



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

UFH NEWS

NOV-DEC 2022

You are all appreciated

**2022 Staff indaba &
appreciation day**



Staff Indaba & Employee Appreciation Day

For the first time in years - most probably in over two decades - the University hosted a Staff Indaba and Employee Appreciation Day.

The year-end function was held at both the Alice and East London campuses on the 7th of December 2022. The venues for each session were filled to capacity as staff from the academic and support functions of the institution attended in numbers.

The event was a result of management identifying the need to give feedback to staff on critical issues and the status of the Decade of Renewal project and to celebrate milestones achieved in the year 2022.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sakhela Buhlungu said: "We have to celebrate our resilience and renewal."

The VC noted some visible strides and achievements in 2022 that speak to the University's Renewal programme. Amongst others these include:

- Management and workers' unions finding one another;
- The Dean of Student Affairs Division being recognized as the "People's Choice Award Most Visible, Relevant and Coolest"
- The revamping of 85 University facilities, including lecture halls;
- The developing and adoption of new policies;
- UFH making its debut on the Times Higher Education ranking;
- Luma Ke Blues lifting the Varsity Shield Cup for the first time;
- Baby Blues qualifying for the Varsity Cup Rugby 7s;
- The University's image improving to less than 10% negative media coverage;
- The acquiring of much-needed fleet;
- New applications (2023) skyrocketing above 200 000, indicating that we are a university of choice".

The VC also focused on some flagship departments that optimize the Decade of Renewal such as the UFH libraries which always come out tops on students' satisfaction surveys and the Office of the Deputy Registrar for Academic Affairs and her team for the willingness to work in collaboration with other departments.

He also mentioned staff who have personified excellence in their duties, like Mr Buzani, the

University's Electrician, for always availing himself and fixing the problems he attends to - even in the still of the night. He also mentioned the chairpersons of the Covid-19 Task Team, Mr Khotso Moabi and Ms Ntombana Rala for the diligent work done to oversee the effective communication of reports related to the virus.

After the VC's address, members of the Management Executive Committee reflected on some of the achievements in their respective areas.

In his reflection the Registrar, Mr Njabulo Zuma said: "It always feels tough and long, but we always make it and raise the flag high to improve the UFH brand. To be recognised in the world rankings does not happen in a vacuum but because we work collectively. I am proud we are setting the trend."

The Chief Financial Officer, Mr Charles Matumba, cited the recent unqualified audit and the hiring of four Chartered Accountants to build capacity in the office, as some of his department's significant achievements this year. "Other achievements include the improved third-stream income, stable processes of payment, and reduced rate of complaints at the financial aid offices. We have raised the standards, let's continue going forward," he said.

Professor Renuka Vithal, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Teaching and Learning said the University has made great strides in the academic front. "Several policies have been developed, consulted and submitted to council." She made mention of the continuing professorial inaugural lectures, of which four of them, were delivered by female professors in the 2022 Academic Year.

Prof Vithal also indicated that for 2023: "The plan is for full contact teaching and learning to return but to retain areas where we have made gains electronically."

Dr Ntangi Taole-Mjimba, DVC for Research, Partnerships and Innovation reflected on some of the significant and impactful research partnerships that were formed this year and the successful roadshows that were conducted with all the faculties to drive the University towards becoming research-focused. "We have just finalized the process of reviewing our institutional niche research areas. Early next year we will have new areas that will be incorporated into the existing ones. In terms of improving research capacity, there are several achievements including an increase in

"We are making progress with renewal. The visible progress is because of the efforts made by all of us" -VC

Towards a Decade of Renewal

the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) rated researchers. Last year we had 28 NRF-rated researchers and we set a target of 33 for the year 2022. I am happy to report that we have exceeded that target and now have 39 NRF-rated researchers."

The Acting DVC for Institutional Support, Dr Nosisa Mayaba said: "All can be achieved with proper planning, monitoring and evaluation. A February 2023 deadline has been set aside to make visible improvements. Failure is not an option, we must deliver, make real and visible changes." Management has declared UFH infrastructure a state of emergency. Things were made worse by the hailstorm that ravaged part of the already ailing infrastructure on the Alice Campus. My team will work around the clock and ensure students return to a conducive environment in January."

Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo, the Dean of Student Affairs who recently received an award for being the Most Visible, Relevant and Cool Students Affairs Division in South Africa said, "As student affairs we are witnessing the Decade of Renewal. The division's role is to make student affairs fashionable, and we will achieve such if we focus on our pillars. These pillars include student centeredness and ensuring there is stability in student governance."

The Dean attributed the success of 2022 to a number

of things including the SRC's full participation in different forums. "Credit goes to the student development office for always engaging the SRC. The division is also affiliated to all relevant professional bodies. We have also witnessed significant growth in the number of female student leaders as such, both our student representatives in the university council are female. Critically, we have created awareness about the role of student affairs".

Mr Joe Japhta, Wellness Practitioner from the Wellness Unit reminded the University community that mental health and employee well-being should always come first. "Some employees have been through difficult situations due to unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances. We can't bury our heads in the sand and pretend everything is normal. In 2023, we look forward to developing other wellness champions from departments across the University to build readiness and response plans."

Both sessions ended with a dialogue between staff and management where robust and fruitful discussions were had.

The achievements detailed by Management were met with thunderous applause. "We are making progress with renewal. The visible progress is because of the efforts made by all of us," said the Vice-Chancellor.



UFH Rewards Excellence and Launches Second Research Report

“Evidently, in this Decade of Renewal, we want to build this great institution to become a sustainable African university that prides itself in quality and excellent teaching, learning and research and a university that is a leader in providing solutions to societal challenges,”

From the 14th to 17th November, the University hosted the 2022 Research Week of Excellence (RWE) on Alice campus where over 100 impactful research papers were presented. The opening address was delivered by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu, and a key address was delivered by the CEO of the National Research Foundation (NRF), Prof Fulufhelo Nelwamondo.

The week-long event culminated in the Vice-Chancellor's Research Excellence Awards in recognition of academics who have distinguished themselves in research and the recognition of all newly NRF-rated researchers.

Among the highlights of the event was also the launch of the University's 2021/2022 Research Report.

Held annually, the UFH RWE aims to provide a platform for the dissemination and showcasing of research activities. The event also plays a vital role in strengthening the presentation skills of the University's researchers and also showcases intellectual property and research innovation that could attract external funding and partnerships.

Themed: “*Advancing innovative research in the Decade of Renewal*,” the four-day was dedicated to celebrating the work of researchers, postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows and intellectual property and innovation.

Giving an overview of the 2022 RWE, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Partnerships and Innovation (RPI), Dr N Taole-Mjimba the theme of this year's event was aligned to the University's new Strategic Plan (SP) 2022-2026.

“Earlier this year, the University commenced with the

implementation of its new SP, which has at its core, a focus on institutional renewal. As such, our RWE, is aimed at placing an emphasis on research impact”. This is because, among the seven main strategic goals that we have set for ourselves, two of these are core to our portfolio. These include and relate to:

- Building the University's research and innovation profile and
- Enhancing the University's regional, national and international research footprint, institutional standing and positively impact scholarship.

“Many scholars have engaged and published on what impactful research comprises, its varied meanings and the different forms it may manifest in research outcomes. I'm particularly reminded of a publication by Prof N Boshoff, published in 2018, where not only scientific impact is highlighted, but also technological impact, economic impact, social impact, environmental impact, health impact, cultural impact and even training and capacity development impact, to offer an example. So, when we present our papers and participate in the exhibitions, I would like to invite all presenters to think about what they want to get out of their research and what positive impact they want to pursue,” said Dr Taole-Mjimba.

To successfully achieve our goals as outlined in the new SP, Dr Taole-Mjimba said that extensive work is yet to be done to build on the strides the university has already made. “We have to look into our own research capacity and strengths and hence the conclusion process of reviewing our Research Niche Areas (RNA), among others.”

“In terms of capacity, we have just finalized two resolutions that pertain to research and innovation



Research Week of Excellence Highlights



that have been approved by Senate. Firstly, is to ensure that all prospective academics, before joining the University, should hold a PhD or be registered for one. Secondly, we have set a targeted number of publications that each academic has to produce within a specific timeframe.”

The DVC: RPI also mentioned the strengthening of support to postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows and the University's aim to produce impactful research through partnerships.

The DVC: RPI remarks came just a few days after the University and the Eastern Cape Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs signed a three-year agreement for the University to conduct research on the effectiveness of local economic development agencies.

“Evidently, in this Decade of Renewal, we want to build this great institution to become a sustainable African university that prides itself in quality and excellent teaching, learning and research and a university that is a leader in providing solutions to societal challenges,” said Dr Taole-Mjimba.”

To view the 2021/2022 Research Report, [click here](#).

VC's Research Excellence Awards Highlights





RESEARCH WEEK OF EXCELLENCE



VICE-CHANCELLOR'S RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS





“The University of Fort Hare’s slogan is Together in Excellence and we know of the excellent leaders it has produced in the country and in the African continent. It is therefore no surprise that we partnered with this University in this journey. We are happy to celebrate this milestone.”

SA government officially hands over institute for development assistance management to UFH

On the 18th of November 2022, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) officially handed over the ownership of the Institute for Development Assistance Management (IDAM) to the University of Fort Hare (UFH). This happened after the five-year partnership between the University and the Department ended – the handover signaled a new chapter for the Institute.

Established 14 years, IDAM is a product of an agreement between the then Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). It was developed out of a need for a strong and effective support capacity in development cooperation in the agricultural and food security field in South Africa and its neighbouring countries to prevent skills and capacity dependency from countries outside Africa for services.

The University was brought on board in the project as the institution to provide formal teaching, learning, and research in the area of Development Assistance and Management.

The Institute located on the Bisho campus was officially opened on the 22nd of March 2016. Currently, the Institute under the UFH Department of Public Administration offers a Postgraduate Diploma in Development Assistance Management – an NQF Level 8 qualification.

To signify the end of the partnership and the start of a new chapter, a project close-up evaluation report was handed over by the Deputy Director-General of DALRRD, Mr Nasele Mehlomakhulu to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu during a close-up celebration event held on the Bisho.

Speaking at the event, Prof Buhlungu described the moment as special, saying: “We are here to close a chapter and begin a new one.”

According to the VC, the new chapter includes entrusting the future of IDAM in the capable hands of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Partnerships and Innovation, Dr Ntabi Taole-Mjiba who is responsible for research centres and institutes at UFH.

The VC extensively outlined the profile of IDAM, such as the Institute’s capability to organize many

significant research conferences that attracted Kings, Ministers and other high-level dignitaries. He also highlighted some of the challenges the Institute overcame during the past chapter.

The VC said while some of the Institute’s activities will continue, the University will undertake a process of reimagining IDAM. “There is a plan and there is serious thinking and all will be revealed by the DVC. Part of the plan is to exploit synergies between IDAM and the Faculty of Science and Agriculture and other University activities.”

The DDG, Mr Mehlomakhulu who is an alumnus of the University, said when they were looking for a partner for this project, the Department never doubted the capability of the University of Fort.

“The University of Fort Hare’s slogan is Together in Excellence and we know of the excellent leaders it has produced in the country and in the African continent. It is therefore no surprise that we partnered with this University in this journey. We are happy to celebrate this milestone.”

“As we exit, we should remain partners to ensure that all the good work that happened over the years continues. We are pleased with the University’s vision for IDAM and as we exit, we are doing it with comfort knowing the University will continue the good work.”

While the partnership has ended, both parties have shown great interest in future collaborations to ensure the success of the Institute.



UFH and EC CoGTA collaborate to strengthen Local Economic Development in the province

“The new findings will not only benefit the province but will also influence policies on a national level,”

A shared vision to strengthen the economy of the Eastern Cape has culminated in a collaboration between the University of Fort Hare and the Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) to develop research on the role of Local Economic Development (LED) agencies as drivers of economic development in the province.

The collaboration between the institution and the government department was sealed on the 10th of November 2022, with the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) by the VC, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu and the Head of CoGTA, Mr Andile Fani.

According to the agreement, the partners will work together for the next 36 months (three years) to conduct research and facilitate public engagements on matters around LED. The studies will seek to explore the agencies' efficacy and create a body of knowledge to inform policy decisions.

The event was attended by CoGTA MEC, Zolile Williams and senior UFH Academics. The research will be conducted by three Researchers from the University's Faculty of Management and Commerce: Prof Willie Chinyamurindi, Prof Munacinga Simatele and Prof Forget Kapingura.

The VC welcomed the opportunity to work with the Department, the development agencies and the municipalities, saying: “The University's area of specialisation is research, there is a definite role to play in terms of issues of skills development in research and teaching.”

The MEC of CoGTA said UFH acknowledged the value of the collaboration and stated that based on the findings of the research done by UFH, the department would now be better placed to analyse the efficacy of development agencies.

Mr Fani acknowledged that the current research on the development agencies was dated and said that he looked forward to the new research findings and implementing the outcomes of the findings. “The new findings will not only benefit the province but will also influence policies on a national level,” he said.





UFH Fine Arts students' murals immortalize the values of Mam'Lindiwe Mabuza – iconic poet and liberation struggle heroine

“Artists have a greater chance of flourishing when their work is showcased in significance spaces such as this facility and this is what we want for our students – to flourish.”

The University once more made an entry in history books on the 6th of December 2022, when the murals of some of its Fine Arts students were unveiled on the walls of an iconic newly launched conference centre in honour of Lindiwe Mabuza – a South African and an international legend.

The day of launch marked the first anniversary of Mabuza’s passing and to honour her rich legacy, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), together with her family opened the new facility in her name:

the Lindiwe Mabuza Space situated in Rosebank, Johannesburg.

Mabuza’s legacy has many facets. She was a cultural activist, politician, academic, poet, journalist, diplomat, and so much more. She dedicated her life to the struggle for liberation in South Africa and the realisation of human rights.

As a feminist, she saw the fight against patriarchy as central to her life’s work. As a poet, she demonstrated the importance of arts and culture for activism and progressive change. As an internationalist, in exile she worked for international solidarity, dialogue, and unity amongst progressives.

As the first Ambassador of democratic South Africa to Germany and throughout her career, she continued to emphasise the need for progressive internationalism beyond the level of government.

Among the dignitaries in attendance was Mabuza’s daughter Thembi Mabuza, Max Sisulu, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Dr Brigalia Bam.

The students whose murals found a permanent home on this significant space are:

*Lukho Dyongo, *Indoda aYikhali*

*Sikelelwa Mqina, *New Beginnings*

*Lunga Mabongo, *Akusafani Nakuqala*

*Sokwana Lwanda Mthenganya, *Let’s break a cycle!!!*

These students’ artworks were selected during a competition that was held by the FES in partnership with the Fine Arts Department where students were required to paint artworks that interpret the politics of renewal.

FES South Africa’s Resident Director, Sebastian Sperling said because of the long-standing partnership between the Foundation and UFH that dates back to early 1990’s it made sense for them to partner with UFH on this project.

“We cannot thank the Head of the Fine Arts Department enough. Dr Siphe Potelwa and his team

did a stellar job in coordinating the competition and hosting us for the competition workshop at Alice campus. Dr Potelwa himself travelled with the four winning artists to Johannesburg and helped them to bring their winning sketches to the walls of our conference facility. Their murals are stunning!”

Commenting on this Dr Potelwa said: “Artists have a greater chance of flourishing when their work is showcased in significance spaces such as this facility and this is what we want for our students – to flourish.”

In addition to the artworks selected during the competition, a fifth UFH student Sinovuyo Makhubalo was selected to paint a mural of Mabuza. The 2m x 2m will be a welcoming image to those visiting the facility.





“These awards are an important indicator that we are making progress with achieving the goals of the institutional master plan of enhancing the University’s standing regionally, nationally, and globally through improved brand management, marketing, and reputation management.” - VC

Fort Hare scoops several marketing communication awards including coveted Chairman’s Award at 2022 Mace Excellence Awards

The University has scooped several awards at the prestigious 2022 MACE Excellence Awards that celebrates excellence in marketing and communication in Higher Education. The event host for MACE Congress this year was the University of Pretoria and the MACE Excellence Awards function was held at the Maslow Time Square.

“The University of Fort Hare stole the spotlight when it received one of the most important and coveted awards, the MACE Chairperson’s Award for Excellence in Marketing, Communication and Advancement,” said JP Roodt, UFH Director: Institutional Advancement.

“It was the University’s institutional-wide effort towards the prevention of GBV - driven by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs, GBV prevention Unit and Institutional Advancement - that led the University to this sweet victory,” Roodt said. Last year, this award went to Stellenbosch University for #Covid-19 Relief Fund: Making a Difference.

In total, UFH won five awards, and rose to the top of the provincial leader board: it was the Eastern Cape University that received the most awards during the 2022 MACE Excellence Awards.

UFH received two gold and two bronze awards with gold awards being awarded for the highest scoring entries in each category. The gold awards were made in the categories of issues management and crisis communication - disciplines that deal with effective reputation management.

MACE (Marketing Advancement Communication in Education) is the *de facto* industry representative body for marketing and communication practitioners in Higher Education and is a membership-based organisation. The annual MACE Excellence Awards event celebrates and acknowledges excellence in marketing, communication and institutional advancement disciplines in the Higher Education (HE) sector.

Case study entries in various categories need to demonstrate excellence and rigid academic standards in planning, delivery, measurement and evaluation. Entries are evaluated by seasoned professionals in higher education, government and the private sector and are externally moderated.

With the MACE board reporting that only 56% of the 171 entries received converting into awards, UFH enjoyed an 80% success rate in terms of conversion of entries submitted to the awards.

“The awards are an important indicator that we are making with the institutional master plan’s goals of enhancing the University’s regional, national, and international standing and impact, especially through improved brand management, marketing, and reputation management of the university,” commented Professor Sakhela Buhlungu, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare.

Roodt said: “We are delighted by the awards and extend our appreciation and congratulations not only to the MACE board but also to the other universities that received MACE Excellence Awards.”

Employees Matter

Secretary and Administrative Professional Appreciation Day





TLC hosts successful Teaching & Learning Indaba

Themed - “Advancement and Enhancement of Teaching and Learning Through Fellowship”, this year’s Teaching & Learning Indaba was great success.

The two-day gathering seeks to establish the role of fellowships in improving, enhancing and advancing teaching and learning in Higher Education and to reflect on how participants who undergo these programmes contribute to realising UFH’s strategic goal of advancing excellence and innovation in research, teaching and learning.

“The idea is to plan and strategize on how best to work with all the fellows in an integrated and coordinated manner to benefit teaching and learning, institutionally,” explained Dr Vuyisile Nkonki, Director of the UFH Teaching and Learning Centre.

Currently, the University is supporting academics who are fellows at two schemes, which are the Teaching Advancement at University (TAU) and the Advance

Higher Education Academy (HEA) fellowship programmes.

The TAU scheme funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training aims to enhance the status and stature of teaching and popularise the understanding of teaching excellence in varied institutional and disciplinary settings.

It also seeks to develop capabilities to engage in and insert participants as change agents, individually and collectively, in building a socially just education. Lastly, it aims to contribute towards the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education in South Africa by supporting the development of a cadre of academics across institutions and disciplines as scholars, leaders and mentors in their fields.

The University currently has six TAU Fellows and three academics undergoing the programme.

In total 15 staff members have obtained different categories of fellowship ranging from Associate

Fellow, Fellow and Senior Fellow with HEA - a professional membership scheme that promotes excellence in Higher Education. The HEA advocates for evidence-based teaching methods awards fellowships as professional recognition for university teachers and employs the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for HE Practitioners.

Key speakers include Prof Barbara Dexter – HEA Fellows based in the United Kingdom; Emirates Associate Prof Jeff Jawitz – TAU Fellow (University of Cape Town); Dr Karin Cartell-Holden – TAU Fellow at Stellenbosch University and; Dr Hellen Agumba – TAU Fellowship Programme coordinator.

“This Indaba directly ties with the University’s strategic goal of pursuing high-quality and innovative teaching and learning. Insights from the indaba will show how capacitation of staff through the fellowship schemes contributes to curriculum renewal, innovations, teaching and learning. It is envisaged that the strengthening of such will enhance students learning experience.”

“The above institutional objectives also tie up with the TLC’s strategic goal which is to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning, as well as scholarly teaching practice,” explained Dr Patricia Muhuro from TLC.



The Department of Social Work and Social Development has worked tirelessly over the years to build partnerships with community stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to foster work-integrated learning programmes to prepare its students for the field of work.

Recently, 85 first-year social work students enrolled and completed a personal growth and counselling skills course with Masithethe Counselling Services based in Buffalo City Metro.

According to Kim Schmidt, Senior Lecturer at the Department, for the first part of the programme, the training was offered through fieldwork programmes where the students, under the supervision of registered social workers, had an opportunity to implement the theory they have learned in class through various methods of social work.

“Traditionally these fieldwork programmes were offered from a second-year level, however, since 2020 through the support of the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) the programme was able to extend to first-year student support.”

“The course afforded students the opportunity to come together as a class in a learning environment that was supportive and encouraging while at the same time building capacity in the area of self-awareness and counselling skills,” explained Kim.

For the second part of the programme each student was presented with an opportunity to attend in-service training at two local social work agencies where they received training around areas of specialization.

“For many students, this was the first time they had visited a social work agency or even had the opportunity to meet and talk to a social worker about the work that social workers are doing in the field.”

According to Kim the students thoroughly enjoyed the course, saying it was an amazing and insightful journey of personal and professional development. The interaction with professionals in the practice also left many students inspired.

The Department is also working with other NGO’s such as Breath of Life, Masimanyane Women’s Right International, Nicro, Butterfly Palliative Home, and the Rehab Centre for the blind, physically and mentally disabled.

Kim commended the students for participating with energy and eagerness in these programmes and thanked the community stakeholders and the UCDG team for making this opportunity possible for the students.



“The right to science remains unrealised in other parts of Africa. Most rural areas still need to benefit from scientific and technological progress.”

DR FOBOSI PUTS A SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICA’S RIGHT TO SCIENCE AT WORLD SCIENCE FORUM

Dr Siyabulela Fobosi, Senior Researcher at University of Fort Hare’s (UFH) UNESCO Oliver Tambo Chair of Human Rights was among the researchers and scientists that participated in the World Science Forum (WSF) that hosted by the Department of Science and Innovation in Cape Town from the 6th to 9th December.

This is the first time the event was held in Africa.

The WSF is one of the most influential global platforms to interrogate the role science should play in society.

Themed: “Science for Social Justice” the programme brought together scientists, government officials, industry leaders, media representatives, students as well as representatives from broader civil society, especially from communities often excluded from these types of events.

The Forum deliberates in various plenary and thematic sessions, as well as side events, on the role of science in ensuring resources, opportunities and privileges are accessible to all, and distributed in a fair manner.

Dr Fobosi participated as a speaker and a panelist in a session on ‘Responding to Pandemics: Science and Human Rights’

During the discussions, Dr Fobosi highlighted the importance of realizing the right to science and development to the benefit of ordinary people.

“The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 15 of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) laid the foundation for the right to science.** Article 15 of the ICESCR states that just as governments are expected to take steps to protect the rights to freedom of expression and a fair trial, they must also protect the right to the advantages of scientific development.”

“However, governments have generally ignored their Article 15 commitments to date, and neither the human rights nor scientific communities have used their expertise to promote and implement this right in practice. **The right to science remains unrealised in other parts of Africa. Most rural areas of the**

continent still need to benefit from scientific and technological progress. For example, the lack of appropriate infrastructure in South African schools does not lead to equitable access to education and resources,” he stated.

According to Dr Fobosi, the significance of science for the enjoyment of other human rights and for long-term human progress is undeniable.

“Science and technology must be used as an engine of human progress and the pursuit of peace, and not harm. Thousands of pages have been published on the relevance of science for the issues that our societies and planet face, as well as plenty more on the value of science for our own well-being and the opportunities and possibilities that we now have. We need to get to a point where science is inextricably linked to various rights,” he explained.

Dr Fobosi also noted the importance of promoting the recognition of science and scientific research for developing responses to challenges confronting societies. He further highlighted that the connection between the scientific process and human rights has been recurrent, and we see that in several features that have proven critical in the context of the pandemic.

“The right to science can be defined as being free to participate in cultural life and share in scientific advancement. Such a right also includes the protection of moral and material interests, that is the author’s rights,” he stated.

“While the right to science and technology appears as distinct from the right to education and health, it is central to improving human life and raising the standard of living. The goal of a dignified human life and civic engagement shared by the rights to education, culture, and science extends far beyond the requirements for basic survival and security. Humans work together to actualize values of beauty, creativity, the pursuit of truth, and the realisation of a better tomorrow through education, culture, and science. Science and technology can be used to break social problems and ameliorate the material situation,” he concluded.

Zoology and Entomology postgrad students present impactful research studies during end-of-year seminar

A study into the abundance and diversity of citrus plant pests in Greenwood farm in the Eastern Cape and a study into molecular identification of araneae specimens using DNA barcoding to improve the Eastern Cape's contribution to the Barcode of Life Data System database are among the research presented by postgraduate students during the UFH Department of Zoology and Entomology end-of-year seminar held recently.

According to the head of the Department, Dr Craig Tambling, the annual seminars were initiated in 2017 to increase the cohesiveness of the department and to showcase the postgraduate research that is being conducted.

"We realised that many of the students were working on their projects and the rest of the department did not have any update on the progress or findings once the proposal was completed. This lack of feedback went as far as some students submitting their final projects and moving on with the bulk of the department unaware of what had been done or what answers had been obtained in the research."

"Firstly, the seminars provide the ideal opportunity for the department to come together once a year and everyone gets to see what is being done and what each student has been busy with over the past year."

"Secondly, a Book of Abstracts is developed to serve as a formal record by providing the Department, funders and collaborators with a detailed, consolidated report of all postgraduate student research that was completed that year.

"Thirdly, the seminars give the students a chance to present in a conference-like setting amongst their peers, thus learning valuable scientific skills along the way."

Held in October, the main activity of the two-day event was the presentation of research updates to the department through both face-to-face and online presentations. Altogether, 20 students (3 honours, 10 MSc's, 6 PhD's and 1 Post Doctoral) presented their research studies.

"This year's end-of-year seminars were a rousing success. We had entomology, marine zoology and



terrestrial zoology talks over the two days," said Dr Tambling.

The seminar concluded with an awards ceremony in recognition of some of the students' projects.

The awardees and categories were as followed:

Honours Winner - Chulumanco Majavu: *The molecular identification of Araneae specimens using DNA barcoding to improve the Eastern Cape's contribution to the Barcode of Life Data System (BOLD) database*

Runner up - Me-Kuthi Gogela: *Baboons and their use of waterholes in the Great Fish River Reserve, Eastern Cape, South Africa*

Masters Winner - Oyama Mfeketho: *Characteristics and drivers of waterhole use by ungulates in the Great Fish River Nature Reserve (GFRNR), Eastern Cape, South Africa*

Runner up - Bongi Mngqushu: *The effect of water-off events on the growth, survival, and biochemical stress indicators of the South African abalone *Haliotis midae**

PhD Winner - Pfarelo Grace Tshivhandekano:

*A morphological illustration of specimens of *Natalimyziidae* (Diptera: *Schizophora*) used to revise and describe different species*

Runner up - Sinalo Malindie: *Evaluating camera trapping success in monitoring demographic estimates for African buffalo (*Synerus caffer*) in thicket landscapes*

Associate Professor at the Department, Prof Niall Vine said the postgraduate seminars are an important and valuable activity for students individually as well as the Department.

"While the organising of the seminar programme, abstract book, and the seminars themselves take some time, it is well worth the effort. It is clearly evident that the event pulls everyone together which helps develop and reinforce relationships between staff and students for the following years."

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Human Settlements students participate in International Housing and Human Settlements Seminar

Housing shortages remain a backlog, depriving most indigent South Africans of quality of life and the harmonious environment envisaged in policy objectives. In its quest to find suitable and sustainable solutions to issues in the human settlement sector, the Institute of Human Settlement Practitioners South Africa (IHSP-SA) recently held the International Housing and Human Settlements Conference in Bloemfontein on November 24–25, 2022.

The seminar is designed at informing graduate placement strategies through shared knowledge, skills, and core competencies carried out by academic programmes in housing and human settlement offered at South African universities, including the University of Fort Hare.

Twenty UFH Human Settlements students (graduates, fourth and third-year students) attended this auspicious occasion in hunger for empowerment and inspiration, where Ms. Babongile Moto, a UFH graduate in human settlement, represented the university as a panellist and shared her experiences, expectations for the sector and department including her aspirations. This couldn't have come at a better time when the USA/Africa Collaboration Chairperson, Elizabeth Glenn Scott, stressed how crucial it is for women to have a voice in discussions that drive towards sustainable solutions.

The conference was graced by the attendance of dignitaries and housing professionals from across the globe. Among the very important persons, the Deputy Minister Pam Tshwete of the Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation in South Africa, delivered the keynote address and stated that the department of Human Settlements recognises the significant role the IHSP-SA plays in being the voice of human settlement practitioners in the country. She mentioned that they are grateful for collaborations between the institute and the department.

“The department is also aware of the plight of unemployed human settlement graduates...” Deputy Minister Tshwete added.

She did, however, encourage the graduates to seize opportunities that allow them to use their skills to create jobs.

This Workshop provided UFH Human Settlements students an invaluable opportunity to be exposed and network with both Private Sector, Governmental Departments and agencies.

“Being a part of the conversation that seeks to restore human dignity through housing, connect graduates with employers, and, most importantly, provide us with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make our voices heard has given meaning and purpose to pursuing the Human Settlement Degree, and I am proud to be part of the solution,” said Mr Mbsa Ngesi one of the UFH senior students.

Article by Dr. Mahali Elizabeth Lesala, UFH Human Settlement Programme Lecturer



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First-year Rehabilitative Sciences students say: *"Love your ears this festive season"*

Ears don't just help you hear, they also help you keep your balance and contribute to speech and language development. Recently, UFH first-year Rehabilitative Sciences students hosted an awareness campaign to remind the University community about the importance of taking care of their ears.

Themed: *"Love your ears this festive"*, the campaign hosted at the East London campus forms part of the students' Community Engagement and Health Promotion module. The event aimed to raise awareness about how to care for one's ears and hearing this festive season by educating the attendees about the importance of regularly having their ears and hearing checked, as well as, where to get assistance should one show early warning signs of ear diseases.

In addition to the health and hygiene tips, attendees also got a free ear screening on-site.

Ms Khomotjo Kgare, a *Speech-Language Therapist & Audiologist* who is a Lecturer at the Department of Rehabilitative Sciences said as we approach the festive season, it is important to recognize some of the things we do which may be hazardous to our ears and hearing.

"Caring for our ears and hearing is something that is often taken lightly. Some of our current practices may have damaging effects on our ears without our knowledge. Moreover, most people do not know where to go in case they suspect ear and hearing difficulties," she stated.

Below are some of the tips shared by the Department

Cotton buds or earbuds

The most common practice of cleaning our ears with cotton buds, firstly, not only can the earbud poke your ear or get stuck in your ear but you are working against the ear's process of cleaning itself. Secondly, one doesn't really know if there are any foreign objects in the ear, so by using a cotton bud, you may be pushing that object further into your ear and causing pain. Earwax plays an important role in our ears, because of its sticky nature, should something get into your ear, the wax traps it so that it doesn't go deeper into your ear to cause harm to you.

Noise (music and firecrackers)

In most of our communities, the festive season is a time for celebrations and festivities. Most of us will be engaging in activities where there is excessively loud music playing. At these events, try not to be too close to the music speaker and, from time to time, step out of the noisy area to give your ears a "listening break". Make sure that after attending such an event, you keep away from exposing yourself to more noise at least for a day or two. Hearing loss that is caused by exposure to noise is irreversible because it causes direct damage to the hair cells in the inner ear. In most cases, you may not experience the impact immediately because this type of hearing loss builds up gradually. On the 31st of December, as we light up firecrackers, be cautious of those loud banging "sounding like a bomb", if possible, wear your earplugs as you light it up. That sound can cause immediate loss of hearing.

Physical altercations

Try as much as possible to avoid engaging in physical altercations, if you find yourself in this unfortunate situation, try to protect your face and ears. This is because a hard slap on the face can cause damage to your eardrum e.g. rupturing or tearing of an eardrum.

The use of eardrops

Lastly, should you experience any form of pain in your ear, avoid using eardrops that were not prescribed because none of us knows what is happening in our own ears unless they were checked by a health professional. It is advisable to use oral medication such as painkillers until you get medical attention. It is said that "ear drops are safe as long as your eardrum is intact" however, if you have never had your ears checked, you may not know if your eardrum is intact or not.



We hope these tips will assist in improving your ear and hearing healthcare practices. #LoveYourEars and have a safe and blessed festive season.



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