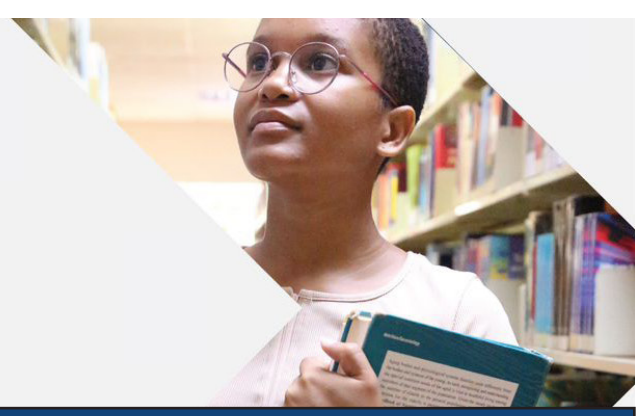




University of Venda  
Creating Future Leaders

# UNIVEN Weekly e-Newsletter



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## Rays of hope - UNIVEN Spring graduation shines bright on future leaders

The Chancellor of the University of Venda (UNIVEN), Adv Mojanku Gumbi conferred over 750 certificates, diplomas, and degrees. Of the overall total of graduates, 56,48% were females while 43,52% were males. In this 2024 Spring Graduation, 50 received their honours while 78 graduates received their masters degrees and 33 received their PhDs. All these were honoured for their academic excellence during UNIVEN 2024 Spring Graduation Ceremonies that took place at the University Auditorium on Friday, 06 September 2024. The graduates were from the four faculties of the University of Venda.



PhDs recipients from the following Faculties: Health Sciences; Management, Commerce and Law; as well as Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

Other highlights of these graduation ceremonies which are also history in the making, the University of Venda conferred a Doctoral Degree in Nursing to a 74-year-old woman, Dr Princess Annesheilah Makhado, defying age barriers. This included Dr Jobodwana Nomna Linda (71), who received a Doctoral Degree in Sociology and Mr Ntevheleni Justice Thovhogi who graduated Master of Environmental Sciences at the age of 75. These remarkable achievements, serve as an inspiring testament to lifelong learning and determination, breaking conventional stereotypes about age limitations in academia.



UNIVEN Chancellor, Adv Mojanku Gumbi



The Chancellor of the University, Adv Mojanku Gumbi, in her congratulatory message briefly shared a sad story of two women who were shot and killed by a white farmer because they are poor. She explained that a single mother of four Mariah Makgato, 47 and 34-year-old Zimbabwean national, Lucia Ndlovu were shot dead and thrown into pigsty while collecting expired food from a farm in Limpopo.

She told graduates to never cross the line where they deny other people peace and freedom. Adv Gumbi said "Never forget where you are coming from and that you are a human being. Do not ever forget your humanity."

As we are celebrating Heritage month, she chose to celebrate with the people of Ethiopia and Ghana who refused to be colonised by the Italians. She indicated that at some stage as Africans, we were never colonised but conquerors. She maintained that today we should also honour these two women who were leading the march to deny Italians to colonise them. In addition, she told the graduates and said "As you go out there, whatever the temptations might be, remember that you come from great people. These people need your assistance and your wisdom to survive. "As we celebrate, let us remember who we are and let us never forget that there are challenges lying ahead of us," she concluded.



Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni

Talking of growing your own timber, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni in his welcome remarks expressed that during this spring graduation, amongst 33 PhDs that were conferred, 11 of them were awarded to UNIVEN staff members. This included Dr Maanda Hadzhi Ligavha-Mbelengwa, Senior Lecturer, Biological Sciences who has acquired over 37 years of service in the University. He expressed pride as he highlighted the achievement of one of UNIVEN staff, Dr Khethiwe Madima who received a PhD (Criminal Justice). Dr Madima is the first candidate to obtain a PhD in the indelible history of the School of Law, and the University of Venda, South Africa.

Amongst those who crossed the stage, under the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, was the MEC of Social Development in Limpopo Province, Mrs Florence Radzilani who graduated Master of Public Management (MPM).





In his remarks, Prof Nthambeleni took a moment and expressed his heartfelt condolences to Nkondo's family for the loss of the third Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Prof Gessler Muxe Nkondo who sadly passed away on Sunday, 18 August 2024.

On another sad note, Prof Nthambeleni informed the guests about the passing away of former Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof Dovhani Reckson Thakhathi who departed on Friday, 30 August 2024.

As he continued, Prof Nthambeleni shared University success stories that included creation of two research niche areas: (1) African Heritage and Indigenous Knowledge Systems and (2) One Health. These specialised areas aim to promote critical and innovative research that can catalyse development at local, national, and regional levels. They embody UNIVEN's dedication to addressing pressing societal challenges through research and innovation.

Some of the success stories included the launch of the UNIVEN Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubation (UCFERI) in 2023; and establishment of the Green Technology Confucius Institute (GTCI).

In terms of implementation of funding initiatives to assist deserving postgraduate and undergraduate students, Prof Nthambeleni made a call to UNIVEN alumni to be part of this initiative.

Prof Nthambeleni commended the UNIVEN Chancellor, Adv Mojanku Gumbi who consistently demonstrated her commitment to support financially needy students who are struggling to pay for their fees. As a result, the Chancellor has requested the University to compile a list of students who owe up to R60 000 so that she could assist in settling their outstanding debts. As part of our country's celebration of 30 years of democracy, she donated 180 sneakers to female graduates during our 2024 Autumn graduation. Over and above that, in this Spring graduation, she has donated 30 sneakers to our female graduates. "Let me express my appreciation to the Chancellor for her generous support," said Prof Nthambeleni.

He finally cherished and thanked the continued support from parents, guardians, sponsors faculties, academic and support departments as well as staff.

He encouraged graduates to keep their torch hope burning.





## Dr Princess Anne-Sheilah Makhado completes her PhD at the age of 74 defying age barriers



Dr Princess Anne-Sheilah Makhado against all odds, defied age barriers when she was conferred with a PhD in Advance Nursing Science, under the Faculty of Health Sciences during the first session of the University of Venda Spring Graduation Ceremony that took place on Friday, 06 September 2024.

In her thesis, Strategies to improve support for children heading families in Limpopo Province, South Africa, she used a qualitative approach with an exploratory and descriptive design. The findings of her study revealed psychological, financial, social, educational, health and safety challenges from children heading families.

It was further found that psychological, financial, social, educational, health and safety support from relatives and community members were inadequate and ineffective. Psychological, financial, social, educational, health and safety strategies to improve support for children heading families were developed. This accomplishment is a testament to the value of lifelong learning and determination. She said "I hope to inspire others to pursue their dreams, no matter their age. My journey proves that with perseverance and passion, anything is possible. I am excited to continue contributing to the field of nursing through research and education. Age should never be a barrier to personal growth and achievement."

Dr Makhado is a retiree who served various departments with loyalty and dedication during her 43 years of service in the South African Health and allied industries.

She empowers students by imparting academic skills and knowledge that increase efficiency and leadership in the nursing profession. To that end, she maintains several leadership positions in the nursing environment, having served as Nursing Service Manager in Midland Hospital, and founding the Nursing College at Midland Hospital in Graaff Reinet in the Eastern Cape. She is the chairperson of Elim Retiree Health Forum and founded the Tshilwavhusiku School for Physically and mentally challenged learners in Ha-Kutama. In addition, Princess founded the Voice of the Voiceless, a non-profit organization that addresses youth and female social and health issues in Louis Trichardt. She has been a member of the Louis Trichardt Hospital board from 2016 to date and has authored the book "The Master Lock Key" published in 2016.

Dr Makhado demonstrates proven abilities in communication, leadership, and management. She is well-versed in conflict- and problem-management and is a sought-after motivational speaker. She makes informed decisions with ease and facilitates the coordination and building of skills. She is an expert in financial management, per PFMA guidelines. motivating students and employees, as well as addressing groups in several churches. She is passionate about issues surrounding youth and service delivery. This passion was nurtured by her late mother, a teacher who instilled in her an indomitably resilient spirit from a tender age based on the saying "Never take no for an answer." Princess's over-riding passion for girl children inculcates in them the firm knowledge that they are able and independent, capable of leading successful lives as leaders. Accordingly, she has developed strategies to improve support for child-headed families in improving the quality of their lives, whilst they continue with their education. She will always be a community builder, as she firmly believes children are the foundation of a nation's future.

## UNIVEN always ensures that there is accessibility and inclusivity for persons with disabilities



On Tuesday, 27 August 2024, the University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) and the UNIVEN Disability Unit (DSU) held the disability Awareness Day to conscientise staff and students about the presence, abilities and challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Attendees kick started this awareness day by campus walk to make awareness and to signify that there are persons with disabilities amongst the University community. The formal programme took place at UNIVEN Sports Hall.



Some of UNIVEN Staff members posing for a photo with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni

This Disability Awareness Day also provided a platform to celebrate contributions of individuals with disabilities. Through this event, DSU demonstrated that this is about time when we challenge stereotypes, promote understanding, and advocate for equality. This important observance explored the significance of disability awareness, the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, and the steps that people should take in order to foster a more inclusive society.

“For us to ensure what we call inclusive economy we must ensure that students with disabilities participate with their skills and must be given a space to participate. They face much more barriers that limit their participation but not because they do not want to participate but because of our facilities that excludes them. There are lot of barriers that are created by our facilities. It is our duty to ensure that we must make sure that we construct facilities that also accommodate and assist people living with disabilities.”



Above photo: Prof Bernard Nthambeleni



Above photo: Mr Malela Thizwilondi (UNIVEN alumnus) who is a Diplomat at the Department of International Relations

UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni highlighted that it is our responsibility to assure that students with disabilities are accommodated. He mentioned that institutions that want to build an inclusive economy have no room to leave out those living with disabilities. He continued to mention that students with disabilities must be given a fair platform to also contribute to our economy. “Every country is measured by the way it treats persons with disabilities.” He said in South Africa we have a national disability equivalence of 7.5% of people living with disability and it is not disability, they are just limited in mobility.

As the keynote speaker, Mr Thizwilondi Malela mentioned that, for the longest time, people with disabilities were marginalised; and received negative reception from the society. As a result, the attitude of the social structure constructed disability. He mentioned that people with disabilities have suffered psychologically because of the hardships that the society imposed on them. Mr Malela continued to mention that disabilities are the disadvantages imposed on individuals by the society that views and treats impairments as abnormal, hence worthy of exclusion. “It is only right for the society to design its physical and social infrastructure around this fact of life.”





Prof Lindiwe Mulaudzi giving welcome remarks

In her opening remarks, Director Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL), Prof Lindiwe Mulaudzi, mentioned that this day is important because it is time to also celebrate and showcase the skills, abilities and achievements of staff and students with disabilities. "At UNIVEN, we strive for equality and inclusivity regardless of abilities. We appreciate all our differently abled students. This is a special occasion where we come together to recognise, appreciate, and support individuals with disabilities."



Dr Tshifhiwa Mbuva, Head of Disability Unit

Head of Disability Unit, Dr Tshifhiwa Mbuva, said "with this awareness day event, the Unit wanted the University community to learn and be aware about persons with disabilities." She said before 1994, most people with disabilities were discriminated and not allowed to participate in the economy.



Mrs Glenda Ramathavha, UNIVEN Financial Aid Manager

When giving a word about funding of students with disabilities, Ms Glenda Ramathavha who is the UNIVEN Financial Aid Manager said that most of the people living with disabilities do not apply for funding. She encouraged them to apply whenever there are calls for funding or internships. Ms Ramathavha mentioned that her office also helps students on how to apply for funding and internships.



Dr Rosinah Mukhodobwane, Lecturer in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture

Dr Rosinah Mukhodobwane who is a Lecturer under the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture said she had a passion for working with students with disabilities and mentioned that most of the students with disabilities perform well in their studies. Dr Mukhodobwane said throughout her journey as a lecturer, she has noticed that working with students with disabilities assists one to learn more than what ordinary people are learning. "There are those students that you can't ask about their challenges because it is visible."



Ms Rendani Munyai, Deputy Chairperson of Disability Student Council

Deputy Chairperson of Disability Student Council, Ms Rendani Munyai thanked the University for arranging this day for persons with disability. She encouraged students with disabilities not to be afraid to speak out whenever they have challenges.

Director Revenue and Financial Aid, Ms Tshilidzi Ramulondi mentioned that disability is not inability and it does not mean we are not equal. She told them that others are differently abled. "People with disabilities can do anything that everyone can do," she said.





Ms Tshilidzi Ramulondi giving a vote of thanks



## The University of Venda Hosts the British-Commissioner to South Africa for a Question-and-Answer Session on South Africa-UK Relations

On Thursday, 04 September 2024, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in partnership with the British High Commission Pretoria, hosted the British-High Commissioner to South Africa, H.E Anthony Philipson on a Question-and-Answer (Q&A) Session that took place at the UNIVEN Research Conference Centre.



A group photo with the British-High Commissioner H.E Anthony Philipson (3rd from left)

The Question-and-Answer session on UK-South Africa Relations by the British High Commissioner, H.E. Antony Phillipson, presented a unique and valuable opportunity for students and faculties to engage directly with the High Commissioner on the topics of mutual interest and significance, particularly in light of the evolving global landscape. The accompanying Chevening info session provided invaluable insights for students interested in pursuing postgraduate study opportunities in the UK.



High-Commissioner H.E Anthony Philipson

H.E Anthony Philipson noted the UK has a diverse suite of programmes which focus on many areas of development. His talk during the Q&A focused more on the UK-South Africa relations. He outlined the objectives of the UK programme in South Africa, as well as the missions engagement at national and provincial levels.

H.E. Anthony, underscored that the British High Commission works with the government of South Africa and its private sector, looking at how they can support South Africa on its economic and the ecological developmental goals.

His Excellency highlighted that "UK and South Africa trade remains vibrant and profitable. This trade is a testament to both countries commitment towards the cooperation. A cooperation which is driven by shared values and a commitment towards equitable growth anchored by a complex history which we need to continue learning from. "To this end, we are proud of the Chevening programme which over 900 South Africans have benefited from.

The High-Commissioner's visit culminated in a productive question-and-answer session, providing an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to engage directly with the esteemed diplomat.



The Acting Executive Dean Of Faculty of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (FHSSE) Prof Tawanda Runhare



Prof Tawanda Runhare, the Acting Executive Dean of FHSSE in his opening and welcome remarks appreciated the event because students are the beneficiary of this programme. Prof Runhare painted a picture of more flowers being given to the dead people than those who are still alive because people regret their omission in terms of having been given gratitude for what they have done and end up regretting, hence they give more flowers to dead people. Professor Runhare illustrated that more flowers are often given to the deceased than to the living. This occurs because people tend to regret not expressing their gratitude while someone is still alive, and as a result, they end up honoring the dead with an abundance of flowers.

This example was to challenge students to realise the way they can access flowers while they are still alive. He further reminded the students that the reason they are gathered is because there is a scholarship and many opportunities available for students to access. He further said they should ask questions to benefit them in accessing the opportunities of studying abroad and benefitting from the internationalisation process.



Mr Vhutshilo Makananise, British High Commission Chevening Officer

On Chevening Scholarship Information Session, Mr Vhutshilo Makananise, from the British High Commission, said the Chevening scholarship is a global UK scholarship and fellowship programme funded by the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. He said there are many benefits to this scholarship as it offers a unique opportunity for scholars to spend a year living in the UK and also studying in some of the best universities in the world.

He alluded that this scholarship provides full funding and living allowance allowing students to freely focus on achieving their professional goals. Students gain lifelong membership to over 55 000 strong global networks. He also further outlined eligibility for a Chevening scholarship funding and also told students how to apply for it to ensure that they meet all eligibility criteria.



Ms Rinae Maluta, UNIVEN Alumni and Chevening Scholarship Recipient

Rinae Maluta, a UNIVEN Alumna and a Nursing Honours student reflected on how she made it through with being awarded the Chevening Scholarship. She said the first thing she did was to get information since knowledge is power. She said in her time there were no opportunities available. She encouraged students to go to the Chevening website and search more about what's happening in their country. She said this programmes in the UK does not require a person to be an A-student she was not an A-student.



Prof Rendani Tshifhumulo, HoD of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences, FHSSE

Prof Rendani Tshifhumulo, Head of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences, under the FHSSE, in her closing remarks thanked all the attendees who made it to the event. She said 'we are hoping that in few years to come will have students representing UNIVEN in the UK. She thanked the Commissioner for giving a picture of what the UK is doing in South Africa and highlighted that we have also learnt a lot, and left a message to Rinae Maluta to represent UNIVEN well on the other side of the world.





## Cheers to 27 Years of Univen Radio: Celebrating a Legacy of Community and Innovation



Univen Radio 99.8 marks an incredible milestone with 27 years of dedicated broadcasting, and the celebrations are in full swing! The station's Facebook page recently shared a heartfelt tribute: "On this special day, we applaud the heart and soul of our campus, the pulse that keeps us dancing and the voice that broadcasts our stories far and wide. Happy birthday, Univen Radio 99.8! Here's to a year filled with our signature blend of tunes, stimulating discussions, and unforgettable experiences. Your signal is strong, and your future is brighter than ever. Keep rocking our community." As we honor this remarkable journey, we look forward to many more years of vibrant programming and community impact. #TheStationThatBeginsWithYou #CreatingFutureLeaders



## 2025 UNIVEN Online Applications for Admission and Hostel Accommodation are underway

Prospective students who intend to enroll for programmes of their choice with the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in the 2025 academic year, are hereby advised that the process of ONLINE applications for Admission and Hostel Accommodation is still open and will close on Friday, 27 September 2024.

Do not hesitate to apply online on or before the closing date to avoid frustration in the year 2025. To Apply, visit UNIVEN Website: [www.univen.ac.za](http://www.univen.ac.za)