

03 February 2025

University of Venda Kicks Off First-Year Journey with Exciting Orientation Programme

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted a grand official opening of the orientation programme to welcome its first time entering students at the University Auditorium. This highly anticipated event marked the beginning of an exciting academic journey for new students, setting the tone for their integration into university life. The official opening of orientation session took place on Friday, 31 January 2025.



On Photo: Prof Tawanda Runhare, Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education

Professor Tawanda Runhare, the Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education, delivered a compelling welcome address to the first-time entering students (FTENS) at the University of Venda. Acknowledging the students' exceptional achievement in securing admission, he emphasised that they are among a select group chosen from over 100,000 applicants, urging them to recognise the rarity of this privilege and seize the opportunity with both hands. He described the transition from high school to university as a thrilling yet demanding experience, advising students not to dwell on past accomplishments but to focus on the hard work ahead. Professor Runhare also highlighted that orientation extends beyond this session, with essential faculty and departmental introductions that students should not miss. His address underscored the importance of academic commitment, personal development, and active community participation as the cornerstones of success at UNIVEN.



On Photo: Prof Eucebious Lekalakala-Mokgele, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Teaching and Learning

The official opening address was delivered by Prof Eucebious Lekalakala-Mokgele, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Teaching and Learning. In her address, she warmly welcomed students to the University of Venda, acknowledging their hard work and determination in reaching this milestone. Prof Lekalakala-Mokgele expressed the shift from structured high school learning to independent university study, emphasising the importance of self-discipline, time management, and proactive engagement. “Success is framed as a product of resilience, consistency, and collaboration, with encouragement to seek support when needed,” said Prof Lekalakala-Mokgele. She stressed balancing studies with social life, participating in extracurricular activities, and embracing personal growth. Prof Lekalakala-Mokgele said students are reminded that challenges are opportunities for learning and that their time at university is about more than just earning a degree—it is about shaping their future.

Various university units took turns to enlighten students about support structures available to them. Ms Makhadzi Makheda, representing Facilities Management, focused on waste management, Mrs Uanda Ndou, Director, Human Resources, and shared important information regarding safety and student welfare on campus, and Mr Vusi Mokoena, the SRC president welcomed students to the University of Venda, sharing his personal journey of perseverance. He recounted his struggles upon arriving at the university with limited financial resources and how support from others helped him succeed. He urged students to value their education and work hard, emphasising that no one is useless—everyone has value when placed in the right environment. Using a parable of a carpenter and a fallen tree, he highlighted the importance of recognising one’s potential and concluded by encouraging students to stay focused and make the most of their opportunities.

The programme also included insightful presentations from four faculty managers, including Mr Takalani Nyelisani, Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Health Sciences; Dr Mafemani Baloyi, Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education; Ms Mampuele Legodi, Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Management, Commerce, and Law; and Mrs Julia Sigama, Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture.

Other notable speakers included Ms Shumani Nembudani, Senior Manager at the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubation; Dr Mlungisi Ganto, representing the Directorate of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation, and Commercialisation (DCEEIIC); Ms Tshilidzi Ramulondi, Director of Revenue and Financial Aid; Prof Lindiwe Mulaudzi, Director of the Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL); Mr Andisani Mathelemusa, Head of Student Governance, representing the Student Affairs Department; and Adv Thanyani Mphephu, Head of Legal Services, representing the Legal Services Department.



On Photo: Dr Joel Baloyi, the University Registrar

The event concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Dr Joel Baloyi, the University Registrar. He expressed gratitude to speakers, and students for their active participation. Dr Baloyi's key messages included the importance of responsible behaviour, discipline, and focus on studies to avoid exclusion. Students were urged to make the most of their privileged opportunity, as only a select few were admitted. He reminded students to make wise financial decisions, prioritise their studies, and avoid distractions that could derail their success. They were encouraged to build relationships within their faculties, develop leadership skills, and contribute to sustainability efforts.

This orientation served as a vital introduction to university life, fostering a sense of belonging and motivation among new students. As they embark on this new chapter, the University of Venda reaffirms its commitment to "Creating Future Leaders" through excellence in teaching, research, and community engagement.

With this strong foundation, first-year students are set to navigate their academic journey with confidence, determination, and a supportive university community guiding them every step of the way.



Issued by:

Department of Marketing, Branding & Communication.

University of Venda

Tel: 082 868 2218 / 082 868 1811