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JUNE 2021 ISSUE



US-UNIZULU PARTNERSHIPS ON THE HORIZON

UNIZULU Choir Hits the Right

Afro Jazz Notes

The Year of Breaking the Silence

UNIZULU CELEBRATES AFRICA DAY

with Riveting Performance and Lecture



UNIVERSITY OF
ZULULAND

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O EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The University's initiatives are at the forefront as showcased by various events and initiatives that took place recently which include the Africa Month lecture under the topic: African Languages, Social and Economic transformation which was a collaboration between the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) and the national Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. The Lecture was presented by internationally acclaimed scholar Professor KK Prah and was attended by the Director General of the Department as well as University Executives who were led by the Vice-Chancellor. Subsequent to that the University of Zululand in collaboration with the Empangeni Museum and the City of Umhlatuze launched its inaugural annual Africa Day celebration event, the aim of which was two-fold:

- Promote and preserve local creativity through art, music and performance.
- Promote and preserve African ontological and epistemological narratives.

The country also celebrated June 16 with a very rare twist, with masks and social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. June 16 serves to remind us, as a nation and as an institution of higher learning, that education

is a gift and a right; that it came at a great cost and is a privilege and should never be taken for granted. The pages of history are stained with the blood of individuals who believed in causes and died for them. Moreover, history is marked with examples of how the power of standing together for what you believe in can change the course of history.

The above events together with various webinars that are hosted across the faculties ensure that the University is a pivotal space of engagement and knowledge production. We admire the zeal and steadfastness of our academics in ensuring that our name is counted amongst key knowledge shapers in the continent.

The 2021 Graduation ceremony will mark history as this illustrious and proud moment will be hosted virtually. This is the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitates flexibility on our part. The University prioritised safety of its staff, students and broader stakeholder community and has to ensure that we are in compliance with the

Disaster Management Act. The ceremonies will be celebrated between Monday, 5 July and Thursday, 8 July and we promise that the festive mood that marks UNIZULU graduation ceremonies will not at all be lost.

Colleagues, as the COVID-19 crisis continues to challenge the norm, you are all urged to and reminded about the importance of wearing of masks in accordance with Adjusted Level 3 regulations as gazetted in Gazette 44715 of 15 June 2021 and amended by Gazette 44721 of 17 June 2021.

34. (1) For the purposes of these Regulations, a 'face mask' means a cloth face mask or a homemade item that covers the nose and mouth, or another appropriate item to cover the nose and mouth.

(2) The wearing of a face mask is mandatory for every person when in a public place, excluding a child under the age of six years, and any person who fails to comply with a verbal instruction by an enforcement officer to wear a face mask, commits an offence and is, on conviction, liable to a fine or a period of imprisonment not exceeding six months, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(3) No person will be allowed to-

(a) use, operate, perform any service on any form of public transport;

(b) enter or be in a building, place or premises, including government buildings, places or premises, used by the public to obtain goods or services; or

(c) be in any public open space, if he or she is not wearing a face mask.

Let us stay safe. For more information about the university activities please visit www.unizulu.ac.za.



Gcina Nhleko
Director: Communications and Marketing



FACULTY OF ARTS WOMEN IN RESEARCH LAUNCH ACCELERATES GROWTH FOR WOMEN IN ACADEMIA



“We are part of highly distinguished women in society. We are out there to represent and shine as few women are making strides in higher education.”

Those were the remarks of Shalo Mbatha, the Programme Director during the Faculty of Arts Women in Research (FAWiR) launch. Excitement was evident as this capacity building programme within the Faculty of Arts was launched on Friday, 19 June 2021 at the Bon Hotel in Empangeni.

The pioneers for this project has been the late Dean of the Faculty of Arts (Professor Kamwendo) and the current Dean, Professor Mogomme Masoga, who has been instrumental in ensuring that women in research capacitation is accelerated.

Deputy Dean: Research and Innovation Prof Allucia Shokane reiterated the importance of setting realistic goals and prioritising. She alluded to the role of women as wives and mothers but emphasised that if women

prioritise education it becomes a lifetime achievement which no one will take away. Professor Shokane encouraged colleagues who are pursuing their master's studies to start publishing papers in order to establish a research-rich foundation, the pinnacle of working in an academic institution.

Professor Antonia Nzama, Senior Academic in the Department of Tourism, took the colleagues down memory lane, speaking on the road travelled which has culminated in the Faculty boasting its own publication for publishing journals called iNkanyiso. Professor Nzama shared that, initially, the Faculty of Arts was dominated by male academics. But when two female colleagues obtained their PhDs, that was the starting point for cultivating a research culture within the Faculty. In 2017, Dr Cele, Dr Mdiniso, Dr Nkwanyana & Dr Zondi were amongst the first women who obtained their PhDs in the Faculty and the late Dean inspired and encouraged all female academics to participate in this initiative.

The needs analysis was conducted and it was established that women researchers needed mentorship and a little bit of support in terms

of publishing and writing papers. The first retreat to groom ladies was held in Hluhluwe and from that session participants learned the intricacies of networking and the importance of women in unity.

Professor Masoga unpacked the inspiration behind the FAWiR logo design, which is about capacity building. He showcased the achievements of various women within the Faculty in accelerating their work. Amongst those highlighted were Nkululeko Dlamini who will be travelling to Switzerland to pursue her PhD and will return after four years. Faculty veteran Dr Buthelezi has taken great strides in publishing and will be leading the soon-to-be-launched Centre for African Languages.

Professor Masoga reiterated that working for a University is a privilege and an honour hence he made a deliberate decision to associate with African universities as a space to thrive in his academic life.

Dr Cele gave a presentation on the implementation plan for the programme.

She said: **“It is the idea of the Faculty that we must all agree and we must all endorse our course of action, the banner, and all symbols for this project has been endorsed by women who are participants in the Faculty. Collaborations and partnership are very important in research as it is daunting to do everything on your own. That will assist you to be more productive. Black women work harder than their male counterparts for recognition. Also, success is not guaranteed because there are people who are critiquing everything that you do, but if you are focused you will succeed.”**

- Gcina Nhleko



DVC: TEACHING & LEARNING'S MESSAGE of support during FAWiR launch



The Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Dean of the Arts Faculty, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen – Good morning to all.

Let me first apologise that I could not attend this special event due to personal commitments that I could not reschedule. I deemed it necessary to send this short message of support as the faculty launches the Faculty of Arts Women in Research (FAWiR) project this morning.

I draw on Mokhele's (2013) work to emphasise the significance of research in higher education. Reflecting on Black Women Academics in South Africa, she had this to say:

“Building a research profile is arguably the most essential element for achieving success as an academic in a higher education environment, not only for the purpose of intellectual prestige, but also for reasons of economic survival”
(Mokele, 2013)

There is empirical evidence that women academics have less impressive research profiles than their male counterparts. Both national and international research shows the under-representation and marginalisation of women in research, especially black women, due to a number of factors that are familiar to us – such as insufficient time to conduct

research due to family responsibilities, heavy teaching workloads, lack of support to conduct research, and many others. In South Africa, black women are still facing numerous challenges with regard to gender-based epistemological stereotypes and that hinders their research success which determines their upward advancement in academia. As a result, many women academics, especially black women, are invisible and voiceless due to their limited participation in research, and most of them remain in the lower ranks of the academic hierarchy.

Those who have read some of the essays in the book entitled “Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience (2019)” written and published by Black women academics working at the universities of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and the Noth-West, will attest to the fact that many women academics do not only experience exclusion in terms of race in some higher education institutions, but also get silenced and intimidated when it comes to advancing their research profiles. However, it is exciting to see few black women breaking this stereotype and becoming more visible as leading researchers in their field/disciplines, despite the barriers they encounter in their research environments. We salute these phenomenal women as our heroines who have a lot to sacrifice to ensure that they become part of the research game in higher education.

It is for this reason that I am delighted and excited to witness the launch of this important programme in support of women academics in research in the Faculty of Arts.

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the faculty, especially to the Dean and Faculty who have played a significant role in this great initiative – i.e. the establishment of the Faculty of Arts Women in Research (FAWiR). Unfortunately, I will be unable to mention the names of all the key role players – please pardon me, but I believe that there have been intellectual dialogues, debates and negotiations that have seen FAWiR being launched this morning. I greatly appreciate this insight into promoting research among women academics.

FAWiR comes at a time of critical questions and concerns about

the visibility of Black African academics in research in South Africa. We have to ask ourselves questions as to whether FAWiR will be able to rise to this challenge, while responding to critical and contemporary societal issues that need robust and ethical research. If so, what will it cost the participants and the faculty leadership to propel and sustain the vision of FAWiR?

Colleagues, I hope that by participating in this FAWiR programme, you will not use this space to establish yourselves as researchers only, but you will also make efforts to inspire the next generation of women researchers, and challenge the status quo with regard to academic women and their research trajectories in higher education. FAWiR is a great opportunity to disrupt the academic research space which is dominated by white men at the moment. I trust that you will also make your mark in the transformation of the research agenda in higher education.

In closing, I must, once again, thank the Dean, Prof Masoga, for this great intellectual initiative that puts women at the forefront of the Faculty's research agenda.

Congratulations to the FAWiR participants too. I hope that you will exploit this academic space to your advantage and ensure that you yield positive results for your personal growth, while contributing significantly to the research vision of your Faculty, and that of the institution. I wish you success in your research projects that form part of the FAWiR.

I hope that FAWiR will grow into an intellectual space that will soon be recognised for research excellence, nationally and internationally.

Halala FAWiR, Hala-a-a-la!!
Thank you.

Future

MOGOMME ALPHEUS MASOGA
- composed on the occasion of FAWiR Launch



Abstract dream of all!
You are wanted by all,
all want to come to you,
with the sun rich upon your mood,
the music of overcoming, and
the melody of all the sweet things of life
the background music of one's arrival
in your unknown abode.
I am on the tide of time now;
but, I do not know where I am going,
but I was told to aim for you,
your destination that seems to move
when I feel or see the next borough
might be where you reign;
they told me to dream of you,
spend my days religiously committed to
your coming or my going to you.
Flower unseen, the question keeps
tagging, nagging inside me, like a whirlwind:
Where is the future?
This one would not let my mind
rest, for like all who pray of going
to tomorrow, I want the best:
Is the future a place or space?
And then I am on a race. Sick, healthy,
I am on your case. Sometimes when I
inspect my pace, I fear I may have borrowed
from the snail. And then, I fret of never reaching you.
There are days when I drum my chest,
proudly, as if I am the one who whispered
in the sea's ear how she should dance under
the gaze of the all-seeing sky;
on these days, I would feel like I have a
grip on you – future. But then, future, you are elusive,
you know, like quick silver, or
some sacred fish of unknown waters.
Where are you, future?
There are those who say you are not a place.

There are those who say you are here,
in the unseen matrix of life,
a silent choir that hovers upon our dreams.
There are those who say you are a myth,
a shifting concept, to keep us from fearing the
ever-gaping grave; some say you are an illusion.
There are those who even disturb the sleep
of ancient sages, who might have meditated,
thought deeply about what you might be.
There are those who say you are what one makes
of you; but I would not know, for I am not sure
what I have made boils down to you; I don't know
you, future, flower unseen.
If I were to follow those who say you are here:
How do I socialise myself of your place, space?
How can I harvest the revelations of my life
from your grace? This question too, mounds
my pendulum mind: How is it shaped, the future?
The air is heavy with my restless questions,
they wriggle, somersaults, in search of answers.
I am here now, alive, living, dreaming, asking,
seeking, suffering, falling, rising, renewing,
reviving, discarding, mending, hoping;
and I have questions almost as countless
as the stars in the sky, in the laboratory
of thoughtful silences and sighs.
I have seen this happening around me
and I wonder if this is the future of future.
Well, where does the future come from?
What is the future? Do I really
know what it is? To guard my ways, my words
so not to upset it. But whose future?
By whose standards?
I wonder if it exists. Or does it keep moving
whenever one's footsteps are heard in its vicinity?
I was once a boy chasing the future
chasing butterflies and locusts in the fields,
but it has all been a symbolic chase

after the future, really – running after the future;
pushed and shoved for the future.

I had my doubts about life;
Was promised improvements in the future.
'Did you know about that?' I say to the Future.
'I am worried that I will die not knowing you.'
I burden the future, if it is listening, and say:
'What do I tell my children about you?'
'Are my future grand children with you?'
Oh future, unseen flower held for me by the unborn,
tell me before I demise; tell me before I disappear,
never to return. The past I know and I can relate.
The past comes in and out, sneaking at times,
a familiar friend or foe who has a strange way of
rocking up behind you; the past I know, I can relate,
and at times it hurts, but the fact of knowing it heals.'

Future, flower unseen, I implore you:
Tell me if you are still coming, if you are there,
behind mirrors, behind my worries and solitude.
Some sing about you, you know, do you hear?
Others wait for you patiently;
I am not sure if they know where you are,
but they are sure they are waiting for you.
Where are you from, future, song of all?
Who gave birth to you? Future you are a mystery,
but a dream familiar to all. You are unknown,
but held up as the crown of one's
living, the cream-on-top of one's coming into being.
Please reveal yourself, there is a dire cry here;
I wish to know you.
I have stories of the past to share with you.
I wish to touch you.
My future, abstract flower, when will your
fruit come out, and fall for me?
I AM HERE, WAITING.

Mogomme A. Masoga,
18 June 2021
Zululand, Mtunzini (Shadow of Shaka)

DEMOCRACY, LANGUAGE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR

Kwesi Kwaa Prah



Democracy is ultimately more an ideal, a principle, than a formally constituted and historically fixed formula of government. To varying degrees and extents, it has featured in different societies at different points in history. In our times, the desirability of democracy as an overarching principle of social organisation is one of the least contested popular values of political life. In Africa, since the mid-20th century, it is institutionally identified with universal adult suffrage, the right for all adults to vote in the selection of state and representative leaderships, **“one man one vote”** as

it is sometimes called. While other enabling conditions such as rights to association, equality before the law, free speech and religious freedom are generally acknowledged, most African states principally adhere to the symbolism of universal suffrage. While this is the idea, practice leaves much to be desired. These ideas as broad values, have in substance been the conditions which have been used as defining principles for the constitutional basis of the post-colonial citizenship in Africa.

Democratic deficits are not exclusive to Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the West, glaring and flagrant deficiencies in democratic practice have been both common in the past and present. Ancient Greece the much-vaunted cradle of Western democracy rested on a slave underclass. In most of the West until the 1920s women did not have universal voting rights. Throughout the 1960s in Northern Ireland Catholics protested for civil rights. The United States of America was built on slavery, since the abolition of the “peculiar institution” in 1865 and the Reconstruction era which

followed, Jim Crow laws, lynching and voter suppression directed against its supposed citizens, of African descent, has never stopped. Some gains were made in the Civil Rights Protest era of the 1960s but since the ouster of Trump again in recent weeks and months some states in the US are passing legislation to make it difficult for African-Americans to vote.

Most people will agree that modern citizenship is at best an educated condition, and that democracy is the most satisfactory formula for the organisation of society today. Thus, citizenship is a requisite feature of a democratic system. When we say a socio-political system is democratic, we are also saying that the system is sensitive and responsive to the interests of the citizenry and also that this citizenry operates the routinisation of government through an institutionalised elective process which gives them a share and say in government, however removed they may be from the immediate area of political leadership and decision-making.

Furthermore, modern citizenship eschews the idea of superior or inferior citizens. All are equal before the law, all have equal voting rights, without exception all are free to engage in the activities of citizenship, all are in the expression of their political rights free to express both individual and group interests.

Thus, for democracy to flourish, there is need for a constant state of social and political interrogation and debate between those in and out of authority. Representation must be accountable and must institutionally provide for eventual recall. For citizens to meet the challenge of questioning and seeking information on matters affecting them, literacy is crucial. It increases the speed and volume of information flow. It puts people on indelible record. Print and access to print is therefore vital for the cultivation of a citizenry, which is alive to these possibilities. In an earlier address the point was made that, “conditions crucial to the cultivation of a democratic culture in which the idea of freedom of the press has a fuller meaning are that there has to be a high level of literacy in the African languages of the masses; a level high enough to make newspapers, intellectually, realistic propositions.

<http://www.unizulu.ac.za/speeches/>

O RESPONSE TO PROF KWESI PRAH'S PAPER BY DR AKPOME



One of the trickiest things in responding to a presentation is the temptation of responding to what the respondent thinks the presenter ought to have said (in line with the respondent's own intellectual and thematic leanings) rather than what the presenter set out to say and what they actually said. But in this case, it is consoling that, with his encyclopaedic research into and knowledge of language in Africa, Prof Prah can take almost any question on this topic within his strides, even if those questions may appear to be outside the narrow confines of this specific paper and so long as they relate to the broader domain of language in Africa.

Prof Prah's exciting presentation highlights the strong links between culture, language, inclusivity, democracy and innovation especially within the context of the colonial and neo-colonial history of African societies. While noting the discrepancies that exist between the ideals of democracy versus the actual practices that characterise its practice across different regions in contemporary times, Prah hinges the thesis of his presentation much more on the ideals of democracy such as the right to self-determination, social justice, consensus

based decision-making, cultural diversity and inclusivity which, as he correctly notes, are claimed today by almost everyone everywhere. Quite significantly for us as Africans, Prah observes that these ideals are not unique to any part of the world but have always manifested – in varying degrees – in different places. This reminds us of the depictions of pre-colonial African societies found in the works of great African writers such as Sol Plaatje and Chinua Achebe who declared that "African peoples did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans, that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity". This is an important reminder due to the prevailing presumption in popular political discourses that such ideas and practices were the exclusive preserve of western societies before being exported to the rest of world.

Democratic ideals, as Prof Prah convincingly demonstrates, forcefully impose on us the urgent need for Africans to adopt the use of indigenous languages in all spheres of life – especially in the formal and powerful domains of governance, education as well as science and technology. He provides a compelling argument that if African societies are to make progress in democracy and innovation, her peoples need to be able to conduct their lives in their own indigenous languages.

Indeed, for two decades now, Prah has been arguing that the issues of cultural and linguistic disjunctures are major stumbling blocks to development in Africa. Even though this is not a new argument, coming at this time, Prah's ideas represent a refreshing and constructive perspective on Africa's developmental challenges almost all of which have been overshadowed by the hackneyed and often unproductive and uncritical focus on corruption.

Prof Prah's focus on democratic ideals both as rationale for and path towards the desired elevation of indigenous African languages is the paper's strongest point. Yet, at the same time, it could also prove to be what exposes the paper

the most to scepticism. This is mainly because of some of the contradictions in the actual practice of democracy which Prof Prah himself admits. One of these is the role of African elites, who benefit from and sustain the status quo, and whose interests dominate democratic practices. Can the elite be trusted to lead the way in this matter?

Secondly, history shows (as Prof Prah also notes) that the dominance of colonial languages came directly from the power of conquest and not from any real or imagined inherent superior qualities. The case of the loss of lives and mayhem that accompanied the rise of Afrikaans in South Africa is particularly fresh in our memories. Unfortunately, or fortunately, African governments today do not have the same social and political affordances or motivations of their precursor colonial governments and are therefore constrained by the dictates of democracy in the pursuit of elevating indigenous languages.

Besides these two dilemmas, there are several common causes of scepticism about the actual feasibility of elevating African languages to their desired status. One of these is what is believed to be the 'uncountable' number of languages in Africa today that – or so the argument goes – would make Prah's vision nothing more than an impractical ideal. But Prah disputes this powerfully, showing from empirical research, that the vast majority of Africans speak no more than 17 core languages which, he argues, can be standardised to facilitate usage across considerable populations in the continent. The greater significance of Prah's point that Africa is not a Tower of Babel is perhaps its symbolism in dismantling the negative connotations of the view of Africa as a place of confusion, cultural disharmony and of socio-political incompatibility, a view that is consistent with pejorative colonial representations of African cultures and languages.

In his seminal 1968 essay, 'Decolonising the Mind', Ngugi wa Thiong'o argued that the language debate represents a part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggles of . . . African peoples". Even though he may not have provided answers yet to all the questions of all the sceptics, at a crucial time of renewed calls to decolonise education, Prof Prah's ideas can be accounted as a bold contribution to the struggle for democratic inclusivity, scientific innovation and economic productivity in Africa.

O ACADEMICS PONDER POSSIBILITY OF INSTITUTIONALISING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Prof George de Lange Director of the Nelson Mandela University Engagement Office

The University of Zululand (UNIZULU) through its Community Engagement Office recently hosted a webinar where a discussion around the institutionalisation of engagement as a core function of higher education took place.

The forum, which gathered academics and stakeholders in the field of higher education, was opened by Professor Vuyokazi Nomlomo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and learning. She said the University takes community engagement very seriously as it forms an integral part of teaching and learning as well as research. In her view, community engagement offers knowledge and skills to students that they would not otherwise acquire in the classroom.

“Our goal with regards to community engagement is that we want to be transformative in our approach. Community engagement is one of our strategic priorities,

whereby we like to co-create knowledge with our communities in such a way that that part of knowledge becomes sustainable and impactful in our communities,”
Prof Nomlomo said.

The main presentation was done by Prof George de Lange, the Director of the Nelson Mandela University Engagement Office. Prof de Lange put an emphasis on an approach to institutionalisation in a higher education institution using 15 enablers. He created a new inspiration and model for community engagement and interdisciplinary research, an exploration of what kinds of resources are most important for creating a meaningful impact in higher education and what the current limits on university impact are and how these can be overcome.

“Universities need to make a contribution towards the development of the region within which they are situated. Universities engage because, in this way, they contribute towards socioeconomic development where they are situated. Universities cannot be sustainable without being socially responsible. The minute you start engaging with people

outside the university, then research becomes more interesting,” said Prof de Lange. He emphasised co-creation of knowledge in response to societal challenges as a major driver to engagement.

The respondent, the Deputy Dean: Research and Innovation in the Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law, Professor Kaseeram thanked Prof de Lange for his insightful presentation. He cited that the fundamental aspect of the discussion was Prof de Lange’s recommendation for engagement to be integrated into teaching and learning and research, as opposed to it being a stand-alone.

“You emphasised that engagement should be built on the architecture of scholarship. This architecture of scholarship needs to be monitored through performance management; our KPAs should be based on it. There should be a system of rewards for such engagements,”
Prof Kaseeram noted.

- Precious Shamase

CALL FOR INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS FOODS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOOD SYSTEM



UNIVERSITY OF
ZULULAND



South Africa
Sweden
University Forum

Conference dialogue is one of the means through which the Department of Consumer Sciences engages with various stakeholders on indigenous food systems as this is a core aspect of the department.

The subject of indigenous foods and how these can be included in the South African food system as a food and nutrition security drive was greatly deciphered during a recent webinar organised by the Department of Consumer Sciences as part of the South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF).

SASUF is a strategic internationalisation project which aims to strengthen ties between Sweden and South Africa in research, education and innovation. The forum is a collaboration between 36 universities in Sweden and South

Africa, together with embassies, civil society organisations, funding agencies and ministries in both countries.

SASUF is structured along 6 major research challenges. These are six climate change, natural resources and sustainability; education for a sustainable society; social transformation through change: knowledge and social development strategies for society; understanding the burden of disease in Sweden and South Africa and its impact on the health systems of the two countries in the future; sustainable urbanisation, travel and tourism in the 21st Century; and digital technologies, big data and cybersecurity.

The webinar was organised in fulfilment of the theme 3: Social transformation through change: knowledge and social development strategies for society".





While sharing his opening remarks, Dr Pragasen Mudali, Acting Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering, said he strongly supported the drive to include indigenous foods in the mainstream food value chain. He noted, however, that increasing access, availability and usage will require stimulating consumer demand. Using the story of the iPhone as an example, he recommended that there be a disruption of the market. Before the iPhone's introduction into the market, there was zero demand for a touch screen as big brands at the time were all producing phones with a physical keypad.

Apple took a risk by reimagining and introducing the touch screen and this was a massive success.

"The disruption posed by Apple was not just presented as an alternative to the present but also a better version of the future. The challenge for us is: 'Can we present indigenous knowledge and foods as a match for present knowledge systems and food systems and as better options for a sustainable future?'

In other words, 'can we do for indigenous knowledge and foods what the first iPhone did for smartphones?' We can turn our students and staff into ambassadors of indigenous foods. Let's develop menus, cookbooks with family recipes that tell stories. Cookbooks with new recipes that incorporate indigenous foods," Dr Mudali said.

Prof Xikombiso Mbhenyane, Professor and Research Chair in Food Environments, Nutrition and Health at Stellenbosch University, agreed that the quality of diets can significantly improve through the incorporation of underutilised indigenous foods. The challenge,

she said, is that global food security policies have completely shunned the nutritive value of indigenous foods, especially those harvested in underprivileged communities. To combat this issue of food insecurity, the academic recommended that several actions be taken. These include integrating indigenous food studies into the higher education curriculum, imparting knowledge on the health benefits of indigenous crops to the population, especially youth and integrating the crops to the food system and making it available in all markets.

For Dr Ereck Chakauya, AUDA NEPAD SANBio Network Manager, ensuring that we tell the story of our indigenous foods is vital as this will ensure that it is passed down from generation to generation. "We need to have faith and confidence in indigenous foods. When you believe in something, you even teach your children about it.

We also need to create businesses out of the indigenous foods we produce," he said, adding that packaging, branding and marketing are three key elements to capitalise on in order to promote the food. Finding innovative ways to increase shelf life in our food processes is another aspect Dr Chakauya suggested be focused on.

Finally, he said the rural and township communities need to be involved in such businesses as these contribute to job creation.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Stakeholders from industry, government and the private sector engaged in thought-provoking discussions during the break-out sessions. These were aimed at giving practical, significant resolutions towards the development of sustainable policies, to ensure that Indigenous Knowledge & Food Systems (IKFS) are recognised as an alternative system to contribute towards achieving the first three prioritised Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) Agenda set by the United Nations (UN) to be achieved by the year 2030, which are:

no poverty, zero hunger as well as good health and wellbeing.

UNIZULU EFFORTS

Prof Kolanisi, the Head of the Consumer Sciences Department reported that the discussions and feedback from the session indicate that her department is heading in the right direction in terms of unpacking indigenous food systems.

"Key to transformation is exploring platforms that will enable action to be taken in addressing the challenges identified in the inclusion of indigenous foods in the South African diet. The discussions have highlighted the gaps that exist in the food value chain, subsequently they provided practical interventions and systems that should be established as a way forward to set a scientific informed pathway for the inclusion of indigenous foods in the food value chain.

"The department will continue to engage the relevant stakeholders with the intent of encouraging change in the current view of indigenous food systems. Consumer Sciences students and staff are underway with developing an indigenous foods recipe book specifically for the South African consumer and they are working on collating data for nutritional information of the developed foods," Prof Kolanisi said.

For continuous dialogue and engagement on how to inclusively integrate indigenous foods into the commercial food value chain, please register on this forum: <https://indigenousfoodssa.africamotion.net/>

- Naledi Hlelane

Caption

An assortment of dishes with an infusion of imbuya (amaranthus leaves), an indigenous plant.

PROFESSOR KUNENE

on the rise



The beginning of June 2021 marked the start of a new chapter for Professor Nokuthula Kunene who assumed her new position as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Research and Innovation.

Professor Kunene is an accomplished scholar and researcher. She boasts many scholastic achievements which include Research Fellowship in the Department of Animal Science and Biotechnology at the University of Perugia in Italy. She holds a PhD in Agriculture (Animal Science); M.Sc. Agric.(Animal science) and B.Sc. Agriculture among other qualifications.

For her PhD research, Professor Kunene focused on the Phenotypic and Genetic Characterisation of Nguni (Zulu) Sheep. What prompted her to explore this topic was the fact that, contrary to most of the exotic

breeds which had been studied extensively, very little study on Zulu sheep had taken place. In addition, there was an indication that the indigenous Zulu sheep numbers were declining due to crossbreeding and being replaced by exotic breeds.

The incumbent DVC is the former Dean of the Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering. Prior to holding this position, she headed the Agriculture Department at UNIZULU where she was instrumental in upgrading the various departmental programmes from NQF level seven to level eight. The aim of this upgrading was to enable students to seamlessly enrol for master's degrees upon obtaining their undergraduate qualifications.

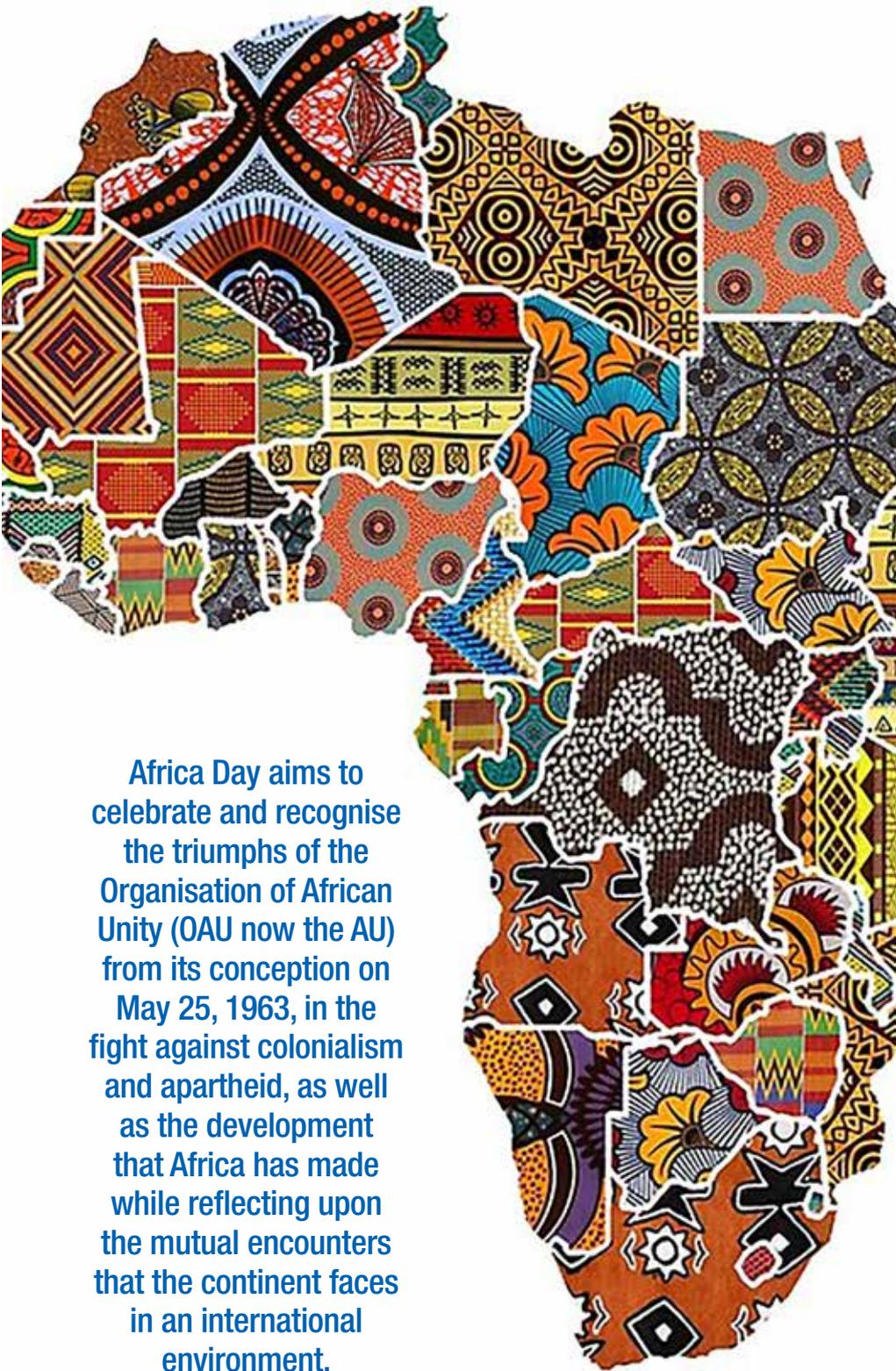
As Faculty Dean, Professor Kunene continued to supervise research projects for fourth-year, master's and PhD students.

The academic has been a member of the South African Life Science and Agriculture Deans Association since it was initiated through the National Research Foundation in 2013. This association, along with other regional associations, are members of the Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Science (GCHERA), a body which aims to encourage mutual understanding and global co-operation of higher education associations and their institutions in supporting innovation and providing leadership in education, research and outreach in agricultural and life sciences.

Her promotion is a significant moment of transformation for women in academia and leadership positions, especially at UNIZULU and society at large.

We congratulate Professor Kunene on this well-deserved appointment!

O UNIZULU CELEBRATES AFRICA DAY WITH RIVETING PERFORMANCE AND LECTURE



Africa Day aims to celebrate and recognise the triumphs of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU now the AU) from its conception on May 25, 1963, in the fight against colonialism and apartheid, as well as the development that Africa has made while reflecting upon the mutual encounters that the continent faces in an international environment.

The University of Zululand (UNIZULU) in conjunction with the national Department of Sports, Arts and Culture hosted an Africa Month lecture under the topic "African Languages, Social and Economic Transformation".

The event was graced by the presence of Director-General of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, Mr Vusumusi Mkhize, and UNIZULU Vice-Chancellor Professor Xoliswa Mtose.

Prof Mtose opened her address by breaking down the Africa Day concept. She said: "Africa Day is a day that we remember our history and identity as Africans, taking stock of where we are coming from and where we are headed as people of Africa in terms of progress we have made socially, politically and economically. It is a day where we remember our common goal, as a people, of our shared history that makes us a people with common destiny as a result of our shared experiences, especially that of colonial domination by external forces."

The lecture was presented by Prof Kwesi Kwaa Prah, the Founder of the Centre for the Advanced Study of African Society (Casas), a brain trust that is devoted to research of critical developments in Africa and its diaspora. Prof Prah spoke on the culture and the history of African language. "Language lies at the heart of culture. Language is intangible; it is not something which is manufactured like a car which you can see, you can touch, you could feel or anything like that which transacts the whole of culture. Language lines is the



O UNIZULU CELEBRATES AFRICA DAY WITH RIVETING PERFORMANCE AND LECTURE



central pillar on which the whole advocacy of culture rests. In 1913, the first rules of spelling for a standardised version was done. The same year, with determination, they took it to schools. Five years later they were introducing it to universities. Between 1925 and 1927 they had it in parliament. I want to emphasise again that the key for us is culture, particularly the language.

Let us all get hold of our languages and use languages to lift up our own identity. If we use our languages, the common man in the village is empowered. We empower everybody in that way. The moment we start and those villages even speak their language more beautifully because of the greater control that those of us who are 'so called' educated (have). If we want to lift our society by the book straps, then take the language to the people; take knowledge to the people in the languages that they know. That way we will transform people and they can have their pride back and the collective memory will come back," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, Mkhize thanked UNIZULU for organising the

Africa Day lecture considering the impact it will have on the preservation of culture and languages in the African continent.

"What is it that is in the power of language? And why were the colonisers so afraid of the culture and language of indigenous people? I think the answer lies in what Ngugi wa Thiong'o said when he said that while he was in prison, he was surprised by why he was imprisoned for working (using) an African language but when he was working (using) the English language, he was not imprisoned. He then realised in that time while in prison the power between the language and the use of power itself and the meaning of

power. So we really appreciate Prof Prah in what you have said in your statements when you touched the raw nerve about geography and people and when you talked about the Unity of Africans and the use of language and culture," Mkhize said.

In his closing remarks, Prof Siphon Seepe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support, thanked the department for partnering with the University in celebrating Africa month and hosting the lecture as well. He also thanked the Vice-Chancellor and Prof Prah for the impactful lecture.

Caption

From left: Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah, Founder of the Centre for the Advanced Study of African Society; Gcina Mhlophe, storyteller and playwright; Professor Siphon Seepe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support; Prof Xoliswa Mtose, UNIZULU Vice-Chancellor; and Vusumusi Mkhize, Director-General of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture.

- Siyanda Mntambo

UNIZULU CHOIR HITS

The Right

AFRO JAZZ NOTES



The perfectly harmonised voices of the UNIZULU Choir can soon be enjoyed on their second album, a collection of traditional songs and Afro Jazz set to be released later this year (2021). The choir is working with award-winning music director and MTN Joyous Celebration cofounder, Dr Lindelani Mkhize, on the album which will be a celebration of music that brings comfort and joy.

UNIZULU Choir conductor, Bhekani Buthelezi, said: "We respect Dr Lindelani Mkhize's diverse music skills, and having him part of the project is a dream." Award-winning producer, Siyanqoba Mthethwa, also forms part of the album creating team. UNIZULU Choir was

established in 2001 by students from different departments, all of whom had a passion and talent for singing. They started at choral festivals, competitions and concerts, growing to become one of the best university groups in South Africa. They've had the opportunity to work with the best in the industry, including Londiwe Cele, Babo, Thobekile, Zaza, Phuzekhemisi, Qadasi and Maqhinga, Mroza and Khuzani, among others.

Singing gospel, choral and traditional music, the choir has competed extensively even representing the country in the United Arab Emirates, United States of America and Germany and taking top awards along the way. In 2007, UNIZULU Choir was the provincial champion in the Arts and Culture Competition, taking top place at the national GACMA choir competition in 2011.

The following year, the choir scooped the national title at the GACMA Choir Competition, coming in second at the 2013 Old Mutual National Choir Festival.

The choir's 2019 album, Halala Syanibongela, saw them nominated in the Best Traditional Dance Group category at the South African Traditional Music Awards. That same year, the choir was chosen by Deputy President David Mabuza to be ambassadors for TB, HIV and AIDS where they were tasked with visiting communities to spread educational messages through music. A 2020 trip to England was postponed because of the pandemic, but the group is excited about the upcoming release of its second album.

- Wellington Makwakwa

UNIZULU PARTNERSHIPS ON THE HORIZON



Transdisciplinary collaborations between the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) and the United States of America (US) are imminent following a recent fruitful engagement between Executive and Senior management together with a team from the US Consulate General in Durban.

The meeting came as a result of the Consulate General's intent to forge relationships with various stakeholders around the country. Led by Consul General Anne Linnee, the delegation therefore visited UNIZULU with the aim of first understanding its environment, population and culture before determining the possible areas of partnerships.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof Xoliswa Mtsoe, was particularly excited by this visit. She said she aspires to forge relationships with US higher education institutions in order to gain knowledge on how to transform UNIZULU from being viewed as an inferior historically disadvantaged institution to one that is a game changer.

Her sentiments were echoed by Prof Siphon Seepe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support Planning during his presentation on the overview of the institution. He began by painting a picture of the colonial history of South Africa, stating that most of the institutions of higher learning were created under this rule. "As an outcome of the struggle, all institutions must be subjected to a process of transformation, from serving the apartheid objectives to serving the post-apartheid dispensation. UNIZULU is located within the space of historically disadvantaged institutions. The common denominator is that they are disadvantaged not because the people going there are mentally disadvantaged but they are disadvantaged in terms of resources that were thrown at those universities.

"We are trying to level the plain field in terms of the programmes that we offer. We are defined as a comprehensive university that can offer regular academic programmes and professional degrees. As part of that transformation, we have introduced engineering programmes

as part of making sure that those programmes that people of African descent were not allowed to have, these institutions begin to play a role," Prof Seepe highlighted.

His final words were that UNIZULU, just like Harvard which proudly positions itself as an American university, will define itself as a distinctively and unapologetically African institution.

From recent meetings Linnee said she had sat in with stakeholders in the Zululand region, the impactful role UNIZULU plays in the area was evident. This heightened the US Consulate General's intent to have engagements with the institution as it believed that there were great opportunities for collaborations. From climate change to teaching assistants, Linnee said there were multiple programmes, adding that she would love to witness more American academics coming to work with UNIZULU.

Both the University and the Consulate General agreed to have further meetings in order to chart the way forward regarding collaborations.

- Naledi Hlefane

O THE YEAR OF BREAKING THE SILENCE

In light of the gender-based violence (GBV) issue that continues to plague the country, the Pastoral Unit together with the Guidance and Counselling Unit, under the Student Services Department, recently educated students about the essence of calling-out perpetrators of GBV and reporting such incidences.

This occurred in the form of a webinar, hosted under the theme “Life is better without abuse. This is the year of breaking silence”.

According to the Pastoral Unit’s Bishop Monument Makhanya, GBV is at the top of the University’s agenda. He highlighted that the Pastoral Unit was therefore established to help deal with GBV matters on the University’s campuses.

“The aim is to create a safe campus (environment). We can only create a safe environment by naming the scourge and directing people where to go to report such things. We have a sexual and gender-based violence policy in our university; please make sure you report bad behaviour,” Bishop Makhanya said. He added that staff members in his unit are regularly available on campus to deal with various student issues in order to create an environment conducive to living, learning and working together.

“We all know that GBV is a scourge that cripples our society and institutes of higher learning. It is a human rights issue. Studies have shown that one in five women report to have been victims of gender-based violence in South Africa, mostly perpetrated by their partners or people they trust,” said Bishop Makhanya.

He thus urged students, especially males, to partake in putting an end to the epidemic. One of the ways in which they can become agents of change is through the HeforShe programme. HeforShe was initiated by the United Nations as a response to the global GBV crisis.

Its main objective is to include all genders in the fight against all forms of abuse. Bishop Makhanya affirmed that the Pastoral as well as Guidance and Counselling units ensure to involve young men in the process of ending GBV by teaching them

about the conflict resolution and positive masculinity. **In his closing remarks, Nhlanhla Mbizana, Counselling Psychologist, said: “We cannot treat gender-based violence in isolation to moral degeneration issues. I think it’s time that we appreciate opportunities for a dialogue like this, so that we tap into the issues of all the social ills that we have.”**

- Precious Shamase



POPS

STAFF MEMBERS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON POSSIBLE STEPS GOVERNMENT COULD TAKE TOWARDS ACHIEVING ITS GOAL TO GROW YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FOR AN INCLUSIVE AND TRANSFORMED SOCIETY.



- Dr Ntandokamenzi Dlamini
nGAP Lecturer: Curriculum and Instructional Studies

“To deal with the rife unemployment among the youth, particularly in the low and middle classes, the government should focus on equipping the youth with skills and knowledge of what is currently on demand in the labour market. Institutions of higher education and the labour market should work in partnership to enhance the employability of the youth. The higher education institutions’ focus during the intake of new students should be in the required fields so that when the students graduate, there is a place for them and the long waiting period before joining the labour force is eliminated. The education system needs to prepare the youth adequately, equip them with skills and knowledge to create their own opportunities. There is quite a number of youth involved in the selling business lately; skilling these young people to create and sell their own products would lead to positive returns and in job creation for many.”

“There are various issues that stimulate youth unemployment, but I will briefly highlight two of them. The first one is the issue of misunderstandings around ‘education-for-employment’. South Africans misinterpreted Nelson Mandela’s words and rushed for qualifications. Which is not wrong but, he did not say a for qualifications- which is not wrong, but he did not say a qualification is the key to success, he said “education is the key to success”. Education and qualifications have different meanings. Education involves a number of individual qualities including attitude, discipline, innovation, adaptability, knowledge, skills and many more. To give a picture, many of today’s youth have obtained qualifications, but they are not well prepared for workplaces due to lack of a set of individual qualities. I do not think that is the education Nelson Mandela was referring to. In order to increase employability, young people have to build themselves beyond theoretical knowledge of their professions. Secondly, the reducing number of private organisations sponsoring higher education is worrying. We might end up having the government preparing qualified people to support the private sector, that does not give back to the public. Government has to put in place policies that will motivate the private organisations to sponsor higher education through funding support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially those in postgraduate studies.”



- Nkosingiphile Zungu
Lecturer: Department of Information Studies

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