



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Institutional Advancement

Vol 1, issue 7

This Week @FORT HARE



“Under *new management* means everybody, new ways of doing things and everyone doing their best to deliver quality service.”

- Prof Sakhela Buhlungu





MANCO DOES A WALKABOUT

The University of Fort Hare's top five Management Team – MANCO, has embarked on a journey to visit each department to meet with staff in their work spaces. The ultimate goal is to ensure that everyone lives by the university's motto, *"Together in Excellence"*.

MANCO consists of Prof Sakhela Buhlungu (VC), Prof Renuka Vithal (DVC - Academic Affairs), Prof Nokwethemba Ndlazi (DVC- Institutional Support), Mr Njabulo Zuma (Registrar) and Mr Nieleh Ravgee (CFO).

According to the VC, the walkabout exercise seeks to achieve three objectives:

"Firstly, to introduce the *new look* MANCO and to talk about the work they are doing

"Secondly, to talk about what it means to be under *new management*.

"Thirdly, to highlight the good that university was doing.

The walkabout commenced at the East London Campus on 16 October and proceeded to the Alice campus the following day. The first stop in Alice was a meeting with the Student Affairs Division at Senate Chambers. MANCO enjoyed intimate conversations with the Dean of Students and his staff. The session kicked off with a question by Prof Vithal who asked a pertinent question:

"What makes you feel good to be at Fort Hare?", to which staff gave positive and heartwarming responses.

"I come to work every day because I consider myself a parent to these students," said one of the staff members.

The walkabout proceeded to the Library, where Dr Connie Bitso, UFH Libraries Director, shared her vision for the Library. A gratifying conversation was also had with Library staff, some of whom have been with the university for over three decades. The visit ended with an extensive tour of the Library.

In his closing remarks, Prof Buhlungu said MANCO hopes to have a service charter to which all employees will commit to high performance and provision of quality services.

"Under new management means everybody, new ways of doing things and everyone doing their best to deliver quality services."





In conversation with the CFO



"Now that all top management vacancies have been filled, this gives impetus to our executives to move the institution forward, academically and financially." These are the reassuring words of our Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Mr Nielesh Ravjee.

This Week @Fort Hare was very fortunate to be able to squeeze in a slot in the CFO's busy diary to hear his perspective on what the future holds for this 103-year-old institution.

The CFO has faith in the capabilities of his newly appointed colleagues, Prof Renuka Vithal (DVC-Academic Affairs); Prof Nokwethemba Ndlazi (DVC-Institutional Support) and the Registrar, Mr Njabulo Zuma. He believes their knowledge and drive are sufficient to take the institution forward.

"This is already evident in some of the decisions we have taken, and our vision about how we plan to improve governance to make sure things are done properly to improve the image of the university."

Mr Ravjee said the executive is now motivated to look at the longer term implementation of projects.

Turning to the Finance Department which he leads, Ravjee said the aim is "to improve governance; generate funding; improve and change policies as well as paint a positive image of the university".

He mapped out four areas of focus:

Firstly: Getting around or over the period of administration and having a turnaround plan crafted by MANCO for the smooth operation of the institution.

Secondly: Obtaining an unqualified audit. We have already developed an action plan to achieve that outcome.

Thirdly: Developing a list of policies and benchmarking with other universities to serve as a measurement and improvement tool to improve budget planning, revenue management, debt collection and the investment policy.

Lastly: Focus on staff performance."

The CFO concluded our chat by saying: "**If we continue on this current trajectory, I believe our institution will be viewed differently by the public, parents and potential students. Our achievements will speak for the university and our stakeholders. The Department of Higher Education and Training is very interested in ensuring we achieve our goals. Our aim is to become a top university in the province and to be competitive with other universities in the country. We are determined to move away from the Historically Disadvantaged Institutional status**", he pointed out.

This Week @Fort Hare is confident that the CFO's dreams will be realized soon.

Mr Nielesh Ravjee, a Chartered Accountant, was appointed in August 2016. In his short tenure he has managed to steer the university away from financial instabilities of the past such as negative cash flow as well as fraud and corruption claims.

THE CENTENARY BOOK *will be* PUBLISHED IN 2020

... PROF LUVUYO WOTSHELA

Historical events that transpired in the first 100 years of the University of Fort Hare (UFH) will be reflected in a book set to be published next year. This exciting milestone was revealed by Professor Luvuyo Wotshela, Director and Head of the National Heritage and Cultural Studies centre (NAHECS).

The Centenary book is funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) through a project known as the Centenary History Project which is being rolled out in collaboration with the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

The book captures broadly, the social and intellectual history of the university. **"It deals with the major ethos of the evolution of the institution and pays respect to key individuals who have been instrumental in shaping the university,"** said Prof Wotshela.

The book will be an addition to the pictorial coffee table book which was published in 2017.

Prof Wotshela joined the university in 2002 and has been teaching history as well as land struggles and environmental sciences. In 2009, he was tasked with the momentous responsibility of writing biographical studies of some of the distinguished alumni of the university, including a book on the country's first black Chartered Accountant, Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu. Whilst in the process of completing Prof Nkuhlu's biographical study in 2012, he was appointed as Director of NAHECS.

He has been at the helm of recording the rich history of the university in a number of publications. He was fully roped-in on the preparations of the university's centenary celebrations in 2016 where he played a major role including authoring the centenary books.

Currently, Prof Wotshela drives the preservation and digitisation of the university's records, a project that is also funded by the DST. Through this project he has been able to employ six archivists. "The project is in progress already and I am working with the office of the Registrar, as the custodians of the university records as well as with university Libraries."



Prof Luvuyo Wotshela

The first cycle of digitised records is expected to be completed in 2021.

Prof Wotshela holds a DPhil in Modern History from the Oxford University (2001). He has authored and co-authored important books, written several chapters in books as well as articles and journals. His general interest is in the 20th to early 21st century South Africa. His specific interest is in resettlement and displacements, changing human settlements, land and authority for the same period, more so for the Eastern Cape.

On the leadership front, Prof Wotshela has been a member of the African Studies Association United Kingdom (ASA-UK) since 1998. He is a founding member of South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) history project. Between June 2017 and June 2019 he served as Vice-President of the Southern African Historical Society (SAHS). His appointment as President in July 2019, means the UFH will become the first historically disadvantaged university to host the SAHS conference in 2021. This is a huge achievement for the University of Fort Hare.

Prof Wotshela's illustrious career gives us the confidence that the university's history is in capable hands.

UFH Libraries *go digital*

Dr Connie Bitso

In a bid to embrace the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) and be part of the digital world, the University of Fort Hare Libraries are gradually making moves to incorporate technological advancements.

In an interview with *This Week @Fort Hare*, Dr Connie Bitso, Director of UFH Libraries, said the Alice Library is regarded as the "Heart" of the university. This is because it is the first point of reference for information for many academics and students, and provides much needed support to researchers.

Dr Bitso shared some of the plans and her vision for the university's libraries including a R20 million Digital Laboratory. In the main, UFH Libraries are trying to achieve three niche area, viz:

Research Commons - to create research space

Digital Commons - to provide digital support and innovation where users can design software apps and connect with other students and lecturers, and;

Knowledge Commons.

Dr Bitso also confirmed that the digital lab aspiration is about to become a reality as space has already been identified at the Bhisho Campus.

"What we need now is a commitment of R20 million from the UFH executive team MANCO. We have to develop a

proposal that MANCO can market for us and I think this will sell quickly and easily. We need to move with the times", she said confidently.

There are also plans to digitize some of the library's special collections. **"These collections are rare and cannot be accessed anywhere. However, we do not allow people to page through them because they are old and frail. But once they are digitised, we will be able to preserve the content and share it with a wider audience, anywhere and anytime."**

Dr Bitso believes that in order to successfully embrace 4IR, the library has to be recognised as an academic partner of the university in research and E-Learning. "Without the university recognizing us as academic partners, it will become a little bit difficult when we have to convince them on certain things in the latest trends."

Libraries are no longer about books only. They are about engagement, social learning and collaborative research. Libraries are about creating a vibrant learning space.

"In ten years' time we will be fully digitalized with less books," promised Dr Bitso.

We believe her.

SHIFTING THE RESEARCH CULTURE AT FORT HARE: GMRDC Presents Annual Research and Innovation Day



On 18th October, the Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre (GMRDC) held its annual Research and Innovation Day at the Science Auditorium, Alice Campus.

The event presents a unique opportunity for researchers from across the university to make a meaningful and qualitative assessment of the achievements and challenges they have encountered in the struggle towards creating new knowledge, meant to emancipate our communities.

More than 250 delegates and researchers attended the event. During breakaway sessions researchers interrogated, critiqued and shared their scholarly articles across all faculties. Altogether 40 oral presentations were made and 15 research posters were displayed.

In her welcoming address, Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola, Dean of Research, said this year's event comes at an exciting time. Recently the University of Fort Hare was recognised by the National Research Foundation (NRF) as the recipient of the Excelleration Award for achieving the most improved research performance.

"The university has produced quality research output that has attracted prestigious research funding from all of the significant funders such as the NRF, Medical Research Foundation and Human Sciences Research Council. We have produced high calibre researchers over the last few years and we have seen a shift in the research culture at Fort Hare. Thanks to the incredible efforts by our Academics, Deputy Deans of Research,

Post Graduate students as well as many other colleagues who have contributed to producing quality work," said a beaming Prof Gqola.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Babalwa Magoqwana, a Senior Lecturer at Nelson Mandela University and HOD of Sociology, Anthropology and Historical Studies as well as founding Director of the Nelson Mandela University Centre for Women and Gender Studies.

Dr Magoqwana emphasised the need for researchers to look at the value of our institutions in questioning the nurturing of the ontological demographic shift. She further highlighted the necessity of high ethics beyond reproach, responsibility and accountability within the context of what academics teach in research.

"It is critical that one doesn't teach merely content, but values, especially within the African context as this is the only way researchers will find deeper meaning that is informed by in-depth context," said Dr Magoqwana.

Buya Africa, a local cultural dance community group, kept the attendees entertained throughout the day.

Internal stakeholders such as the Library, Forté School of Science and Technology, UFH International Office, IsiXhosa National Lexicography Unit and the University's Innovation office participated in the exhibition.



SA MINERAL RESOURCES IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA



Prof Sonwabile Mnwana

DEMANDING A 'RIGHTFUL SHARE'? 'CUSTOM', LAW AND DISTRIBUTIVE CLAIMS ON SOUTH AFRICA'S RURAL MINING FRONTIER – FELLOWS' SEMINAR BY SONWABILE MNWANA

Source:

Michelle Galloway: Part-time media officer at STIAS
Photograph: Christoff Pauw

Head of Sociology Department, Professor Sonwabile Mnwana, a recipient of the prestigious Fellowship at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS) recently presented a seminar at STIAS based on his book project.

4 October 2019

"South Africa's post-apartheid state, despite nationalising all mineral resources, has failed to ensure that the benefits of mining accrue to the historically excluded Black population and to local communities where the industry's operations occur," said Sonwabile Mnwana of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Fort Hare. "Benefits of mining for local communities and the rural poor, in general, are miniscule. Mining has led to land dispossession and loss of livelihoods on the platinum belt. In communal areas, local residents who are also customary land rights holders, have no right to withhold consent for mining or other development."

Mnwana's project specifically explores the distributive

struggles in the platinum-rich traditional authority areas in South Africa's North West province but he hopes that the work can contribute to global debates on state-driven distributive measures and limited grassroots benefits from Africa's mineral resources. Mnwana has been involved with this ethnographic research for about 12 years beginning with his PhD work. This work will result in a book.

"The role of the mining industry at a local level has so far received limited empirical focus," he said. "This is ironic because mining positions itself as an agent of local development through its social corporate investment programmes. There has also not been a detailed focus on how the poor themselves imagine distribution and development. Most studies limit the 'voice' of the poor. This study seeks to contribute towards addressing this impasse by a detailed analysis of the rural-based platinum industry."

"The rapid expansion of mining into the former 'homeland' areas, over the past two decades, has produced new struggles in rural South Africa," he said. "The dwindling of gold meant that platinum mining has expanded and risen in value – it's the biggest mining frontier."

"What is unique about this area is that most of these mining projects are on communal land under tribal chiefs - land that used to fall under the former homeland," he added. "More and more land that used to be farmland is disappearing under the mine dumps. You often see village cattle foraging along the fences."

But the 'fight' for land in this area has a long history. When the Dutch settlers arrived they encountered a dry terrain and small, very spread out groups of mostly Tswana people who were easily defeated by settlers with guns. Land was demarcated into farms and parcelled off to white owners.

"By the late 1880s many Africans were living on white-owned farms as tenants and sharecroppers," said Mnwana.

But some did enter the colonial land market as owners "usually via white intermediaries and at great risk of losing their purchase".

These land purchases had to be registered in the name of a tribal unit under a chief. The buying process was difficult because many were neither numerate nor literate and had to depend on missionaries and others. Swindling was not uncommon, state officials were not sympathetic to African buyers and the purchases often took years.

"Mineral rights were also separated from surface rights. So mineral rights were not sold to Africans in most cases," said Mnwana.

"Quite often, these were distinct land-buying syndicates of farmers – not ethnically or culturally homogeneous. At times, they didn't even necessarily speak the same language but were forced to be part of a tribal unit to register land often under a state-appointed chief. This made the tribal authorities more powerful"

The various Land Acts from 1913 onwards and the creation in the 1950s of legalised segregation meant that African institutions of property holding were further ignored and the focus on chiefs was strengthened. All of this was further complicated with the expansion of platinum mining from the 1960s. Mineral rights, where held, were held under state custodianship, land was fenced off and often the chiefs received the royalties.

"Resistance to the chiefs' abuse of power goes back to the 1950s," said Mnwana. "Royalties were paid into the so-called development account of the tribe which were kept by the homeland government on behalf of the traditional authority."

From the early 2000s, the ANC government determined to nationalise minerals and introduce state custodianship. They encouraged communities receiving royalties to convert them into shares/equity which

meant they didn't get money directly. Although in some cases, chiefs remained wealthy. As an example, local chiefs through community mining revenues financed the soccer stadium built in Rustenburg for the 2010 World Cup.

"Many people feel that nationalisation of minerals left the communities that own the land empty handed. At the point where royalties could have benefitted them, the state took them away. Leading to the emergence of more radical exclusive demands."

"This has led to significant struggles in which people have died as well as lengthy court battles."

"Ordinary villagers make radical demands – for direct cash payments – that are rooted in private group 'ownership' of land and mineral resources," said Mnwana. "Most of these struggles take the form of custom where claimants articulate claims based on customary law and land rights. But we encounter different versions of culture and history depending on which group claims."

Some of the questions that Mnwana is therefore interested in unpacking include: Which authority is recognised?; how is custom articulated?; who remembers?; where do you get and how do you look for custom?; what is the character of custom?; what is the legal status of custom?; how does custom shape the structure of power over resources?; and, which authority is recognised when giving compensation?

"Custom is not a new phenomenon but has its own dynamics in South Africa," he said. "Custom, to some extent, has been distorted and used to crystallise power in the hands of traditional authorities."

"I argue that, in the context of mining-led local conflict, custom and law are not only contested notions (and 'spaces'), but also instruments of power and contestation," he continued.

Mnwana is also interested in understanding the socio-economic aspects in more detail.

"Mining is supposed to be a development enterprise but people are being dispossessed. Mining has created a massive surplus, unemployed population in the platinum belt but many also reject working in the mines."

"There is a strong sentiment that mine work is dangerous and not for them and many young people are moving to bigger cities."

"History, custom and law have become tools of exclusion in the contest of conflict in South Africa's rural mining frontier."

WRITING RETREAT FOR MPhil (Human Rights) STUDENTS



For the second year running, MPhil-Human Rights students participated in a retreat hosted by the UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair of Human Rights Centre which is housed under the Nelson R Mandela School of Law. The engagement took place on 15 October, at Senate Chambers, Alice campus, and was an opportunity for the students to write and reflect about various aspects of human rights education and law.

According to Professor Nomthandazo Ntlama, Head of Research at the Nelson R Mandela School of Law,

the purpose of the retreat was to breed a new crop of researchers that will transmit the acquired knowledge for socio-political change. In turn, the researchers will contribute to the growth of a vibrant and emerging community of postgraduate students who will produce knowledge that is socially and ethically relevant, as envisaged in the University of Fort Hare's mission statement.

"In essence, the retreat was meant to foster a collective vision in response to UFH's motto which envisions 'excellence' in the promotion of the institutional culture of teaching and research. The students chose their own topics and reflected on the connections between what they have learned in other disciplines and the new knowledge in a different discipline."

Student Supervisors Professor Ntlama and Dr Bellita Chitsamatanga presided over the session while Drs Cyril Ekeke and Pheliwe Mbatyoti served as external moderators.

Prof Ntlama said the outcomes of presentations were informed by the interdisciplinary nature of the MPhil programme which acknowledges the inter-relationship that exists across disciplines.

UFH FEATURES PROMINENTLY AT REGIONAL SAICA POP-UP TALK



On 17th October, Ms Wendy Terblanche, Senior Accounting Lecturer and Deputy Head of the Nkuhlu Department of Accounting, gave an address at the Border Kei District Association of Chartered Accountants (BKDA)'s first ever Pop-Up Talk. The event was held at the PricewaterhouseCoopers offices in Beacon Bay, East London.

The BKDA is an association of all SAICA members in the Border/Kei region and is the regional chapter of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA). Ms

Terblanche's presentation was aligned to the topic of the day: IFRS 16 - *an International Financial Reporting Standard promulgated by the International Accounting Standards Board which provides guidance on accounting for leases*. She spoke about financial reporting, auditing and business implications of applying this new standard.

The association decided to launch Pop-Up talks as a platform to service member needs. The sessions focus on relevant issues in the industry, with this being the first of many to come.

"The BKDA chose to focus on the implementation of the new international accounting standard dealing with leases as this standard is to be applied for financial years starting on or after 1 January 2019. Chartered accountants in business or audit firms will be dealing with the challenges of implementing this new standard during 2019," explained Terblanche

The inaugural session was very well received by participants and a call was made to hold more similar events in the future. After conclusion of the formal session, participants had an opportunity to network over refreshments.

UFH HUMAN SETTLEMENT STUDENTS INITIATE LAUNCH OF STUDENT CHAPTER



Students from the University of Fort Hare Human Settlement Department have collaborated with Nelson Mandela University, University of Free State and the University of KwaZulu-Natal to launch a Student Chapter. The event took place at Nelson Mandela University on 11th and 18th October.



The student chapter is a platform where students have an opportunity to network and share ideas with other students from different institutions. It will provide access to job shadowing and industry field trips. Students will also gain practical experience when they form part of site visits to informal settlements.

The first day of the launch consisted of different speakers who spoke about waste management, building sustainable human settlements and consistent engagement with communities. The students had an opportunity to discuss different practices of Human Settlement such as spatial planning, land use management and infrastructure development. There was also a discussion on "defining post-apartheid South Africa, Human settlements graduates as the agents of change"

On the second day students visited a settlement called Khayamnandi in Port Elizabeth, where students had an opportunity to interact with different representatives from the Human Settlement at Nelson Mandela Bay Metro Human Settlement department.

Nqaba Tyali, a student from the University of Fort Hare said: **"This is an important platform for developing future Human Settlement Practitioners. The networking chapter will ensure that we are prepared for the industry we want to work in. Our hope as the student chapter for the coming years is to grow our numbers, especially participation by institutions which offer human settlement related programmes."**



CONVERTING EVERY STUDENT INTO A CHAMPION AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Soon, the University of Fort Hare will be rid of all forms of gender-based violence (GBV). This is the noble aspiration of a group of students who not only volunteered for training, but have committed to becoming Champions Against GBV.



In April 2019, the Student Affairs Division assembled a group made up of 60 students from Psychology, Social Work and Criminology departments. The group, fondly known as the 'Champions', has attended several workshops to capacitate them for this cause. According to Mr Malinge Gqeba, Dean of Students, the main objective of forming the group was to create awareness about the scourge of rape and sexual harassment on campus.

"Since establishment, the Champions have visited classrooms to talk to other students, they hold talks in residences and they give support to survivors of sexual harassment and rape. They have also been visible at evening functions where alcohol is served," said Mr Gqeba.

At these events, the Champions can be seen in a white tent where they give assistance to intoxicated students, intervene in conflict situations, identify, and report perpetrators. They have developed a good working relationship with Campus Protection Services and enjoy support from their academic departments.

Their work among students has led to cases of GBV being reported and a significant drop in the number of reported GBV cases. "There was no incident reported in the Miss Fort Hare Beauty Pageant".

Their aim is to convert every student into a Champion against GBV," said an elated Dean Gqeba.



UFH CHOIR ADDS ANOTHER AWARD TO ITS IMPRESSIVE COLLECTION

Our beloved UFH Choir has done it again!

On 19th October, the Fort Hare choir took part in the annual Old Mutual National Choir Festival (NCF) and won top spot in the Large category. The event was held at the East London Christian Centre.

The NCF brings together the best professional choirs from across the SADC region. It prides itself in using the choirs' voices to celebrate culture and Africa's rich heritage.

The choir sang two songs: Western and African pieces. In the Western category they sang a Regina Chelly composition and scored a massive 84 points. For the traditional piece they sang Ayikho Indlela Makrestu and scored 82 points.

Said Masibulele Makroko, a UFH student: "This was our first time in this competition. We have participated in other competitions such as the South African Tertiary Institution Choral Association (SATICA) and have held the title of reigning champions for the five years. We wanted to challenge and push ourselves to another level, so we are very happy with the results".

"I would like to thank the university for the support. Even though we did not have enough time to practise, the choir showed dedication and commitment. Thank you to my choir and next year we will do better", said a proud Dumisani Tembani, Choir Master and choral music lecturer at the Music Department.

Halala Nokholeji!

Upcoming Events

Indigenous Knowledge Workshop hosted by the Innovation Office

When: Thursday, 31 October 2019

Time: 10am to 3:30pm

Venue: Senate Chambers, Alice Campus

FHISER Seminar: “Debating deagrarianisation in the Eastern Cape”

When: Monday, 4 November 2019

Time: 11am

Venue: Ground Floor Training Room, Collaborative Library

GMRDC Postgraduate Day

When: Friday, 8 November 2019

Time: 8am to 4pm

Venue: Science Block Auditorium, Alice Campus



University of Fort Hare
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THIS WEEK @ FORT HARE

your weekly newsletter

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