitude to Professor Wanyama.

"Professor Wanyama's lecture was not only captivating but also illuminating. His profound understanding of the intricate relationship between 21st-century skills, cultural perspectives, and socio-economic development is truly commendable. We at UNIVEN are humbled and inspired by his knowledge and wisdom," said Dr Obadire.

Attending the public lecture was an "eye-opening experience," said Nhlonipho Lubisi, a Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase Teaching student at UNIVEN. "Professor Wanyama's passion for African progress was infectious, and his words resonated deeply with me. I realised the importance of promoting a culture of innovation, supporting educational initiatives, and respecting cultural diversity in our pursuit of a prosperous Africa," added Lubisi.

She concluded by saying "as a future educator, I now have a renewed sense of purpose, knowing that I can play a role in creating a brighter future for our continent."

The UNIVEN Africa Day celebrations ended on a high note as students, staff and community members showcased their remarkable talents in the Africa Day Talent Show. The diverse performances, which ranged from traditional dances to contemporary music, offered a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of the African continent. The camaraderie and enthusiasm evident among the performers and audience members was a testament to the power of unity and creativity in uniting people.

UNIVEN enhances student safety through installation of streetlights in Ngovhela cluster

The University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Student Housing Unit under Student Affairs Department, in collaboration with Protection Services Department and Off-Campus Accredited Residences (Ngovhela cluster), recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the installation of streetlights from Westgate residences to Phoskho.

The ceremony was a joyous occasion, attended by community leaders, residents, and students, all united in their excitement over this important step in enhancing the safety and security of the Ngovhela cluster. The new streetlights will not only provide increased visibility at night but will also serve as a symbol of the University's commitment to providing a safer, more secured environment for its students.

UNIVEN's Director Protection Services, Mr Ratshilumela Mulaudzi said "This initiative is a shining example of the strength of partnership and community spirit. It is only through the combined efforts of the Housing Unit, Protection Services, and Off-Campus Accredited Residences that we have been able to achieve this important milestone. We are grateful for the support and cooperation of all parties involved, and we look forward to working together to further enhance the safety and security of our UNIVEN community."

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Director of Legal Services, Advocate Eric Nemukula representing the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal highlighted that the installation of streetlights is more than just a safety measure, it is a reflection of our institution's dedication to providing a secure and conducive learning environment for our students. "We understand that a safe and secure learning environment is crucial for students to thrive. By working together with the Housing Unit, Protection Services, and Off-Campus Accredited Residences, we have taken an important step in ensuring the safety of our students and fostering a sense of community within the Ngovhela cluster."

The team worked tirelessly to ensure that the installation of these streetlights becomes a success.



UNIVEN's Off-Campus Coordinator, Mr Thomani Ndwambi was at the forefront of the effort, leading by example with his passion for student well-being. He famously stated, "At the end of the day, it's not about us, it's about the students." With this as his mantra, he spearheaded the cleaning and light installation, emphasising the importance of providing a safe and comfortable learning environment for the students.



UNIVEN SRC President, Mr John Ndaka expressed gratitude towards the University's efforts, stating that he would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the University Management for prioritising the safety and well-being of UNIVEN students. Mr Ndaka further expressed that this initiative highlights the commitment of UNIVEN to creating a positive and inclusive learning environment. "On behalf of the SRC, I would like to express our appreciation to the Housing Unit, Protection Services, Off-Campus Accredited Residences, and all other stakeholders who contributed to this important achievement."



Sergeant Latani Tambani, a representative from the South African Police Services, weighed in on the significance of the streetlights installation saying "Safety is a joint effort, and this initiative demonstrates the effectiveness of partnerships between the University, security services, and the local community. The installation of streetlights is a proactive step in reducing the risk of crime and fostering a safer environment. "I commend UNIVEN for their dedication to enhancing student safety and look forward to continuing to work together to ensure the well-being of the students," added Sergeant Tamabani.

Association of Black Accountants of Southern Africa UNIVEN Student Chapter held a successful Virtual Exam Motivation Talk



Mr Ronewa Bamuzi, an investment manager from Business Partners Limited

The Association of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA) UNIVEN Student Chapter, conducted a Virtual Exam motivation talk on 23 May 2024 via Microsoft Teams. The talk benefited all students studying all programmes within the Department of Accountancy.



Mr Pfunzo Munyai CA(SA) from AGSA

Miss Zwothe Candy Mudau, a member of the ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter, welcomed the student leaders from the ABASA UNIVEN and University of Limpopo (UL) student' chapters, executive members from ABASA Limpopo Education Committee, South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) members, lecturers, all other guests

and students who were in attendance. She highlighted that the importance of this examination motivation talk was to remind students about the reason they are at the university; to help them prepare for the end of first semester examination and to share with them examination techniques that will help them deal with different techniques they may encounter during the examinations.

In his opening remarks, Mr Ronewa Bamuzi, an MCOM Cost and Management Accounting student at UNIVEN and a graduate of the BCOP in Accounting honours, informed the students that, "If I can do it, I believe you can also do it." Mr Bamuzi made this statement because, although he was never the smartest student in his class, he was always the one who put the greatest effort into his studies—not to excel by outperforming others, but rather to better himself. Mr Ronewa Bamuzi told the students to believe that they can, and that they are halfway there. Meaning for them to succeed, they must believe in their dreams and goals first.

Inspiring students, Mr. Pfunzo Munyai CA(SA), a former UNIVEN Academic Trainee and Tutor, advised them to aim beyond their capabilities and disregard limitations. When one has the correct perspective, nothing is impossible. "The fact that you came to UNIVEN does not matter where you are from; you have what it takes to become a better person." In order to pass their examinations, he advised them to adhere to the four Cs: competence, coaching, care, and courage.

"I am here today because ABASA used to organise motivational speakers to come share examination techniques when I was still a UNIVEN student," Mr Munyai stated.

Mr Ndivhuwo Advice Ramagwa, ABASA UNIVEN Student Chapter's Public Relations and Communication Officer, expressed his gratitude to UNIVEN ABASA student chapter, the Department of Accountancy, for organising the event on behalf of the students. He also expressed his appreciation to those who attended the session as well as the visitors from the University of Limpopo and SABPP.

Vhutshilo Maeba's journey to entrepreneurial innovation success



In a momentous occasion that resonated with the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, Vhutshilo Maeba, a Final Year student at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), represented the UNIVEN at the ABSA Summit Gala Dinner that took place on 16 April 2024. By exploring how Blockchain Technology can be leveraged to solution for a responsible digital payments system that empowers unbanked communities, paving a way for a more inclusive financial future, secured Vhutshilo 3rd place in the prestigious and inaugural Digital Innovation Competition. This event brought together industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and students from Historically Disadvantaged Institutions, providing a platform to showcase groundbreaking ideas and foster collaboration within the payment acceptance ecosystem.

Vhutshilo's journey to success is nothing short of inspiration. He has demonstrated remarkable resilience, creativity, and determination in pursuing his passion for innovation. Vhutshilo told us that winning third place at ABSA's Digital Innovation Competition was a whirlwind. "Honestly, when I received the news, I was speechless. It was not just about the recognition, but the validation that my idea – a responsible digital payment system for unbanked communities – had the potential to make a real difference."

He added that whilst third place is an incredible achievement, the true reward lies in the journey itself. This competition ignited a deeper fire within him to

contribute to building a more inclusive financial landscape. Vhutshilo highlighted how ABSA's commitment to empowering young innovators has given him immense hope for the future. "Thank you, ABSA, for providing this unforgettable platform and the opportunity to be a part of something truly transformative."

Supported and nurtured by dedicated mentors and faculty members from the Department of Mathematical and Computational Sciences, he honed his skills and channelled his creativity towards developing an innovative solution through blockchain to real-world challenges. His entry into the competition highlighted the departments unwavering commitment to making a meaningful impact in the digital landscape; and Vhutshilo's journey serves as a source of inspiration for aspiring students, innovators, showcasing that with dedication, hard work, and perseverance, anything is possible.

As we celebrate Vhutshilo's remarkable achievement, we also recognise the pivotal role played by UNIVEN through the implementation of Strategic Objectives in Strategic Thrust Two in nurturing his talent and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. By providing a supportive environment and equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the digital age, UNIVEN continues to empower the next generation of leaders and changemakers.



Vhutshilo feels that this experience through the ABSA Banks Digital Innovation has now sparked a renewed sense of purpose in his pursuit of success in the fintech landscape. He is eager to dive deeper, refine his ideas, and collaborate with others who share this vision of financial inclusion for all. "The future of finance is bright, and I'm determined to be a part of shaping it, one innovative solution at a time" remarked Mr Maeba.

As we look towards the future, let us continue to celebrate and support the endeavours of young entrepreneurs like Vhutshilo, whose innovative spirit and drive for success embody the essence of UNIVEN's commitment to fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and improving on Student Graduatness.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubation (UCFERI) stands ready to strengthen Vhutshilo Maeba's entrepreneurial journey following his remarkable achievement. Through tailored mentorship programmes, access to resources, and strategic industry collaborations, the UCFERI is positioned to provide Vhutshilo with the necessary guidance and support to further develop and refine his innovative ideas and transform them into impactful ventures.

We would like to hear from you!

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