

RESTRUCTURED FOR RELEVANCE



UNIVERSITY OF  
ZULULAND



## R70 MILLION INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE FOR UNIZULU

Two key infrastructure projects – a 288-unit residential facility and the complete rebuild of the campus electricity substation – have been completed at the University of Zululand's main KwaDlangezwa Campus.

The University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Xoliswa Mtose, says that the upgrades, which have a combined value of over R70 million, helped the University deal with key challenges en route to creating a good teaching and learning environment for both students and staff.

Prof Mtose notes that the university had identified six strategic priorities for the period 2016-2021. These include accelerating infrastructure development. "Investment in post-secondary infrastructure is an investment in South Africa's next generation of students and researchers. Improving the spaces where students live and where innovation takes place will fuel prosperity for years to come," she said.

Facilities Management Department Director, Mr Richard Dlongolo, says that the completion of the student residential facility was a precursor to building further residences on campus to address the critical shortage of student accommodation.

At present, 5 000 out of 17 000 students can be accommodated on campus. Unlike many tertiary institutions which are located in busy cities, the University of Zululand is situated 19km south of Empangeni and 142km from Durban and there is limited alternative accommodation.

As a result, many young people travel long distances or live in the nearby Vulindlela Village where rudimentary housing and shacks lack basic services and do not provide a suitable environment for study, he points out. Mr Dlongolo says that the latest residential additions are actually an extension of facilities that were completed in 2008.

"This project officially began in November 2015. Construction of the new residences took a year. They were ready by May this year and students took occupation this month (July)," said Mr Dlongolo.

The new units are arranged into four and six sleeper combinations and come with hot water, bathroom facilities, furniture and kitchens that are equipped with refrigerators, stoves and individual lockers for students to store their groceries. Creature comforts include a lounge area and television.

Mr Dlongolo said that the second project – the reconstruction of the campus electricity substation at a cost of around R26 million – addressed the protracted electricity outages that had plagued the University.

Because the campus is located in a remote area, it was not included on the municipal power grid when it was established during the 1960s. It

therefore required its own high voltage electricity substation. At 35 years old and technically obsolete, the substation was "past its sell by date".

Mr Dlongolo said the climate promoted corrosion which, when coupled with poor maintenance over the years, meant that the old transformers were beyond repair. As a result, the University had relied on a single transformer for two years. There was always "a high risk of failure and a strong likelihood that this would have a negative impact on the University" as, without any back up, the electricity supply could only be restored once repairs were done.

As a result, electricity outages that stretched for days at a time had become a major problem. This impacted on laboratories and IT facilities and made teaching and learning difficult in Zululand where air conditioning is a must in the hot summers. The completed facility and the control centre, which is housed in the shell of the original control room building, has been built to international standards. Modern hybrid technology delivered a compact installation that requires minimal maintenance. It can be remotely controlled and supervised and is extremely operator friendly.

Mr Dlongolo says that the new facility has additional spare capacity for another 20 to 25 years and will easily accommodate the expansion of the University. The replacement of the old 6MW transformers with 10MW versions has resulted in a 40 percent increase in capacity.

The high voltage switch gear – which is the first of kind in South Africa – is central to the integrity of the new system. "But the biggest challenge was rehabilitating the substation while keeping it live," Mr Dlongolo says.

He adds that security around the substation has been beefed up with CCTV cameras to help combat cable theft. A new fence also deters monkeys. As part of the substation upgrade, 5km of aged high voltage cables was also replaced. Ducting that will accommodate a potential installation of micro optic cable was included, eliminating the need for expensive retrenching and dramatically reducing the cost of this future project. UNIZULU is also in the throes of improving energy usage on campus and has recently completed the specifications for the replacement of all street lighting. This will utilise LED technology and will both improve aesthetics and safety whilst also eliminating light pollution and bringing down electricity costs.

by Gcina Nhleko

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**Gcina Nhleko**

Director: Communications and Marketing

## EDITOR'S NOTE

South African Women must continually and fervently pursue the struggle towards equal emancipation. Patriarchal forces are tenacious. In South Africa's case they have persisted, partly because of an unintended consequence of the struggle against oppression when women made sacrifices for the "greater good". This meant that women remained silent even when those in authority abused their power.

History shows us that despite women's commitment and contribution to the freedom struggle, they were never regarded as truly equal to men in the patriarchal and hierarchical structures of the liberation movements. The irony was that the fight for equality didn't extend to gender equality despite the rhetoric of a "non-racist and non-sexist and democratic South Africa".

The sobering reality is that in the transition to democracy, the promise of a more gender equal society struggled to gain traction. In addition, pervasive structural violence – much of it invisible – means that the cards remain heavily stacked against women. This violence is also entrenched in societal structures – political and economic – and sustained by deep rooted inequalities of power and privilege.

We are privileged and truly blessed that UNIZULU is an environment where women thrive and are equal contributors and shapers in the decision making process. The University of Zululand has made a transformation mark in appointing female leaders successively.

On an educational note, the upcoming months will be packed with conferences, seminars, symposiums and the flagship Beyers Naudé Memorial Lecture on 11th October.

The below is just a highlight of upcoming activities at the University between September and October:

- Teaching & Learning Conference
- 18th Information Studies Conference
- MBALI conference
- Human Sciences Conferences
- Beyers Naudé Public Lecture
- 30th Annual SASM-KZM Symposium
- SAICA Accreditation for UNIZULU
- Research Awareness Week
- Wellness Day

Let's all participate in these events in true UNIZULU spirit as such opportunities can further enrich our knowledge fountain.

## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

### Professor Mtose Condemning Gender-based Violence

Dear colleagues

Management, like you, is concerned about the increase in gender-based violence in our communities.

In the recent past, UNIZULU has experienced huge institutional trauma around a number of cases of sexual harassment and abduction, including murder. The untimely death of an individual, especially someone so young with a promising future, is always difficult to comprehend and accept. We will continue to offer support to the affected families. The loss of young lives is not only a loss to UNIZULU, but to the national university community as well as society. Furthermore, gender-based violence is a scourge that afflicts our society and scars human lives. As UNIZULU, we condemn all forms of violence including the general rape culture that permeates our society rape, sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

Our institution has initiated peer conversations and awareness campaigns within the UNIZULU community with the aim to make our University a safer and healthier environment. On 20th July 2017, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, in collaboration with the Student Services Department, planned a campaign aimed at raising awareness and breaking the chain of silence around rape and sexual violence.

Prior to this event, the KZN MEC for Arts and Culture, Honourable Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi, on Thursday, 18



May 2017, launched the *Cultural Thursdays* campaign at the University of Zululand's KwaDlangezwa Campus with the aim of encouraging social cohesion and tolerance among Africans. A cohesive society works towards the wellbeing of all its members, and it is important if we want communities to move forward. Violence has a negative impact on economic and social development. By creating a sense of belonging and creating trust, we do

not lose focus of the most vulnerable in our societies. We hope that by collaboration, we would help to strengthen relationships and knowledge-sharing within the UNIZULU community.

We urge everyone to take advantage of the opportunities created to achieve and develop a counter culture to rape culture.

I would therefore earnestly appeal to our staff, students and visitors to be extremely vigilant outside of our campuses. Please do not accept lifts or any other forms of assistance from strangers.

The UNIZULU community is asked to report any suspicious and criminal behaviour to its Protective Services Department on (035) 902 6599/6479.

Sincerely,  
Professor X. A. Mtose  
Vice-Chancellor



## CAMPUS NEWS

### Be Bold for Change: Women at UNIZULU Told



*Dr Yasmin Rugbeer, the Director in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor at UNIZULU, and Michelle Jewlal, the Director of Lifeline Zululand, who delivered the keynote address at the event. Also pictured are UNIZULU female staff members who were at the event.*

UNIZULU recently held its Women's Day celebrations in honour of the incredible women who have changed the course of history for the better throughout the ages as well as its female staff who work hard in ensuring that the University continues to deliver on its mandate of providing quality education to its students.

The celebrations were held at the Umfolozi Casino, Empangeni. During the event, the ongoing scourge of gender-based violence was also addressed, with the attending women being urged to be "bold for change".

The ladies were exquisitely dressed in black with a touch of "bling" which was a strategic continuation of the dress code for the University's Black Thursdays campaign aiming to unite the UNIZULU community in the fight against women and children abuse as well as create awareness about gender-based violence.

Beyond the glitz and glamour however, the message was clear: society needs to be bold for change where gender parity is concerned.

Speaking on behalf of Professor Xoliswa Mtose, the Vice-Chancellor at UNIZULU, Dr Yasmin Rugbeer, the Director in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor said that "Women's Day is a collective day of global celebration and it calls for gender parity". "No one in government, no women's network,

no NGO is the sole custodian of this day. It belongs to everyone," said Dr Rugbeer.

She continued to mention that violence against women and children remains "one of the most tolerated violations of human rights" but that it was up to each and every individual to change this status quo by taking actions against all forms of abuse. According to Dr Rugbeer, one of the ways in which society can achieve gender equality is if parents raise girl children to be brave, bold and confident about sharing their great ideas. When society does this, she said, an "I can" attitude will be planted in young girls' minds and will thereafter thrive in all they set out to achieve.

In her keynote address, Michelle Jewlal, the Director of Lifeline Zululand, discussed emotional wellness/intelligence; mentioning the four factors which contribute to it. These are, she said, self-awareness, empathy, social relationships and personal influence. Without a balance in these areas, Jewlal said chaos is created, which thus results in social ills.

In conclusion, Jewlal encouraged women to make hard work and determination their "chronic illnesses" as this will guarantee their success in life. "Ignite who you are and become that fire and spark for yourself and for others to see," she said.

*by Naledi Hlefané*



## CAMPUS NEWS

### Be Local but Think Global: Siba Urges Students

It was a mind-blowing experience for UNIZULU students as celebrity chef, Siba Mtongana visited the University recently.

Hosted by the University's Consumer Science Department, the visit was held at the KwaDlangezwa Campus and featured mini competitions, an awards ceremony as well as a motivational talk by Siba, the Queen of Convenience Food.

Siba is a passionate and dynamic food enthusiast who brought style and charisma to South Africa's television food scene. She is well known for her show *Siba's Table* on DStv's Food Network channel which debuted in September 2013 and was an instant hit worldwide. The show is now broadcast in more than 130 countries in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, USA, Australia and Asia.

Upon her (Siba) arrival at UNIZULU, a sense of euphoria engulfed the crowd, with both students and staff loudly chanting the chef's name in sheer excitement.

"We are hoping that our students will be able to think bigger and better understand their chosen profession in Consumer Sciences through Siba's visit," said Professor Unathi Kolanisi, UNIZULU Consumer Science Department HoD. "We are also attempting to boost the self-esteem of our students and are hoping that today's experience contributes towards shaping their graduate attributes," she said, adding that Siba was chosen to visit the department because she is a consumer scientist by profession. "She is one of the few black South Africans who have managed to put the profession on the map. She is a trendsetter in interfacing indigenous foods with modern foods. As a department positioned in a rural community, we have prioritised interfacing indigenous food systems with those that are modern. We are hoping that her visit will bring enthusiasm to our students to understand and value the integration of indigenous aspects into our curriculum," said Kolanisi.

Delivering her keynote address, Siba encouraged students to be "opportunity-takers" as well as avoid letting challenges and family hardships stop them from reaching for their dreams. "Have a good heart and be a bookworm.



*Celebrity chef Siba Mtongana (middle) with Professor Unathi Kolanisi, UNIZULU Consumer Science Department HoD (left) and Nomfundo Nxele, Consumer Science Department Administrative Secretary (right) at the event. Also pictured is Siba with adoring fans.*

Be the stupid one who doesn't go to parties and clubs. Be passionate. Have dreams. Take opportunities because sometimes they come once," Siba told students. "As Consumer Science students, let your mind grow beyond KZN, beyond South Africa and Africa. Think at a global level because that's where the world is. Be glo-cal (informal phrase for global and local) so you can be competent," said Siba, also advising students to be creative and see value in themselves. "Be real. Produce something local. But, make sure that you take it to the next level by adding va-va-voom to it. Be proud of being South African. Be unique," she emphasised.

The competition also saw students from KwaDlangezwa and Richards Bay campuses compete against each other in the Best Cook competition, with Team KwaDlangezwa emerging victorious. Students who excelled during last semester were also honoured during the event.

Professor Nokuthula Kunene, Science and Agriculture Faculty Dean, expressed gratitude to the Faculty team, Consumer Science HoD and further revealed that the Department is in the process of opening a restaurant which will benefit the students on how to run a business.

by Samkele Sokhela



## CAMPUS NEWS

### Arts Faculty Research Output on the Upward Leap



The Faculty of Arts at the University of Zululand has carved the research pathway as evidenced by the increased Research throughput ratio of PhD graduates.

The Faculty is currently shining as the only one of the University's four faculties to have six

academic staff members receive their PhD qualifications from the institution this year (2017)

The faculty is befittingly shining as the leader and pioneer of staff acquiring PhD qualifications from the same institution during the 2017 graduation season.

The six recipients are academics in the departments of Tourism and Recreation; Anthropology and Development Studies; Sociology; Education as well as Communication Science and English.

Professor Gregory Kamwendo, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts at UNIZULU, said the Faculty is proud to be associated with staff capacity development, adding that "a PhD, being a reputable academic achievement, is a critical indicator for preserving the delivery of the refocused academic trajectory of purposeful teaching and learning, research and innovation as well as community engagement.

The graduates are representative of the South African diversity landscape and race groups which is in line with the focus of the Dr Blade Nzimande, the Minister of Higher Education and Training when he hosted the Summit of Higher Education Transformation in 2010. The Summit revisited the issue of transformation with a specific focus on equitable access to higher education, quality of higher education and the role of higher education in national development.

Prof Kamwendo reckons that these statistics speak well to the transformation agenda of the Faculty. Gender advancement imperatives are also addressed and evidenced as the majority of the graduands are females.

"Female PhD holders are likely to inspire female students

and learners to aim high in their studies. A nation of highly educated women is a nation whose bright future cannot be doubted," Prof Kamwendo said.

On how the Faculty promotes the culture of research and publications, Prof Kamwendo said it (the Faculty) has maintained the tradition of holding two major conferences each year; one for the entire Faculty and another for the Department of Information Studies. These conferences offer platforms on which staff and students are able to present papers and establish networks with peers from other institutions locally and beyond. After each conference, paper presenters are also encouraged to proceed to publish more papers.

Another common practice of the Faculty is knowledge sharing. When a colleague publishes, his or her published work is circulated to all Faculty staff members via email so as to open their eyes to further and/or potential research and publication avenues that could be pursued.

The Faculty is currently taking great strides with regards to the decolonisation of knowledge production and dissemination in research and this is particularly prominent in the Department of African Languages. Some of the postgraduate students in the Department write their theses in IsiZulu; something Prof Kamwendo finds "revolutionary and commendable".

"Our institutional language policy speaks to the development and promotion of another language of scholarship in addition to English and I think we are doing well on that front," Prof Kamwendo said.

Although these achievements are regarded highly by the Faculty, Prof Kamwendo noted that there is still great room for growth in terms of research productivity. He mentioned that in growing a culture of research within the Faculty, it is important that the leadership should lead by example and be "research active". He also emphasised the importance of senior academic staff mentoring non-senior academic staff and students; elaborating that a supportive and intellectually empowering environment would then result in increased research throughput by academics, especially those coming from the previously disadvantaged groups such as blacks and women.

*by Gcina Nhleko and Naledi Hlefané*