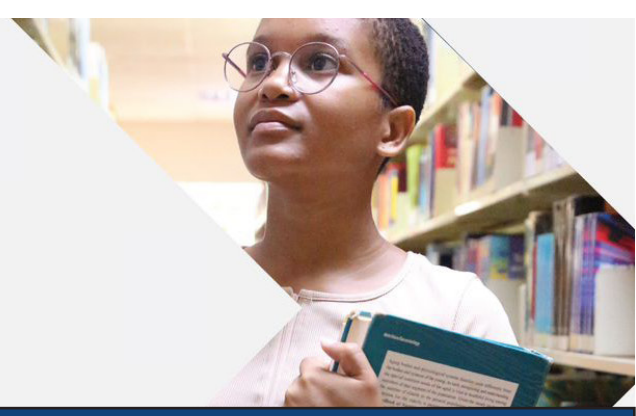




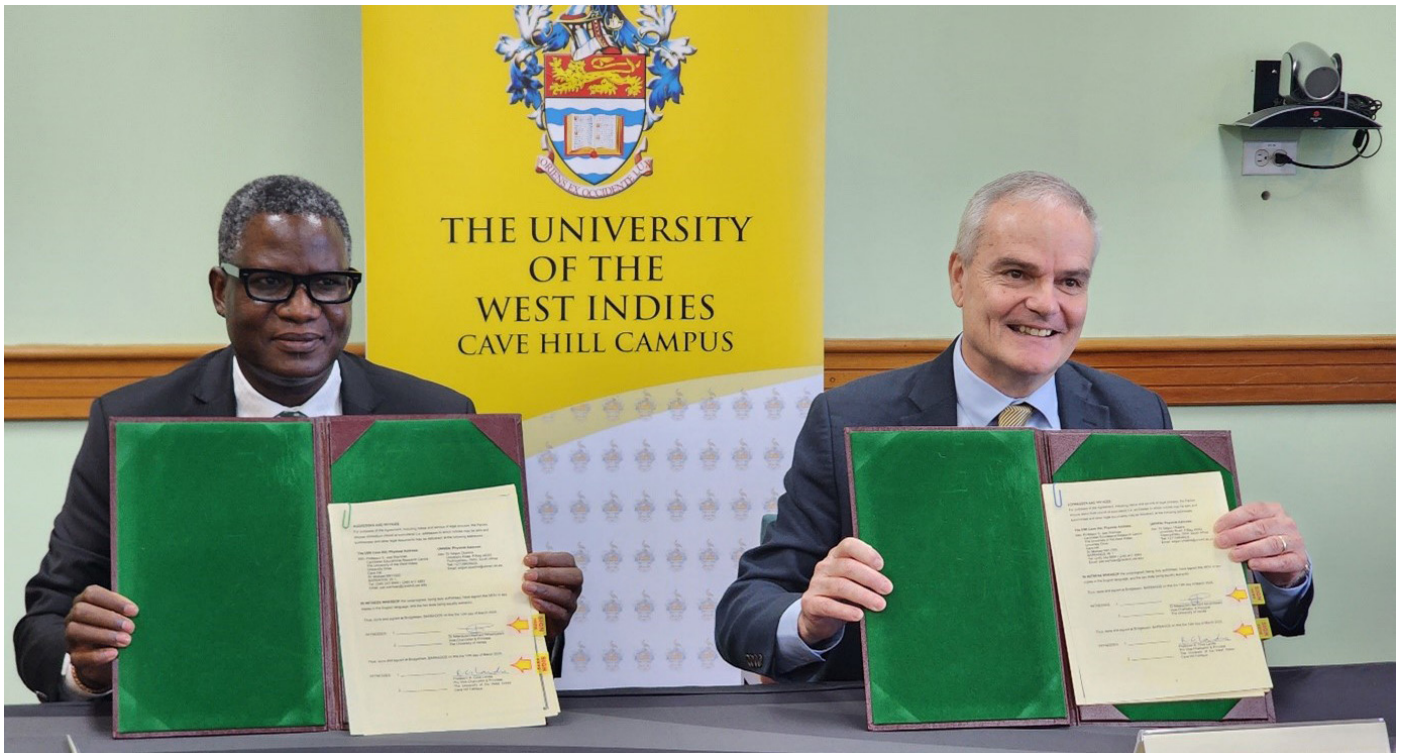
University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

UNIVEN Weekly e-Newsletter



ISSUE 20 | 20 March 2025

Universities of Venda and the West Indies Forge Stronger Africa-Caribbean Ties with New Memorandum of Understanding



On 12 March 2025, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) and the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cavehill Campus, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen the Africa-Caribbean Collaboration. This signing ceremony took place at the University of the West Indies, Cavehill Campus in Barbados. The session was chaired by Dr Laurette Bristol, Director School of Education, UWI.

In her opening remarks, Dr Bristol expressed excitement about the signing of the MoU between UWI and UNIVEN, cementing the partnership that started more than 15 years ago through the Sustainable Learning Environment Network (SULE) comprising scholars from Africa and the Caribbean.



Dr Laurette Bristol, Director of School of Education, University of West Indies, chairing the MoU Signing Ceremony

Dr Bristol added that it is an honour to operationalise the vision of the longstanding partnership. The MoU signing coincided with the inaugural Caribbean Educational Research Centre and the (UWI) School of Education Conference under the theme: Maximising Resilience through Education, Innovation, Sustainability, Inclusion, and Impact. She concluded that the MoU between UNIVEN and UWI will be a lived connection through collaborative research, publications, and grant applications, as well as an engaged connection of communities through the exchange of students and staff to support capacity development, training, and joint qualifications.



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

One of the strategic thrusts of the University of Venda is internationalisation, Linkages, and Partnerships aimed at strengthening collaboration with other Universities in the global space. Prof Nthambeleni also applauded the work already done by UNIVEN and UWI colleagues in the establishment of the partnership, the ongoing webinars under the SULE, and the visit by the Caribbean scholars to the University of Venda in August 2024. Prof Nthambeleni also expressed the need to create opportunities for the exchange of students and staff for both UNIVEN and UWI to broaden the scope of the MoU to cater to all faculties at the two institutions.



Prof R Clive Landis, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UWI, Cave Hill Campus giving welcome remarks

In his welcome remarks, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal, the UWI, Cave Hill Campus, Professor R Clive Landis applauded UNIVEN and UWI colleagues on their longstanding partnership leading to the signing of a formal MoU. He mentioned that he believes that cooperation between the two institutions will take off, as several projects are already underway. He also applauded the UWI, Caribbean Educational Research Centre, and the School of Education leadership for collaborating with South African universities.

The University of Venda Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni shared his remarks before the signing of the MoU. He expressed the importance of forging partnerships that benefit communities and societies in South Africa and the Caribbean.



The signing of this MoU cements UNIVEN's presence in the Caribbean and acts as a catalyst for future collaborations in the region. The UNIVEN delegation will participate in strategic meetings with the University of Belize from 17 to 20 March 2025, continuing discussions from the meetings held in August 2024 at the University of Venda. The meetings are expected to finalise implementation plans and unlock more opportunities for collaboration in the region.

UNIVEN Expands Horizons in West Africa: A Bold Move for International Student Recruitment



On the photo L-R: Matome Mokoena, Mirero Makhado, Patrick Matshisevhe and Takalani Dzaga

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) is making significant strides in expanding its presence in West Africa. A team led by the Director Marketing Branding and Communication, Dr Takalani Dzaga which includes Matome Mokoena and Mirero Makhado from International Relations and Partnerships Directorate participated in the World View Education Fair between 10 and 15 March 2025 in Lagos, Nigeria and Accra, Ghana. The Education Fair ended on a high note on Saturday, 15 March 2025.

The team paid a courtesy visit to the Consulate General of the Republic of South Africa in Lagos, Nigeria where they were warmly received by the UNIVEN alumnus, Mr Patrick Matshisevhe, Counsellor, Immigration and Civic Services.

This strategic move is part of the university's broader mission to enhance its international profile and attract a diverse student body across the continent. The team had the opportunity to engage with diverse stakeholders, ensuring that prospective international students receive

comprehensive information about the academic programmes, admission requirements, and campus life at UNIVEN.



Front row L-R: Mirero Makhado, Takalani Dzaga and Matome Mokoena with some of the prospective students

The information shared entailed various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across its four faculties: Science, Engineering and Agriculture; Management, Commerce and Law; Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; and Health Sciences.

During the engagements, the team unwaveringly mentioned that with state-of-the-art facilities, including modern laboratories, well-equipped libraries, and advanced ICT infrastructure, UNIVEN provides an enriching learning environment for its students.

One of UNIVEN's core values is diversity, and the university is dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where students from diverse cultural backgrounds can thrive. By increasing its footprint in West Africa, UNIVEN aims to foster a multicultural campus community that enriches the educational experience for all students.

The University of Venda's efforts to expand its footprint in West Africa are expected to yield significant benefits. By attracting talented students from the region, UNIVEN not only enhances its academic community but also contributes to the continent's socio-economic development. As the university continues to build strong partnerships and implement innovative recruitment strategies, it is poised to become a leading institution of higher learning in Africa.

The delegation was hosted by the hospitable UPSA's Vice Chancellor, Prof John Kwaku Mensah Mawutor, who also serves as Matome Mokoena's fellow under the DAAD DIES National Multiplication Training programme. During the courtesy meeting, the team engaged in productive discussions to advance the implementation of their signed Memorandum of Agreement, marking significant progress in fostering shared institutional goals.

The University of Venda's initiatives to increase its presence in West Africa through international student recruitment are a testament to its commitment to academic excellence, diversity, and global engagement. These efforts will undoubtedly pave the way for a brighter future for both the university and its students.



L-R: Takalani Dzaga, Prof John Kwaku Mensah Mawutor, Matome Mokoena and Mirero Makhado

The team also visited its partner institution, the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen international academic collaborations.



On the photo: Dr Takalani Dzaga engaging with prospective students



On the photo: Mirero Makhado and Matome Mokoena engaging with prospective students