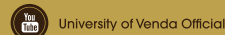


Nendila

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA



University of Venda
Creating future leaders

Mr Nkhumeleni Victor Tharage reflects on 30 years of Eco-Tourism in Democratic South Africa



On Photo: Mr Victor Tharage, Director-General of National Department of Tourism

On Tuesday, 22 October 2024, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) held a Public Lecture by the Director-General for Tourism, Mr Nkhumeleni Victor Tharage. This Public Lecture took place at UNIVEN auditorium. The public lecture was hosted by the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management with the assistance of Marketing, Branding and Communication. UNIVEN Auditorium was abuzz with energy as the Director General of the Department of Tourism delivered an insightful public lecture on the evolution of eco-tourism in South Africa over the past three decades. This public Lecture was attended by students, UNIVEN staff members, high school learners, government officials, municipal officials, tourism product owners, traditional leaders, religious leaders and Eco-Tourism professionals.

The Director General, Mr Victor Tharage highlighted the transformative role that eco-tourism has played in shaping South Africa's tourism landscape since the dawn of democracy in 1994. This lecture touched several key themes related to ecotourism and its role in South Africa's economic and social development. Mr Tharage said ecotourism has potential for community beneficiation, especially in poverty alleviation through skill-based participation, even for those without significant financial resources. He highlighted

the need for tourism to directly improve local communities' Livelihood through sustainable and responsible practices. As he continued, Mr Tharage mentioned that it is important to involve previously marginalised communities, particularly in areas like national parks and reserves, and emphasised the value of participation in wealth generation and conservation. "The government has a role to play in enabling community participation through various programmes and partnerships that lead to transformation of tourism spaces, ensuring both environmental sustainability and economic opportunities," he said.

Towards the end of the lecture, Mr Tharage stressed the importance of innovation in ecotourism and referenced the rise of adventure tourism and ecotourism-focused developments such as hiking trails and cable cars. While progress has been made, he acknowledged persistent challenges, particularly when it comes to implementing policies and ensuring consistent benefits for local communities. "The goal remains the same for ecotourism to not only preserve natural resources but also to create sustainable livelihoods for the people who live near these tourist destinations." He concluded.

In her welcome remarks, Prof Tharien van der

Walt said events like this play the key role to enable us to achieve our strategic objectives as a university. She said that we value this engagement with external role players in our institution and we are proud that our very own department of tourism has ties with such esteemed members in the tourism industry.

In his remarks, Prof Lonias Ndlovu mentioned that as we are looking at 30 years of the bill of rights and constitution and democracy, we will be celebrating tourism, and eco-tourism because a lot has been achieved.

Mr Albert Jeleni, Provincial Consular from the Limpopo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) said historically, people travelled for three main reasons: pleasure, religion (pilgrimages), and exploration (including business and research). "In the past, individuals typically travelled for one of these reasons exclusively. However, in modern times, people often travel for a combination of purposes, which presents challenges and opportunities for the tourism industry." He said businesses should now anticipate that there is a diverse number of travellers with needs and experiences. "The development of tourism parallels the industrial revolutions, with early focus on individual empowerment shifting

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On Photo: Prof Tharien van der Walt, Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Management Commerce and Law



On Photo: Prof Lonias Ndlovu, Director School of Law

to corporations, influencing migration and travel patterns." Warrant Officer Mabogo from Hawks said that she works with national priority offences and said South Africa is a mega diverse country and one of the largest in the world. She said due to abundance of natural assets we are targeted by people on wildlife species for financial gain. Ms Mabogo said for years we have been mindful of the fact of illicit trade that threatens diversity.

In his appreciation message, Vho Thovhele Kennedy Tshivhase commended the National Department of Tourism for promoting eco-tourism as a means of sustainable development, job creation, and community upliftment. "UNIVEN is praised for its commitment to producing globally competitive graduates," said Vho Thovhele Tshivhase who further emphasised the importance of eco-tourism in preserving culture and the environment, urging continued collaboration to ensure eco-tourism remains a positive force for future generations.

This public lecture brought the sense of optimism and purpose was palpable. The public lecture not only celebrated the strides made in eco-tourism but also ignited a collective vision for a greener, more sustainable future for the industry in South Africa.



On Photo: Vho Thovhele Prince Kennedy Tshivhase



Group Photo, Mr Victor Nkhumeleni (First form the left) with various stakeholders

Professor Marcia-Terezinha-Baroni-Moraes Souza Delivers Captivating Lecture on Enteric Disease Research at UNIVEN



On Photo: Prof Marcia-Terezinha-Baroni-Moraes Souza, Researcher at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation-Fiocruz in Rio de Janeiro-Brazil

In her lecture, Prof Marcia-Terezinha-Baroni-Moraes Souza gave a background about the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), founded over 120 years ago, which is a leading health research institution in Brazil known for its iconic castle in Rio de Janeiro and its commitment to scientific development. The Oswaldo Cruz Institute, with its key part of Fiocruz, houses 66 laboratories, including 18 World Health Organization-certified reference labs. She said it plays a critical role during pandemic diagnostics and runs postgraduate programs to train future researchers led by Tânia Cremonir. This institute focuses on genetic susceptibility to viral infections, especially gastroenteritis viruses like rotavirus and norovirus.

Prof Souza said a major theme of their research is the One Health concept, linking human, animal, and environmental health. The lab studies virus transmission through diverse samples (human, animal, environmental, food) and has expanded into genetic susceptibility in animals. Their research aims to understand the connection between animal and human viral infections. Prof Souza said the Fiocruz has strong international collaborations, working with institutions in Mozambique, France, Sweden, and Brazil's Amazon region, where they study genetic susceptibility in indigenous populations. Their lab is a WHO

reference lab for rotavirus and is a leader in viral outbreak monitoring in South America.

As she continued, she cautioned the audience present that looking forward, the lab has future plans to deepen its study of genetic and environmental factors in viral infections and continue its vital work in the Amazon. Her presentation highlighted their contributions to global health through cutting-edge research, international partnerships, and a focus on improving health outcomes worldwide.

Following the lecture, there was a lively question and answer session where attendees had the opportunity to ask Professor Souza questions about her research and the broader field of virology. Her insightful responses further enhanced the audience's understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this area of study.

Prof Souza's visit provided valuable insights and inspiration for UNIVEN students, inspiring them to pursue postgraduate degrees and contribute to the global fight against enteric diseases. The public lecture was a resounding success, which showcased the University of Venda's commitment to fostering academic excellence and promoting scientific collaboration.



On Photo: Prof Lutendo Murulana, Deputy Dean Faculty Science, Engineering and Agriculture.

In his welcome remarks, the Deputy Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, Prof Lutendo Murulana said that he believes that public lectures like this one should occur regularly, as they are important because they have a nature of informing the public about the research activities taking place in the lab. Professor Murulana stated that he believes there are researchers at UNIVEN who are working day and night to make an impact within the communities.



On Photo: Dr Adelle Burger, Lecturer at UNIVEN's Department Biochemistry and Microbiology giving a vote of thanks message



University of Venda Launches Successful Campaign Against Examination Irregularities at Greenstone Residences



On 21 October 2024, the University of Venda's Departments of Legal Services, Student Affairs and Marketing, Branding and Communication conducted a successful campaign at Greenstone Residences aimed at raising awareness about examination irregularities. More than 300 students, including many first-year students, gathered to learn about the serious consequences of academic dishonesty.

Mrs Sibongile Machimana, a staff member in the Legal Services Department, emphasised the importance of fostering awareness among students regarding the impact of examination irregularities. "It is essential to establish an awareness campaign to promote academic integrity and a culture of honesty," she said. Machimana explained that a lack of awareness

about university policies could lead to actions that may constitute examination irregularities, or to misunderstandings about the severity of their consequences. Students often feel overwhelmed by academic pressure, which may tempt them to engage in dishonest behaviour. However, she highlighted that many students may not fully understand the long-term implications of such actions.

She also expressed a strong warning about plagiarism, defining it as the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or words as one's own without proper citation. Machimana pointed out that plagiarism is a serious academic violation with severe repercussions. Mr Emmanuel Masindi, from the Legal Services Department, elaborated on the potential

consequences of examination irregularities. These could include academic penalties such as suspension, or even expulsion. Additionally, students could face damage to their personal credibility and reputation, loss of financial aid or scholarships, difficulty securing employment or pursuing graduate school opportunities, and ongoing feelings of guilt and stress.

The event also provided students with the opportunity to ask questions and engage in open dialogue, further reinforcing the importance of academic integrity and understanding university policies.

In closing, Mr Khuthadzo Rammela, the landlord of Greenstone Residences, expressed gratitude to the University of Venda for its dedication to supporting the welfare of off-campus students.



TIP OFFS

If you spot anything out of the ordinary on campus

Contact the University Hotline

Toll free number 0800 212 755
or email: univenhotline@tip-offs.com

Improper conduct includes the following:

1. Financial misconduct,
2. Misuse or misappropriation of University assets,
3. Health and safety risks,
4. Plagiarism,
5. Fraud and corruption.

UNIVEN organises a two-day Digital Entrepreneurship Workshop for students



Group Photo of Participants with Guest Speaker, Mr Khume Luruli (In the Middle First row Standing)

The University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s Directorate of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation and Commercialisation through its Economic Activation Office, hosted a two-day workshop training. This Digital Entrepreneurship workshop focused on equipping Student-preneurs together with aspiring entrepreneurs with the essential skills. The two-day digital entrepreneurship workshop took place from 17-18 October 2024 at Premier Hotel in Thohoyandou. This transformative event featured a renowned guest speaker, Mr Khume Luruli, a Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management at Tshwane University of Technology and an entrepreneur with a proven track record of success.

As the Guest Speaker, Mr Khume Luruli, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management at Tshwane University of Technology shared his invaluable insights and practical advice with workshop attendees. His presentation, focused more on digital entrepreneurship, emphasising the foundational principle that one must first be an entrepreneur before becoming a digital entrepreneur. He mentioned that, just as a person has various roles before specific identities like a lecturer or father, entrepreneurship begins with basic business principles. Before he dived into digital aspects, Mr Luruli stressed the importance of understanding business fundamentals. He said entrepreneurship is inherently customer-centric and many fail by launching businesses based on their ability to produce a product rather than considering whether there's a demand for it. Mr Luruli pointed out that success depends on identifying who needs the product, who is willing to pay, and whether they can afford it or not.

He also gave a critique traditional definitions of a market, offering a more practical view. Mr Luruli further highlighted the danger of relying on friends and acquaintances for business, pointing out that while one may have thousands of social media followers, most may not support or buy their products. He said entrepreneurs should tailor their offerings to suit different customer groups and adjust based on market feedback and again should also avoid making business decisions based on personal preferences, instead allowing the market's response to guide product development and sales strategies.

In closing, Mr Luruli stressed the importance of listening to customers and adapting accordingly. He said segmentation strategies, such as demographic segmentation, allow entrepreneurs to focus on specific factors like age, preferences, and location. "Understanding these nuances is essential, particularly in digital entrepreneurship, where content must resonate with targeted audiences."

In his official opening and welcome remarks, Dr Mlungiseleli Ganto, Commercialisation Specialist (CEEIIC) at the University of Venda, said that the University of Venda's 2021-2025 strategy, aims to position itself as an entrepreneurial hub, fostering local and regional economic development. "In alignment with this, the Economic Activation Office under the Directorate of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation, and Commercialisation has organised this Digital Entrepreneurship Skills Development Workshop which seeks to explore opportunities in the digital economy for both seasoned and aspiring entrepreneurs," said Dr Ganto.

As he conveyed the purpose of the day, Dr Anyway Mikioni, Entrepreneurship Programmes Coordinator (CEEIIC) said the purpose of this workshop is to allow students to gain knowledge on digital entrepreneurship.



On Photo: Mr Khume Luruli, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management at Tshwane University



On Photo: Dr Mlungiseleli Ganto, Commercialisation Specialist (CEEIIC)



Empowering Staff from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture through Workshops in China

In a significant milestone towards advancing renewable energy expertise, five staff members from the University of Venda (UNIVEN) recently participated in an intensive International Solar Energy Technology and Application Training at Hubei University of Technology (HBUT) in Wuhan, China. This programme is part of UNIVEN's ongoing commitment to enhancing its capabilities in solar energy technologies.

The delegation comprised Drs. Fhulufhele



On photo: Group photo of delegates

Nemangwele, Sophie Mulaudzi, and David Tinarwo from the Department of Physics, along with Mr Gift Masuku and Mr Derrick Sipoyo from the Department of Chemistry. The training was made possible through the bilateral academic collaboration between UNIVEN and HBUT. Participants from Egypt, Bangladesh, Malawi, Nigeria, Morocco, Ethiopia, as well as Ms Thuthukile Mthethwa from the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), and representatives from several South African solar photovoltaic private companies, also attended the programme.

The training offered a comprehensive learning experience, incorporating not only technical and practical aspects of solar energy but also covering policy, financial modelling, and environmental considerations in the solar energy sector. Delegates gained insights into the latest advancements in solar panel technologies, received hands-on training with solar energy applications, and explored the financial and environmental implications of large-scale solar energy projects.

A key focus of the programme was energy storage technologies, particularly their role in integrating solar systems to enhance grid stability and ensure consistent electricity supply during periods of low solar generation. The delegation explored various storage technologies, with a special emphasis on lithium-ion batteries and the importance of Battery Management Systems (BMS) for maintaining grid stability.

In addition to theoretical presentations, participants toured HBUT's facilities to observe cutting-edge solar technologies in action. A highlight of the training was a visit to the Blue Electricity Centre, where delegates viewed

electric vehicles designed and built by HBUT's electrical and electronic engineering students. Other site visits included Rexin Solar Company in Wuhan and Longi Company, a global leader in photovoltaic module manufacturing, which provided valuable insights into the solar panel manufacturing process and packaging.

Delegates also learned how to design a solar plant using the PVSyst software, a critical tool in solar energy project development. The knowledge and experiences gained during this training are already influencing the development of curricula, research projects, and the integration of solar energy solutions on the UNIVEN campus. The university is committed to incorporating solar energy topics into existing courses and forming strategic partnerships to implement solar projects, ensuring that the newly acquired skills and insights are translated into meaningful, practical outcomes.



On photo: Prof James Chakwizira visit to the Shanghai Institute of Space (Aerospace) Technology, Shanghai, China

Prof James Chakwizira visit to the Shanghai Institute of Space (Aerospace) Technology, Shanghai, China In a separate initiative, Professor James Chakwizira from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (URP) attended a workshop on "Remote Sensing for Belt and Road Countries" at the Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology (NUIST), Nanjing, China. Prof Chakwizira expressed that the workshop strengthened his ability to enhance teaching quality by integrating Beidou navigation technology and remote sensing applications into curriculum reviews, improvement plans, and postgraduate training in the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture.

He highlighted that the workshop not only offered immediate benefits such as updating course guides and teaching materials but also laid the foundation for long-term strategies, including the incorporation of Beidou navigation technology and remote sensing applications in various disciplines. These include Physics (e.g., Thermal Infrared Remote Sensing Monitoring Technology), Geography and Earth Sciences (e.g., Meteorological Satellite Remote Sensing for Severe Weather Forecasting), Agriculture (e.g., Remote Sensing in Agriculture), and Urban and Regional Planning (e.g., Beidou Navigation in Aviation Technology, Transportation, and the

Built Environment).

Prof Chakwizira emphasised that the workshop also served as an invaluable benchmarking exercise, allowing UNIVEN's departments such as Earth Sciences, Agriculture, Physics, and Urban and Regional Planning to assess their curricula against international standards, identify gaps, and explore opportunities for improvement.

In conjunction with the remote sensing workshop, Prof Chakwizira visited the Shanghai Institute of Space Technology, where he focused on applications of Beidou Satellite Navigation and Big Data technology in disaster prevention and relief, particularly in developing countries. This experience deepened his understanding of the role of satellite technology in disaster management, a critical area of interest for many developing nations.

Mr Tendayi Condo, also from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, attended a training workshop on the application of Beidou Satellite and Integrated Remote Sensing Technology for disaster prevention and mitigation at the Guizhou Academy of Sciences in Guiyang, China. The workshop featured presentations on the application of Beidou technology in earthquake disaster relief and geological disaster prevention. Mr Condo and his fellow participants also visited the China Earthquake Emergency Search and Rescue Centre and the National Disaster Reduction Centre to understand how Beidou technology is utilised in disaster management.

In addition to the technical sessions, participants engaged in discussions on the broader application of Beidou technology in emergency medicine, big data analytics, and international scientific cooperation. The experience provided a platform for participants to present country profiles and share key takeaways from the training, fostering cross-cultural learning and knowledge exchange.

This article highlights the faculty's active engagement in international workshops that are enhancing their teaching, research, and application of cutting-edge technologies. The knowledge and skills acquired during these programmes will undoubtedly contribute to UNIVEN's long-term goals in renewable energy, urban planning, and disaster management.



Gold Medal Award reaffirms that UNIVEN is globally competitive



L-R: Dr Mmaphuti Mamaleka receiving the award with conference Chair, Prof Rasool Shahana (centre) and the TIIKM Managing Director and Co-Founder of TIIKM, Mr Isanka P Gamage (right)

The University of Venda received a token of appreciation from The International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIIKM) in Thailand during the 7th International Conference on Gender and Sexuality which took place from the 19th to the 20th of September 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. As a University coordinator and partner Dr Mmaphuti Mamaleka (Department of Social Work) received an award for contributing enormously to coordinate conference participation from University of Venda. The University of Venda signed a MoU and MoA with TIIKM for collaboration. In her own words Dr. Mamaleka articulated that “it was a remarkable honour and privilege to receive the award on behalf of the University”. She pointed out that the partnership with TIIKM significantly contributes to placing the University in the international domain, thereby fostering its competitiveness at both global and local levels. This collaboration encompasses a variety of initiatives, which include not only attending conferences but also facilitating exchanges for students and staff, engaging in joint publications, and providing internship opportunities for students, among other endeavours.

In the same conference, Mrs Pelewe Mphephu (Sociology Lecturer, Department of Arts and Social Sciences, FHSSE) received a gold medal for best session presenter; she presented a manuscript from her PhD study which is underway. “Receiving this award has been a double-edged sword; while it’s an honour, it also presented a personal challenge. The recognition has instilled a sense of urgency, motivating me to complete my studies. I’m deeply grateful for the unwavering support from my Family”, the USDP, Research Directorate, FHSSE Deanery, and my exceptional supervisors and mentors. This achievement reaffirms that we are indeed globally competitive, and I’m proud to be part of this community.”

The rest of UNIVEN colleagues who attended the conference (On the last photo from L-R: Dr Hundzukani Khosa, Dr Lufuluvhi Mudimeli, Dr Ndidzulafhi Mudau, Dr David Raphaelalani, Mrs Pelewe Mphephu, Dr Mmaphuti Mamaleka, Dr Thizwilondi Madima and Dr Mashudu Muthivhi.



Mrs Pelewe Mphephu (Sociology Lecturer, Department of Arts and Social Sciences, FHSSE)



Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture Expands Global Reach

The Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture at the University of Venda actively participated in international exchange and engagement programmes involving Postgraduate students. These initiatives encompassed students from various departments, including Physics, Biochemistry and Microbiology. Some of the associated projects are still ongoing.



L-R: Magezi, Masego, Kamogelo and Pfano

Physics postgraduate students, Pfano Nema-konde (MSc), Kamogelo Joseph Masiloane, (MSc), Masego Mothapo (Honours) and Magezi Baloyi (honours) invited to the SA-JINR International Student Practice in Dubna, Russia. This is an opportunity for South African university students to participate in the International Student Practice (ISP) programme at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) in Dubna, Russia. The JINR ISP is a three-week initiative that runs from 08-28 September 2024, with the goal of drawing exceptional young people to the Institute and raising knowledge about the opportunities for studying and doing scientific research at the JINR. The students met with JINR staff members and selected a scientific supervisor, conducted a research project at the JINR's experimental facilities, learned how to solve novel physics problems through lectures by prominent JINR experts and prepared a thesis or a report.

Mr Nema-konde is working on Applications of Machine Learning in Blockchain for Renewable Energy Systems to address the currently stagnant barriers that arise in integrating distributed energy resources (DERs) in smart grid distribution networks for green energy trading to enable P2P/P2G distributed network supervised by Mr Mukovhe Ratshitanga (CPUT) and Dr Fhulufhelo Nemangwele (UNIVEN). Mr Masiloane's research focuses on the use of the 3MV tandemron accelerator at NRF-iThemba LABS to fabricate metallic nano-to-micro scaled structures using a lithography technique known as proton beam writing to advance materials in relative applications such as microfluidics, aerodynamics, optics, and solar cells. He is supervised by Dr Nametso Mongwaketsi, Dr Zakhelumuzi Khumalo (iThemba LABS, MRD), and Dr Fhulufhelo Nemangwele (UNIV-

EN). Ms Mothapo's study focuses on evaluating the impacts of space radiation on astronauts' immune systems, specifically the effects of neutron irradiation on the expression of select genes involved in DNA repair in immune cells. This work employs previously held human lymphocyte samples taken a few decades ago, supervised by Dr Randal Fisher (iThemba LABS) and Dr Fhulufhelo Nemangwele (UNIVEN). Mr Baloyi is studying the density function theory of the photocatalytic characteristics of mono- and co-doped BaTiO₃ for hydrogen production. Despite major attempts to develop sophisticated materials, the primary barrier to hydrogen generation utilising solar energy remains low efficiency and selectivity, supervised by Mr Lutendo Phuthu and Mr Tshifhiwa Ranwaha (UNIVEN).



L-R: Prosperit and Stellah

Master students, Mafunise Prosperity and Molepo Stellah recently attended the NORTPART Summer School in Tanzania.

The students participated in the ERASMUS ALL-4WASH NORPART summer school project to be trained on aspects of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) challenges and solutions. Over two weeks, they engaged with renowned experts and fellow students from diverse backgrounds from Norway, Uganda, Mali, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Ghana sharing knowledge and experiences that fostered a deeper appreciation for the complexities of WASH. Through presentations, laboratory work, and group activities, they gained hands-on experience with faecal sludge analysis, sanitation technology, as well as insight into gender inclusion, community engagement, and emerging technologies. The summer school's emphasis is on innovation, inspiring the students to think creatively about WASH solutions, and they left with a renewed commitment to contributing meaningfully to addressing WASH challenges in developing countries.

Master student Ms Mafunise Prosperit was selected for a 3-month internship at NRNU in Norway from 15 August to 15 November 2024. Ms Mafunise will be affiliated with the Water and Environmental Engineering Group at Department of Ocean Operations and Civil Engineering where she will be undertaking the following courses: Design and Operations of Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants; Introduction to Smart Water and Environmental Engineering and MSc Thesis Research Work. The internship will assist her in completing her Masters degree at UNIVEN.



On photo: Damian Jacobs

Master student Mr Damian Jacobs visited Sweden laboratories recently on SASUF project. The collaboration between UNIVEN, Northwest University (NWU) in Potchefstroom, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and Uppsala University is part of SASUF - South Africa Sweden University Forum. It aims to share skills between South Africa and Sweden to bolster both countries' resources, skillsets and knowledge in applying sciences in various setting from rural to urban, African and European. Mr Damien Jacobs (UNIVEN) and Ms Raeesa Bikhoo (NWU) visited SLU and Uppsala University to learn microbiological methods to perform wastewater surveillance Antibiotic Resistance. Our young scientists are learning advanced methods to detect and characterise antibiotic resistance. The skills they acquire in culturing and finding antibiotic resistant bacteria and detecting antibiotic resistance genes through gene sequencing will be pivotal in maintaining the health of our communities, the environment and the animals which we should care for and all depend on.

UNIVEN Hosts the 2024 Young Chemists' Symposium: Shaping the Future of Innovation and Global Impact

On Friday, 25 October 2024, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) welcomed the Seventh Young Chemists' Symposium, organised by the Department of Chemistry within the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture. In collaboration with the South African Chemical Institute (SACI), this event brought together emerging chemists under the theme "Chemistry for a Better Tomorrow." Held at UNIVEN's Agric Hall, the symposium attracted participants from various esteemed institutions, including the University of Limpopo, University of Pretoria, Tshwane University of Technology, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, University of Mpumalanga, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation Limited (Necsa).



On Photo: Prof Lutendo Murulana, Deputy Dean Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture.

In his opening remarks, Prof Lutendo Murulana, Deputy Dean of the Faculty, underscored the significance of hosting this symposium in Limpopo Province, a region celebrated for its rich biodiversity and agricultural importance. He articulated the university's dedication to research, engaged scholarship, and the pursuit of solutions to global challenges. Prof Murulana emphasised how the theme aligns with UNIVEN's strategic goals and addresses critical Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), encouraging collaboration among participants and with the university.



On Photo: Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General of Socio-Economic Innovation and Partnerships at South Africa's Department of Science and Innovation

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General of Socio-Economic Innovation and Partnerships at the Department of Science and Innovation. Dr Muofhe explored the pivotal role of chemistry in everyday life, illustrating its impact on sustaining life, driving economic growth, and addressing global challenges. He discussed the influence of chemistry across various sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, and energy, while cautioning about potential environmental consequences stemming from its misuse. Dr Muofhe stressed the need for innovative thinking among young scientists and urged them to envision future careers that may not yet exist, reinforcing the idea that science is crucial for economic advancement and global problem-solving.

Mr Herman Machiba, a Service Manager and Sales Personnel at Shimadzu, shared insights about his company's collaboration with the University of Johannesburg to establish an innova-



On Photo: Mr Herman Machiba, Service Manager and Sales personnel at Shimadzu

tion centre and provide valuable training opportunities.

The symposium featured a diverse array of presentations from honours, master's, and PhD students representing universities within the SACI North Section. This platform allowed emerging scholars to showcase their research findings, engage in meaningful discussions, and foster collaboration within the scientific community. The vibrant contributions highlighted the innovative research being conducted across the region, showcasing the importance of nurturing young talent in the field of chemistry.

The Young Chemists' Symposium (YCS) provided a valuable opportunity for postgraduate students to connect with their peers, present their research, and engage in fruitful discussions with experienced researchers from various institutions. This gathering not only celebrated current achievements but also aimed to inspire the next generation of chemists to tackle pressing global challenges through innovative solutions.

