



University of Venda
Creating future leaders

DHET Praises UNIVEN for Advancing Infrastructure and Graduate Readiness

Campus Walkabout Showcases Major Upgrades



DHET delegates and UNIVEN Staff members assessing the University Infrastructure on day one

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) has received strong commendation from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) following a two-day monitoring visit on 18–19 November 2025, which confirmed significant progress across key grant-funded initiatives. The visit assessed delivery under the Sibusiso Bengu Development Grant (SB-DG), the Clinical Training Grant (CTG), and the Infrastructure Efficiency Grant (IEG), noting substantial improvements in infrastructure, digital capacity, and student support.

The engagement began with a comprehensive campus walkabout, where DHET delegates viewed completed and ongoing projects, including:

- The refurbished Main Administration Building
- The new Health Sciences Building
- The Advanced Nursing Simulation Laboratory
- The new Punda Maria Road
- The Disability Support Unit
- DBSA-funded student residences

Delegates gained firsthand insight into UNIVEN's infrastructure renewal and enhanced student experience.

Progress Under the Sibusiso Bengu Development Grant

UNIVEN presented achievements across two implementation phases of the SB-DG:

Phase 0 focused on strengthening institutional systems and digital transformation, including:

- ICT and network upgrades
- e-Learning expansion
- Digitisation of campus records
- Enhancements to library and disability support services

Most initiatives have been completed, with ongoing improvements continuing to build teaching and learning capacity.

Phase 1 is advancing major sustainability and infrastructure priorities, including:

- A campus-wide ICT Infrastructure Upgrade
- The Student Residence Safety and Emergency Compliance Project
- The Universal Access Disability Ramps Project
- Energy efficiency investigations and solutions
- Establishment of the centralised Grants Management Office (GMO)
- Construction of a new multi-purpose lecture hall/auditorium

Despite minor delays linked to procurement and municipal approvals, mitigation measures are in place to maintain delivery timelines.

Strengthening Clinical Training Through the CTG

A flagship CTG initiative, the Advanced Nursing Simulation Laboratory, was completed in May 2025; however, it still lacks key clinical equipment to make it fully operational. The technology-enhanced facility provides a high-fidelity training environment that:

- Improves clinical skills development
 - Strengthens readiness for professional practice
 - Supports accreditation compliance
- Additional resources are planned to reach full functionality.

The monitoring visit affirmed UNIVEN's steady progress toward a modern, digitally enabled and student-centred campus

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Infrastructure Efficiency Grant Driving Campus Modernisation

Through the IEG, UNIVEN has delivered major upgrades that improve safety, functionality, and digital access.

Completed works include:

- DBSA-funded male and female residences
- Campus-wide wireless access and LAN modernisation
- Refurbishment of lecture halls and laboratories
- Installation of fume cabinets for safety compliance
- Improved accessibility via the Phunda Maria Gate and Road

The 7th IEG Cycle has also enabled UNIVEN to support apprenticeships, internships, and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), providing young people with hands-on experience in infrastructure planning, project management, maintenance, reporting, and workplace readiness. Interns participated in the DHET engagement sessions and shared positive reflections on their development, highlighting the University's use of earmarked funding to advance both skills development and future employability.



The two interns, Ms Ntshakadzeni Madima (top) and Ms Mulalo Ramathavha (bottom) were given an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned during their internship

Positive Feedback from DHET



DHET Representative, Mr Tshiamo Moleme Chairing the session

During engagement sessions, DHET delegates expressed satisfaction with UNIVEN's overall progress, highlighting:

- Enhanced governance through the GMO
- Strengthened Disability Support Unit
- Improved infrastructure and student living conditions
- Exceptional campus cleanliness, landscaping, and maintenance

Delegates encouraged continued momentum and further upgrades to secondary campus entrances.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement



Dr Phillia Vukea, Director: Grants Management

In her closing remarks, Dr Phillia Vukea, Director: Grants Management, thanked DHET for its constructive feedback and reaffirmed the University's commitment to incorporating recommendations into future planning and reporting. She noted that the preparation for the visit strengthened institutional collaboration and reinforced the importance of integrated planning.

Chief Operating Officer, Mr Botwe Kraziya, concluded by emphasising the University's focus on breaking silos, enhancing systems, and sustaining responsiveness:

"While challenges remain, we are committed to learning, adapting, and ensuring that UNIVEN continues to grow as a responsive and innovative institution. Let us keep the dialogue open and work together towards excellence."



UNIVEN and DHET delegates during the engagement session

Integrated planning and collaboration remain essential to sustaining UNIVEN's momentum



UNIVEN staff members and DHET delegates posing for a group photo

A Moment of Distinction: UNIVEN Celebrates Academic Excellence, Innovation and Impact at 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards



Vice Chancellor's Excellence Research Awards recipients

The University of Venda honoured its top-performing academics and researchers at the 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards, which took place at Premier Hotel, Thohoyandou on 21 November 2025, celebrating outstanding achievements in Teaching and Learning, Community Engagement, and Research. The ceremony highlighted the university's continued commitment to excellence, impact-driven scholarship, and its strategic vision of positioning UNIVEN for relevance and societal transformation. In his foreword, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, applauded staff who "inspire through the full spectrum of academic excellence" and reaffirmed the university's mission to create knowledge that is "impactful, inclusive and transformative."



Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UNIVEN

Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UNIVEN, emphasised that research excellence is the foundation of a strong university, stating, "There is no way you will find a powerful university with very weak researchers." He reflected on strategic changes, including the creation of a dedicated Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Postgraduate Studies position, which has driven significant progress in research outputs and postgraduate enrolments. Highlighting achievements, he noted that UNIVEN now boasts "about 46% of teaching and research staff with PhDs" and has increased PhD graduations to nearly 90 annually. Prof Nthambeleni urged continued commitment to innovation and timely completion of postgraduate studies to secure funding and enhance competitiveness, adding, "We must ensure that our centres of excellence and research institutes don't just exist on paper but function effectively." He concluded by encouraging researchers to pursue NRF research chairs and funding opportunities, affirming, "The future of this university depends on the strength of its research and innovation."



Prof Fulufhelo Netswera, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Postgraduate Studies at UNIVEN

Prof Fulufhelo Netswera, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Postgraduate Studies at UNIVEN, opened the event by thanking attendees for honouring the invitation. He described the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards as "a vital gathering in the daily life of a university" that recognises outstanding contributions in research, teaching and learning, and community engagement. Prof Netswera noted plans to expand categories of excellence awards next year so that "all those who are doing outstanding work in the university get the recognition that they deserve." He stressed the importance of fostering a culture of excellence across all areas, including support services, remarking, "If we don't support the talent, if we do not recognise those who excel, everybody sits back and says, well, it doesn't matter whether I do well or not."



Dr Prince Nevhutalu

In his Keynote address, Dr Prins Nevhutalu began by acknowledging the leadership and researchers at UNIVEN, commending their commitment to progress and collaboration. He emphasised that transformation requires collective effort, stating, "If we hunt as a pack, like the lions do, we are going to make major progress in the university."

Reflecting on his experience at the NRF and other institutions, he highlighted systemic exclusion of Black universities from research funding and opportunities. He urged historically disadvantaged universities to insist on representation in decision-making panels and to leverage current goodwill and funding opportunities, warning, "This window is not going to remain open forever." His message was clear: transformation must be intentional and strategic.

Dr Nevhutalu further outlined practical steps for achieving global competitiveness. He emphasised the importance of leadership, efficient support systems, and "purposeful recruitment" of top academics, citing how one strategic appointment could transform the entire university. He called for relevance in research, urging scholars to focus on local strengths: "Venda is your experiment, when you begin to touch the past from your own back door, you're going to become the best in the world." He concluded with a powerful reminder that progress depends on decisive action: "The future is what we create today. It will not happen by chance." His keynote challenged UNIVEN to move beyond the label of a historically disadvantaged institution and become a locally rooted, globally competitive university.

The 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards at the University of Venda celebrated outstanding achievements across teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. In Teaching and Learning, the overall winner was Dr Mantwa Madiba (Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law), recognised for her innovative approaches and academic leadership. Other notable honourees included Prof Shonisani Agnes Mulovhedzi for excellence as a professor and Dr Mercy Mushwana for her contributions as a lecturer.

In Community Engagement, awards were presented to Ms Recheal Nthangeni Mathungeni for Engaged Teaching and Learning, Dr Shonisani Tshivhase for Community-Based Research, and Prof Mulovhedzi for Social Responsibility Projects. Dr Shonisani Ramashia and Mr Mpho Edward Mashau were celebrated for advancing Open Inclusive Innovation, reflecting UNIVEN's commitment to societal impact and inclusive growth.

In Research, the university honoured scholars driving knowledge creation and postgraduate success. Prof Lindelani Mushaphi and Prof Ntakadzeni Edwin Madala received awards for supervising the highest number of master's and doctoral graduates, respectively. Publication excellence was led by Prof Lufuno Makhado (Faculty of Health Sciences), Dr Sean Mabitsetla (Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education), Prof Ademola Oluborode Jegede (Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law), and Prof Stanford Shateyi (Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture), with Prof Afsatou Ndama Traore recognised as the leading female researcher. Dr Ishmael Obaeko Iwara was named top postdoctoral fellow, while the funding leadership awards went to Prof Pascal Bessong, Prof Nthaduleni Nethengwe, and emerging researcher Dr Gudani Mukoma.

During the 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards, the University of Venda also recognised the adjunct professors at UNIVEN, Prof Sylvester Mpandeli and Prof Stanley Liphadzi, for winning a prestigious global award from the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) for their innovation in irrigation structures. This international accolade not only honours their contribution to sustainable water management but also elevates UNIVEN's profile on the global stage.



Prof Sylvester Mpandeli (middle) received recognition award

UNIVEN Celebrates Academic Excellence, Innovation and Impact at 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards continued...



Honoured researchers with exceptional publication outputs photographed with UNIVEN Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni (left), Prof Lufuno Makhado, Prof Stanford Shateyi and Mrs Julia Sigama representation Emeritus Prof Lillian Mammino

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni also honoured researchers with exceptional publication outputs, awarding Prof Lufuno Makhado (7.6 units), Emeritus Prof. Liliana Mammino (6.3 units), and Prof Stanford Shateyi (5.6 units) for achieving more than five DHET-accredited units. Each recipient received a certificate and a R100,000 cash prize, underscoring the university's commitment to recognising research excellence and promoting high-impact scholarship.

The overall significance of the 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards showcased UNIVEN's growing research strength, deepening community impact, and commitment to innovative, student-centred teaching. The awardees embody academic excellence, societal relevance, and transformation, positioning UNIVEN as a rising institution that advances local relevance and global competitiveness.



Prof. Sebi Lekalakala-Mokgele, UNIVEN's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

Prof. Sebi Lekalakala-Mokgele, UNIVEN's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, congratulated the award recipients on their outstanding achievements in teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. She affirmed that "teaching and learning is the core of every university," praised educators for innovative

approaches, and reminded researchers that "research is about meaning, solutions, impact, and progress." Highlighting community engagement as "the soul of UNIVEN," she urged awardees to mentor others, collaborate widely, and remain "ambassadors of excellence."



Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, DDG at the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation



Prof Sylvester Mpandeli, Senior Research Manager at the Water Research Commission

Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, DDG at the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, and Prof Sylvester Mpandeli, Senior Research Manager at the Water Research Commission, congratulated UNIVEN for its progress in research and innovation. Dr Muofhe urged the university to lead in digitisation and AI, stressing that "knowledge must drive economic growth." Prof Mpandeli highlighted over millions of rands invested in collaborations and announced new initiatives, including a Centre of Excellence and a student exchange programme, affirming, "The success of this university is my success."



Mr Botwe Kraziya, UNIVEN Chief Operating Officer

When delivering the vote of thanks, Mr Botwe Kraziya, UNIVEN Chief Operating Officer, commended the organisers for a well-executed event and partners for their support. He praised the keynote address as a "call to action," urging courageous leadership and collaboration to overcome challenges. Emphasising the role of support services, he committed to opening dialogue and hosting workshops to understand research needs better. Mr Kraziya highlighted the need to improve UNIVEN's share of national research outputs and stressed that "working together, we can figure it out," reminding all that their efforts are transforming lives and shaping future leaders.



Some of the NRF Rated Researchers pose for a photo with the UNIVEN Executives

UNIVEN is forging a future defined by excellence, innovation, and societal impact. By nurturing talent, supporting research, and fostering collaboration, it is transforming knowledge into solutions that benefit both local communities and the global stage

UNIVEN Sharpens its Future Vision at High-Level Council Induction Workshop



The University of Venda convened its Council Induction Workshop on 14 November 2025 at the Protea Fire and Ice Hotel in Menlyn, Pretoria, bringing together Council members for a day of strategic reflection and governance strengthening. The programme explored the closure of the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, the launch of the 2026–2030 cycle, sector-wide governance reforms, higher education megatrends, and the evolution of UNIVEN's governance ecosystem. The workshop marked a pivotal moment in UNIVEN's governance journey.



Opening the session, the Interim Chair of Council, Mr Edwin Mabelebele, reflected on the national higher education landscape, highlighting persistent challenges in student funding, infrastructure, massification, and sustainability, while urging collaborative leadership and proactive planning. Marking his final day as Interim Chair, he expressed gratitude for the support received and encouraged continuity of ethical leadership as the institution advances its strategic agenda.

Strategic leadership and ethical stewardship remain central to UNIVEN's path forward



Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, outlined UNIVEN's progress under the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, noting strengthened governance, improved student success, expanding research capacity, and steady institutional performance despite financial pressures. He introduced the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan aligned with Vision 2040, which prioritises student-centredness; research, innovation, and entrepreneurship; people, health, and environment; and internationalisation and partnerships. Prof Nthambeleni further unpacked the global trends reshaping higher education, from geopolitical instability and technological disruption to shifting labour markets and widening inequality, calling for agile, innovation-driven and future-ready universities.



Building on this strategic outlook, Director Strategy and Risk, Dr Mutshinyalo Ratombo, presented the proposed 2026–2030 Institutional Strategic Risk Register, emphasising outcome-based planning,

regional economic relevance, and stronger industry partnerships. The register identifies key risks, including governance gaps, programme misalignment, limited revenue diversification, and environmental vulnerabilities, positioning it as a dynamic governance tool for decision-making.



The University Registrar, Dr Joel Baloyi, provided deep insight into governance maturity, referencing ISO 37000, ISO 37004 and ISO 37005 to illustrate how ethical leadership, clear delegation of authority, and continuous improvement underpin institutional resilience. His subsequent presentation unpacked the Draft Review of the 2014 Reporting Regulations, detailing strengthened compliance expectations and new reporting instruments designed to reinforce transparency, sustainability, and public accountability across the sector.



Advancing the governance discourse, Mr Fhatuwani Ndou, Head of Governance, Ethics and Compliance, introduced the newly

released King V Code, which takes effect in January 2026. He highlighted its streamlined principles, strengthened sustainability and digital governance requirements, and enhanced accountability mechanisms, including AI oversight, data governance, and a standardised Disclosure Framework endorsed by national regulatory bodies. These expectations, he noted, must be embedded in UNIVEN's 2026–2030 strategic trajectory.



The University Registrar, Dr Baloyi and Head of Committee Administration, Ms Martha Lewis, concluded the governance-focused presentations with an in-depth overview of UNIVEN's decision-making framework, clarifying the cooperative governance model and the statutory processes guiding policy development, academic programme approval, and institutional accountability.

Closing the workshop, Mr Mabelebele thanked Council members and presenters for their contributions, affirming the importance of informed, ethical, and forward-looking governance as UNIVEN positions itself for excellence, relevance, and long-term sustainability. The induction workshop reaffirmed UNIVEN's commitment to robust governance, strategic foresight, and excellence in higher education. It served as a catalyst for strengthening collaboration between the Council and executive management, ensuring effective oversight and sustainable growth.

UNIVEN Strengthens Governance through Joint Council Committees Workshop on Integrated Supply Chain and Strategic Risk Management



UNIVEN Council and Committee members at the joint workshop on Integrated Supply Chain and Strategic Risk Management, working together to strengthen governance, accountability, and strategic planning



The University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted a joint workshop of its Facilities Planning and Infrastructure Committee (FPIC), Finance Committee (FINCOM), and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on 13 November 2025 at the Protea Fire & Ice Hotel in Menlyn, Pretoria.

The session, facilitated by Dr Takalani Dzaga, Director of Marketing, Branding

and Communication, brought together governance structures to deliberate on the Integrated Supply Chain Management (SCM) Policy and the Draft 2026–2030 Institutional Strategic Risk Validation framework.

Opening the joint workshop of the Facilities Planning and Infrastructure, Finance, and Audit and Risk Committees, the Chairperson of the Facilities Planning and Infrastructure

Committee, Mr Edwin Mabelebele welcomed members and stakeholders to a strategic session aimed at refining the University of Venda's Supply Chain Management and Infrastructure Procurement and Delivery Management Policy. He highlighted the importance of harnessing the diverse expertise within the committees to shape a policy that upholds governance integrity, aligns with international best practices, and advances the University's developmental agenda. The Chairperson underscored that the policy must drive job creation, supplier development, and economic growth while ensuring robust monitoring, accountability, and innovation in infrastructure management. He further emphasised the need to prioritise both new projects and the maintenance of existing infrastructure, strengthen supplier performance oversight, and ensure fair and transparent procurement practices. In conclusion, he commended the Director: Supply Chain Management and Expenditure, Mrs Beauty Mutheiwana, and her team for their diligent work in preparing the draft policy for consideration.

Refining our procurement policy requires collaboration, integrity, and a commitment to best practice. By strengthening oversight and embracing innovation, we position UNIVEN for sustainable growth and responsible infrastructure delivery

UNIVEN Strengthens Governance through Joint Council Committees Workshop on Integrated Supply Chain and Strategic Risk Management continued...



Mrs Mutheiwana highlighted the policy's Five Pillars of Procurement: Fairness, Transparency, Competition, Cost-Effectiveness, and Empowerment, supported by rigorous ethical standards and governance controls. The integrated policy eliminates fragmentation in procurement processes by establishing clear delegations of authority, lifecycle planning for infrastructure projects, and internal auditing for probity. It positions procurement not merely as a transactional activity but as a strategic enabler of the university's mission, advancing sustainability, local economic participation, and ethical leadership.

The workshop featured an in-depth presentation by Mrs Beauty Mutheiwana, Director of Supply Chain Management and Expenditure, who outlined the University's Integrated SCM Policy, a unified approach to procurement and infrastructure delivery grounded in constitutional principles of fairness, transparency, competitiveness, equity, and cost-effectiveness. The policy consolidates procurement for goods, services, research equipment, and infrastructure into a single governance framework guided by national legislation such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the Higher Education Act (1997), the Public Procurement Act (2024), and the BBBEE Act (2003).

A unified procurement framework strengthens fairness, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that every decision supports UNIVEN's broader mission



The workshop also received a presentation from the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, titled "Draft 2026–2030 Institutional Strategic Risk Validation." Prof Nthambeleni outlined the consultative process through which the university's Executive and Senior Management identified key strategic risks that could affect the implementation of the new Strategic Plan. Drawing on internal audit reports, risk registers, and performance data, the presentation emphasised that proactive risk assessment enhances decision-making, strengthens institutional resilience, and ensures that UNIVEN remains adaptive and sustainable in achieving its long-term objectives.



The Chief Operating Officer, Mr Botwe Kraziya, closed the session by thanking participants for their commitment and invaluable contributions. He commended members for their active participation and providing inputs that would be integrated into the final SCM Policy and 2026–2030 Strategic Risk Register.

In his closing remarks, Mr Mabelebele expressed appreciation for the constructive deliberations and commended members for their dedication to strengthening governance and accountability across the university.

Through this joint committee engagement, UNIVEN reaffirmed its commitment to transparent governance, ethical procurement, and strategic risk management, key pillars in driving institutional excellence and sustainable development.

UNIVEN Welcomes New Era of Leadership as Mr Rudzani Mushweu Assumes Role of Council Chairperson



The University of Venda (UNIVEN) proudly announces the election of Mr Rudzani Mushweu as the new Chairperson of Council, following a special sitting held on Saturday, 15 November 2025. His election marks a significant moment for the institution as it continues its commitment to strengthening governance, deepening academic excellence, and driving transformation.

Congratulating Mr Mushweu, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, expressed full confidence in

the new Chairperson's leadership and vision. "I extend my heartfelt congratulations on your election as the Chairperson of Council. This is a significant milestone, and we are confident that your leadership, vision, and commitment will steer the Council toward continued excellence and growth," He added that Mr Mushweu's extensive experience and passion for advancing higher education will "inspire positive change and strengthen our institution's mission."

In his acceptance speech, Mr Mushweu delivered a heartfelt address characterised by humility, reflection, and a strong sense of purpose. He traced his first encounter with UNIVEN Council business back to 2002, when he was a student leader, noting how the context of higher education has dramatically shifted over the years. "Today, I accept the responsibility of leading Council under a completely different context," he reflected. "Our university has always been more than an institution; it is a living community of dreamers, thinkers, creators, and changemakers."

He drew inspiration from the words of UNIVEN alumni who recently described the institution as the "University of Life," a place that equips students with resilience, perspective, and readiness to contribute meaningfully to society. Their enduring appreciation, he said, is a testament to UNIVEN's transformative impact.

Mr Mushweu also paid tribute to his predecessors, respected leaders such as Prof Barney Pitjana, Judge Yvonne Mokgoro, Dr Serobi Maja, and Mr Juneas Lekgetha, acknowledging the powerful legacy they leave behind. "I am standing on the shoulders of giants," he noted, emphasising that the responsibility ahead is both humbling and inspiring.

Looking to the future, he called on the Council and university community to embrace innovation, ethical leadership, and compassionate governance. While rejecting the impulse to promise radical shifts, he committed to strengthening UNIVEN's upward trajectory. "Together, we will work to ensure that our university remains a sanctuary for truth, a source of innovation, and a champion of integrity," he said.

Anchoring his message in the words of Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," Mr Mushweu urged the university community to remain united in purpose and intentional in their pursuit of excellence. His vision is clear: a University of Venda that produces students who are locally grounded, globally competitive, and ready to shape a better future.

As Mr Mushweu steps into this pivotal role, UNIVEN looks forward to a period of purposeful leadership, strengthened institutional culture, and continued transformation. The University extends its warmest congratulations and wishes him success as he leads the Council in advancing the mission and values of this proudly African institution.

UNIVEN continues to move forward with purpose, guided by leadership that honours its legacy, strengthens its culture, and champions a future defined by integrity and innovation

A New Era of Wellness at Univen: Students Thrive with State-of-the-Art Gym

At just 21, Emillio Fillies is showing what balance, discipline, and passion can achieve. A third-year Bachelor of Arts student majoring in Political Science and Psychology at the University of Venda, Emillio has become an inspiring example of how academics and athletics can coexist.

Originally from Cape Town, Emillio has made a name for himself both on campus and on the field. As a fullback (number 15) for the Louis Trichardt Rugby Club, he describes rugby as "a physically demanding sport played by gentlemen." For him, the game is not just about physical strength but also about respect, teamwork, and pushing personal limits. "It's often a time where I see how far I can physically and mentally push myself and then go even further," he says with determination.

One of the key factors behind Emillio's success has been UNIVEN's new gym facility in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Modern, spacious, and fully equipped, it has become an integral part of his daily routine. "The gym brought convenience and professionalism," Emillio shares. "My physical fitness, strength, and physique have improved and so has my mental health. University life can be stressful, but the gym has helped me manage that balance."

Balancing sport and study isn't easy, but Emillio has learned the art of discipline. "I've had to make sacrifices, like giving up socialising and drinking alcohol. But it's worth it. Without physical fitness, I wouldn't be able to perform at my best academically or athletically."



UNIVEN's New Gym Facility: A Game Changer



To his fellow students, Emillio has a simple message: get active. "Joining the gym or taking up a sport comes with countless benefits. You meet amazing people, build lifelong memories, and grow mentally and physically. There's nothing like the satisfaction of overcoming a challenge and seeing how far you've come."

Looking ahead, Emillio hopes to pursue an Honours in International Relations and eventually serve as a diplomat, travelling the world and representing South Africa. But rugby, he says, will always be part of his journey. "I want to play for as many teams as I can. I don't see myself hanging up my boots any time soon. Wherever life takes me, I'll keep pushing boundaries both in my career and in the game I love."

***If you spot anything out of the ordinary on campus -
contact the University Hotline by calling 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.

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