



THE MERCURY

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Honorary Doctorate for His Royal Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini

THE University of Zululand (UNIZULU) has recognised the extensive philanthropic work undertaken by His Royal Majesty, King Zwelithini Goodwill, to alleviate poverty and suffering among his subjects.

To acknowledge the leadership of His Royal Majesty, he will be conferred with an Honorary Doctorate Social Work (honoris causa). To commemorate this grand historic event, UNIZULU will bestow the award on the inaugural day of the week-long graduation ceremony scheduled for a special graduation ceremony on May 4 at the main KwaDlangezwa Campus.

King Zwelithini is the eighth monarch of the Zulu kingdom. The monarch is also the Chairman of the Ingonyama Trust, a corporate entity established to administer the land traditionally owned by the king for the benefit, material welfare and social well-being of the Zulu nation.

As the custodian of Zulu traditions and customs, he has revived cultural practices such as the Umkhosi woMhlanga, the colourful and symbolic reed dance ceremony which, among other things, promotes moral awareness and Aids education among

Zulu women. Ukweshwama is another age-old tradition that he has revived, which encourages men to promote HIV awareness during the celebrations of the first-fruit ceremony. His Majesty's age-old practice of circumcision has been globally recognised by the World Health Organization as one of the partial interventions to prevent new infections.

UNIZULU Vice-Chancellor and Rector Prof Xoliswa Mtose said: "We are beyond delighted to be recognising His Royal Highness for his humanitarian endeavours."

Rhana Naicker, the Bayede Foundation CEO, said the King accepted the honour from the university with humility.

"His Majesty is very humbled to accept this honorary doctorate because it is important to maintain strong links with this knowledge hub. We have high expectations of the university to contribute to the education of our people, and to advance research and innovation in ways that will support our aspirations and benefit our communities. This honour recognises our partnership and is a testimony of the ubuntu concept that the King lives and breathes," said Naicker.



His Royal Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini.

International Award for UNIZULU lecturer



UNIZULU academic Karina Govender recently scooped the Best Oral Presentation award during the SAAFECS Conference.

THE University of Zululand (UNIZULU) recently took part in the 13th International South African Association of Family Ecology and Consumer Science (SAAFECS) Conference during which its academic, Karina Govender, was awarded with the Best Oral Presentation award.

Themed: *Consumer Science, in pursuit of the future*, the seminar was held in Pretoria and was hosted by SAAFECS in partnership with the DUT Department of Food and Nutrition. Thematic sessions were selected to address current and relevant issues pertaining to consumer science.

A panel of expert speakers also presented on different views and facts related to the thematic sessions.

Govender's winning oral presentation was on *Snacking preferences of primary school children from a low socio-economic status community in South Africa* and

included key information on determining snacks that children consume in a school setting.

The importance of this research was mainly on the issue of the growing concern about energy-dense snacking preferences in developing countries and its impact on the prevalence of lifestyle diseases. Identifying snacking trends, in particular among children from low socio-economic communities, bears great importance in developing interventions towards promoting healthy eating habits at an early age.

Thus, information on snacking preferences will be valuable in selecting a suitable vehicle for nutrient enrichment aimed at children in a low socio-economic area.

"The financial contribution and support from the Department of Consumer Sciences enabled me to attend

this conference and I am grateful to have been granted the opportunity to learn and engage with other researchers in the field of consumer sciences," said Govender.

"The conference was a platform for me to share my research and to learn from the research of other lecturers. Going forward, I am determined to continue in the pursuit of learning and encouraging my students to do the same. I wish to take the phrase 'lead by example' to heart in the hope that students will also strive for excellence. I have gained valuable skills during this short time and am confident that it will be beneficial to my future career," she said.

Prof Unathi Kolanisi, the Consumer Sciences Department Head at UNIZULU, congratulated Govender, saying: "Novice researchers need more support to be exposed to such platforms. We are proud of Govender for waving the UNIZULU flag. The best is yet to come."

UNIZULU student first in KZN to win Budget Speech Contest



Khayelihle Madlopha, the third-year BCom Economics and Banking Management student, who won first prize in the undergraduate category of the Nedbank and Old Mutual Budget Speech Competition, is congratulated by UNIZULU Vice-Chancellor Prof Xoliswa Mtose.

UNIVERSITY of Zululand third-year BCom Economics and Banking Management student, Khayelihle Madlopha, recently made history when he became the first student from KwaZulu-Natal to clinch the prestigious Nedbank and Old Mutual Budget Speech Competition in the undergraduate category.

Initiated in 1972, the competition challenges entrants, who are undergraduate or postgraduate students registered for an economics course at any recognised South African institution of higher learning, to think critically about economic matters through tasking them to conduct research on a topical economic issue.

In the 2017 leg of the competition, in which Madlopha won, entrants were given three months to research on the *Economic and fiscal cost of corruption using local and international studies*.

For his outstanding entry, the 22-year-old student from uLundi received a R60 000 cash prize and joined a cohort of previous winners who have gone on to

occupy influential positions in academia, the National Treasury, as well as top organisations.

Madlopha said from the onset, he had his eyes set on the prize and not once was he overcome by doubt.

"I knew I would win because I was very creative in my research approach," he said. "I think I defined and measured corruption well."

Looking at the economic implications of corruption, Madlopha found that it had a direct impact on investment because international investors tended to be sceptical of investing in countries deemed to be corrupt, which translates to such countries receiving 5% less investments than they would. "After Pravin Gordhan was removed as the Minister of Finance, Pioneer Foods and other mining companies refrained from expanding their operations within South Africa," he said.

Madlopha also found that corruption affected government service provision, as well as higher utility bills and lower government revenue collection. When

citizens did not witness service provision, he added, they became despondent and it could result in tax evasion.

Madlopha's accomplishment was expected. According to his lecturer and advisor, Sheunesu Zhou Madlopha is "intelligent, focused and humble".

"Khayelihle is a determined and hardworking individual. His victory did not come as a surprise to those who know him as he had always shown great interest in economics. I feel honoured to have been part of his success story," Zhou added.

Prof Gideon De Wet, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation, expressed delight at Madlopha's accomplishment, describing Madlopha's excellence as inspiring.

"Entering such a competition requires that one must think very creatively and out of the box. Madlopha has demonstrated that the unknown should not be disconcerting, but should, in fact, inspire us to achieve our dreams and goals through hard work and commitment," said Prof De Wet.

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