

ENGAGEMENT

OFFICE



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FROM THE DIRECTOR



We present the second edition of our Engagement Office Newsletter. The Newsletter celebrates and critically examines the Office's collective achievements within the broader framework of the Engagement and Transformation Portfolio and our strategic compass, Vision 2030 (V2030).

In this edition, we shine a spotlight on the active and invaluable role of our diverse stakeholder-communities, both internal and external. Together, we navigate the terrain of redefining engagement, enriching the landscape of learning, teaching, research, and innovation. Through our collective endeavours, we continue to underscore the indispensable nexus between these missions.

Nelson Mandela University stands at the forefront, offering a compelling global model for Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Engagement occurs alongside the twin missions of 1) learning and teaching and 2) research, embodying our commitment to co-create a sustainable, socially just world.

The advent of the Student Hubs of Convergence (SHoC) signifies a pivotal response to further understanding student access for success. Central to the SHoC is the voice of our students, driving the discourse and shaping the thematic contours of the project work. SHoC complements existing student initiatives and serves as a calabash for incubating contextually responsive projects.

Every facet of the Engagement Office is committed to aligning our strategic objectives with V2030. Amidst our endeavours, we find solace in the richness of our learning journey, continually evolving as we navigate the terrain of meaningful engagement.

Bruce Damons

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE



ZUKHANYE MQAMELO

The Engagement Office would like to send a hearty congratulations to our fellow staff member Zukhanye Mqamele who graduated this year with an Advanced Diploma in Human Resources.



XOLISWA SENYE

Congratulations to Xoliswa Senye for graduating with an Advanced Diploma in Public Administration and Management. Xoliswa is currently doing her BA Hons in Public Administration.

HLUMA INDABA



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE
PARTICIPANTS AT HLUMA INDABA WORKSHOP

Beginning on World Food Day on 16 October 2023, The Hluma Indaba hosted a week of lunch-time workshops and critical conversations on student hunger

In 2022, the Nelson Mandela University Food Systems programme – located in Hub 2 of the Hubs of Convergence – formed a student hunger subgroup in response to the crisis of student hunger.

Positioned in the Social Development Professions Department, the subgroup – comprised of staff and students – is looking at designing and implementing

approaches to address student hunger that are student-centered, sustainable, and humanizing. One such effort was The Hluma Indaba. Beginning on World Food Day on 16 October 2023, The Hluma Indaba hosted a week of lunch-time workshops and critical conversations responding to the question: “How can Mandela University develop its own unique approach to student hunger?”

SNAC PODCAST

The SNAC podcast will pilot its first season in May 2024, with eight episodes, all built around pertinent topics that came up at The Hluma Indaba. They will be bite-sized so they can easily be listened to in between classes and while walking on campus.



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE

GUESTS DR QINISANI QWABE, MZUVUKILE MAPASA, BUHLE BUZO, AND SESONA BONKE

The Student Nutrition Advocacy and Communication (SNAC) is an initiative started in 2020 by a group of students alarmed at the rising hunger amongst their peers. One of these students became part of the student hunger subgroup, linking our efforts with the original initiative. By using the name they developed we honour the work they did and our commitment to build on it going forward.



LET'S END PERIOD POVERTY TOGETHER!

As a custodian of creating an enabling environment for student success and excellence, while being in service to society, the Nelson Mandela University has identified ending period poverty, as a significant priority.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY VICTOR AGBAKOBA
PROF. MFUNDO MBENGE GIVING A PRESENTATION

On the 26 October 2023, Hubs of Convergence and Engagement Office (HoC & EO) Strategic Projects hosted an End Period Poverty Conversation at the Ocean Sciences Conference Hall from 10:00 - 13:00.



CHAIR OF COUNCIL, AMBASSADOR NOZIPHO JANUARY-BARDILL



VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROF. SIBONGILE MUTHWA

The Conversation brought together a community of stakeholders to unpack the lived realities and experiences of menstrual challenges and discourses around menstrual health.



PHAPHAMANI RAPE CRISIS CENTRE, NOMFUSI TITI

In attendance, was the University's Chair of Council, Ambassador Nozipho January-Bardill, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Sibongile Muthwa, Prof. Mfundo Mbenge.



SCHOOL LEARNER FROM GELVENDALE HIGH SCHOOL

Gelvendale High School, Imbasa Primary School and Siyaphamibili Primary School in Motherwell, as well as Phaphamani Rape Crisis Centre in Uitenhage.

The Student Hubs of Convergence (SHoC) continues to drive the work initiated through the End Period Poverty Programme , while expanding its reach.



STUDENT HUBS OF CONVERGENCE (SHoC)



The Student Hubs of Convergence (SHoC) continues to drive the work initiated through the End Period Poverty Programme - while expanding its reach.

At Nelson Mandela University, we recognise the pivotal role that students play in shaping the university's culture, values, and future trajectory. The Student Hubs of Convergence (SHoC) within the Engagement Office embodies our commitment to empowering students as active participants and leaders in their educational journey.

By fostering a culture of innovation, mobilisation, and academic activism, SHoC serves as an attempt to make a meaningful positive change, equipping students with the tools and resources to engage meaningfully with their community and effect transformative impact. Objectives include a) incubating student ideas,

b) mobilisation and organisation and c) academic activism. SHoC represents a bold and innovative approach to student activism and leadership development at Nelson Mandela University. By providing a platform for ideation, mobilisation, and academic activism, SHoC seeks to harness the collective energy and creativity of our student body to make a meaningful contribution within our university and beyond.

Through inclusive governance, transparent communication, and collaborative action, SHoC aspires to cultivate a culture of engagement, innovation, and social responsibility that reflects the values and legacy of Nelson Mandela himself.



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS ACTIVATION WITH STUDENTS WITH DR BRUCE DAMONS, DIRECTOR OF THE ENGAGEMENT OFFICE SPEAKING AND VUYO NGCOFE FROM THE TRANSFORMATION OFFICE.

RECENT ACTIVITIES



End Period Poverty (EPP) Conversation and Mina Cups Distribution Drive Workshop: On 28 - 29 February 2024, SHoC, spearheaded an activation through the support of HoC & EO Strategic Projects Hub 3 (Gender Engagement). This workshop was aimed at addressing issues around menstrual health and hygiene among students residing at off-campus accommodations.



Sexual Assault Awareness Month - Residence Activation: 24 April 2024 SHoC held a Sexual Assault Awareness Campaign at Sarah Baartman and Claude Qavane Residences during April - Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Students gathered to share insights and experiences, which laid the groundwork for activities under the Gender Engagement Hub.



Collaborative Dialogue Meeting: On 26 April 2024, SHoC hosted an engagement with students actively involved with African traditions, cultures, and spirituality at the University. This initiative sought to navigate the intricacies of University policies while fostering relationships to advance and safeguard indigenous knowledge systems.



The perilous, compounded, and unique societal challenges the world is facing demand universities to create a nexus between their academic purpose and their social responsibility.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Sibongile Muthwa

INSIDEOUT

ENGAGEMENT FESTIVAL

'CONVERGENCE' AS A WAY OF 'SEEING' AND 'DOING' ENGAGEMENT

Nelson Mandela University, in collaboration with Bath University and the University of South Africa, hosted the InsideOut Engagement Festival from 27 - 28 November 2023 to celebrate engagement as an important institutional mission of universities. Engagement with multiple stakeholder communities 'inside and outside' university spaces, alongside learning, teaching and research, must agitate for equalising relationships placing universities side-by-side with communities to co-create a socially just world. Through a two-day symposium, Mandela University, Bath and

UNISA aimed to highlight the importance of collaborative and purpose-driven engagement in which various stakeholders work toward a shared purpose.

In addition, this symposium focused on the idea of 'convergence' as a way of 'seeing' and 'doing' engagement as propositioned by Prof. Muthwa in 2018. This idea took firmer shape in collaboration with various partners, most notably the University of South Africa and the University of Bath, within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and work of the Covid Coordinating Committee (CCC).

CWELL WORKSHOP

PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE



The Engagement Office hosted a Community Wellness, Empowerment, Leadership and Life skills (CWELL) Workshop bringing together scholars from Limerick University, North West University and the University of the Free State from 30 November to 1 December 2023, addressing humanising pedagogies and innovation.



THE HOPE REVOLUTION VISION CERTIFICATION

On 29 November 2023, the Engagement Office celebrated the Certification Ceremony for The Hope Revolution Vision (THR) Short Learning Program (SLP). This programme is a partnership between Nelson Mandela University's Engagement and Transformation Offices, the Department of Social Development Professions, and The Hope Revolution Cape Town. Participants from 13 Hope Sites have successfully completed their non-credit bearing SLP in Community-based Substance Abuse Programmes, contributing to the development of well-capacitated safe spaces in under-resourced communities.



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE

THE HOPE REVOLUTION VISION

SLP IN COMMUNITY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMMES IS AWARDED NRF GRANT

In 2024 the Hope Revolution Vision (THRV) Project has been included in a recently awarded NRF grant to the Engagement Office. Following this, colleagues from the Engagement Office and Social Development Profession at Nelson Mandela University, comprising of Dr Bruce Damons, Prof. Veonna Goliath, Dr Rize Van Rooyen and Osabuohien Clifford Uwuoruya, spearheaded a pivotal strategic planning workshop for THRV Project.

The workshop, held from 28 - 29 April 2024, at The Hope Revolution site in Eerste River, Cape Town, convened representatives from THRV, Stellenbosch University, and the University of the Western Cape.



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE

The strategic session aimed to align program objectives with NRF grant, emphasising the rollout of the SLP across different higher education institutions while supporting further module development for THRV.

Prof. Anthony Brown and Dr Lynne Damons from Stellenbosch University's Department of Educational Psychology, along with Dr Rubina Setlhare from the Educational Psychology Department at the University of the Western Cape, are the lead collaborators from their respective institutions, enriching this collaborative endeavour.

AFRICANISATION DECOLONISATION INDABA

PHOTOGRAPHY FROM AFDEP ARCHIVE



On the 8 March 2024, the Engagement Office participated at Nelson Mandela University's Africanisation-Decolonisation Indaba. The Indaba is an open invitation for the University to collectively imagine a Mandela Institutional Identity along decolonisation and

Africanisation pathways across our knowledges, disciplines, pedagogies and institutional practices. Through a converged engagement approach, the Engagement Office embraces the principles of convergence, reciprocal solidarity and multiple forms of engaged scholarship. As such, our input aimed to demonstrate the complexities of engagement through this multifaceted coordination.

"ECHOES OF CHANGE: SHAKING THE TABLE"

Using an array of demonstrative expressions such as a documentary and a drama skit, we reflected on how the Engagement Office's Converged Stakeholder - Community Engagement approach contributes to Africanisation and Decolonisation in practice. The documentary focused on how the Engagement Office is exploring different ways to deepen and strengthen collaboration and transdisciplinarity within, beyond and through the University boundaries.



Engagement Office Project Assistants, from left, Chulumanco Zamisa, Yolanda Magugu and Andiswa Landingwe

The drama skit aimed to disrupt traditional ways of dialoguing about the processes of institutional change, which are often met with resistance and contestation. The skit offered a compelling lens through which to examine, dissect, and provoke discourse on the complexities of engagement – especially, as Nelson Mandela University endeavours to be an African dynamic institution in service to society. Using satire and allegorical significance, the skit captivated and stimulated audiences to think about issues that have typically remain obscured.



The Engagement Office Team in character for their Africanisation-Decolonisation Indaba input, a drama skit titled "Echoes of Change: Shaking the Table."

From left, Leshilo Pushetji, Clifford Uwuoruya and Dr Rize Van Rooyen

STRENGTHENING TIES AND SHARING INSIGHTS

2024 WEST AFRICA HUB CONVENING



PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE ARCHIVE

Dr Bruce Damons, Director in the Engagement Office at Nelson Mandela University, recently joined an institutional delegation to Nigeria. The team, which included Dr Palesa Mathopa, Acting Senior Director in the International Office, along with Dr Priscilla Mensah, Gabby Dlamini, Karen Snyman, and Qhama Bona, represented Mandela University at the inaugural West Africa Hub Convening in Lagos, hosted by the Pan-Atlantic University on 14 -15 March 2024. The conference, themed "Building an Ecosystem of Excellence for Research, leadership, and Graduate Employability," provided a platform for

Damons to contribute to a panel discussion on "Building Mutually Beneficial Relationships between Universities and Their Communities: During this session, Dr Damons showcased Nelson Mandela University's converged approach to engagement, emphasising the significance of Hubs of Convergence as tangible spaces embodying this approach. Moreover, the conference served as a valuable networking opportunity, enabling Mandela University to expand its African footprint further and strengthen partnerships with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the region.



Some members of the Nelson Mandela delegation to Nigeria, from left Karen Snyman, Bruce Damons and Qhama Bona.



GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND RACE INEQUALITIES

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE SEMINAR

From the 18 - 20 March 2024, the Engagement Office of Nelson Mandela University hosted an International Scientific Seminar titled "Gender, Sexuality, and Race

Inequities in South Africa and Brazil: Intersection of Knowledge and Methodologies for Transformation." This collaborative initiative brought together colleagues from Nelson Mandela University, São Paulo State University, Stellenbosch University, and the University of the Western Cape,



PROF. RAFAEL ALVES ORSI



**PROF. LUCIA HELENA OLIVEIRA
SILVA**



DR RUBY-ANN LEVENDAL

alongside the active participation of students from diverse disciplines within Nelson Mandela University. A notable component of the seminar was a series of visits to stakeholder-communities with whom the Engagement Office maintains partnerships. These immersive experiences took place at Gelvandale High School and the Zwide Development Forum, enabling seminar participants to witness firsthand the prevalent inequalities within our communities. These encounters served to underscore the significance of collaborative endeavours aimed at addressing societal challenges effectively. The seminar facilitated dynamic knowledge-sharing sessions, fostering meaningful dialogue and exchange of insights.

As Prof. Fernando Teixeira Filho aptly remarked, the seminar marked the "beginning" of a promising partnership, reflecting the shared commitment towards effecting transformative change.

Nelson Mandela University remains steadfast in its dedication to fostering greater collaboration with institutions in the global south, aligning with our overarching mission of building a university that actively serves society. We extend our sincere appreciation to the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa and the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) for their generous funding support, which was instrumental in realizing this impactful seminar.

**"MOVING FORWARD, WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO
ADVANCING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND
MAKING SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS
SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION."**

PHOTOGRAPHY FROM ENGAGEMENT OFFICE ARCHIVE
FROM (MIDDLE) LEFT, XOLISWA BUZO FROM THE ZWIDE DEVELOPMENT FORUM



RIPPLES OF RESILIENCE

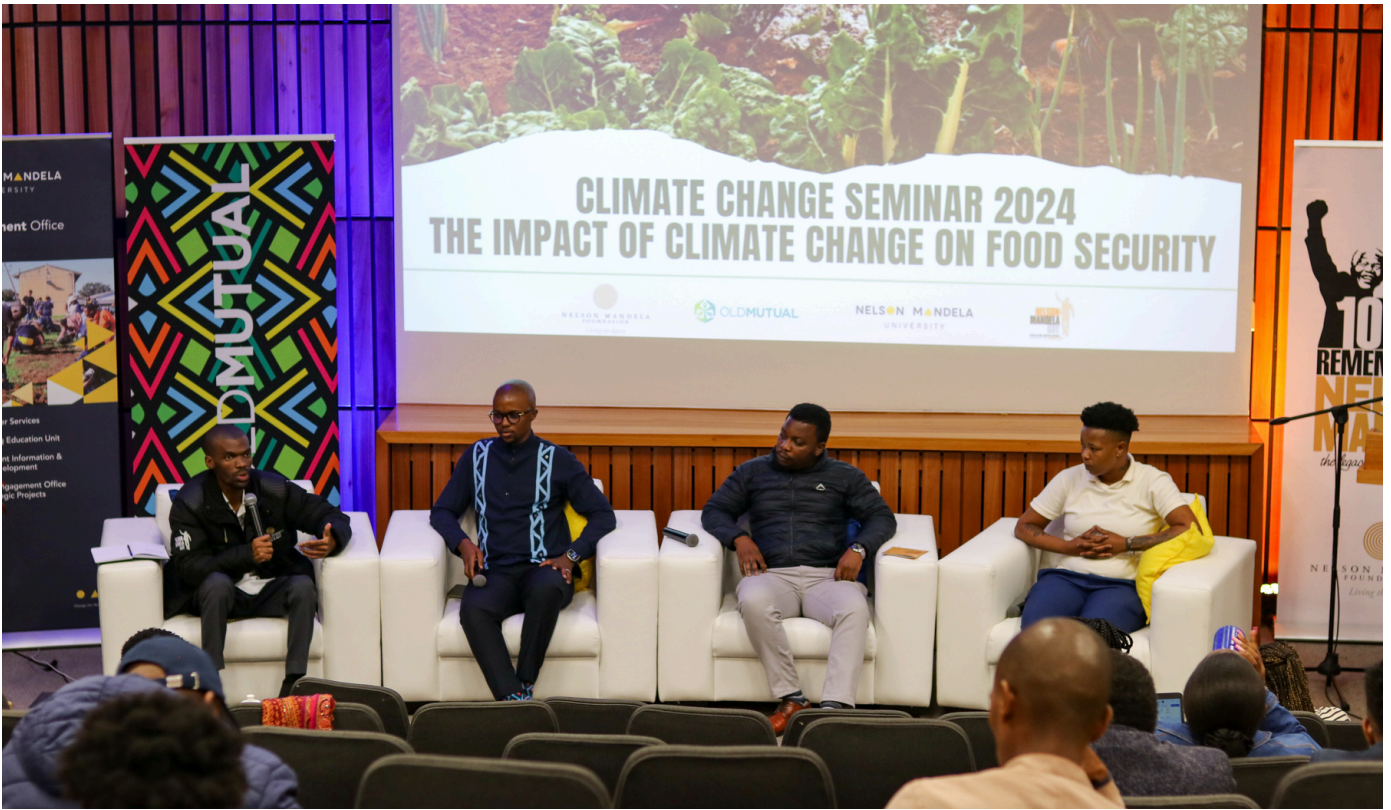
KUSINI WATER CHAMPIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE SEMINAR

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON FOOD SECURITY

On the 27 - 28 March 2024, the Nelson Mandela Foundation in partnership with Old Mutual and Nelson Mandela University, hosted a Climate Change Seminar on the impact of climate change on food security on Nelson Mandela University's Business School, 2nd Avenue Campus. The Seminar convened different stakeholders to explore lasting solutions to immediate and long-term threats.





PNAEL SPEAKERS FROM LEFT SIGCINO KUBEKA, BUYAMBO MANTASHE, TINASHE CHIZEMA AND PHUMLA DLAMINI



GUSHWELL BROOKS, NELSON MANDELA FOUNDATION



JAKO RAMAHALI, OLD MUTUAL

SS MENDI

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING



In a significant collaboration between the Hubs of Convergence (HoC) at Nelson Mandela University and Blackie and Bleki Funeral Directors, a commemorative screening of a documentary on the sinking of the SS Mendi was held on the 18 April 2024 at Missionvale Campus.

This event, attracted a diverse audience, including local schools, and served as an educational platform to shed light on a pivotal yet often overlooked chapter of South African history. The event commenced with the screening of the documentary film *SS Mendi*, produced by Zwai Mgijima. The screening was followed by a panel discussion comprising of Prof Hiliary Graham, Dr Brian Walter, Zwai Mgijima, Phumelela Zonele and Keneilwe Natu –

facilitated by Oyama Vanto. The commemorative screening of the *SS Mendi* documentary stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of those who perished aboard the ship and serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving and sharing South Africa's rich history. Through initiatives like this, the University continues to bridge the gap between academia and community, fostering a deeper understanding of our collective past.



KHANYISA MANZINI, NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY



DR BRIAN WALTER, POET, AUTHOR AND SCHOLAR



DR BRUCE DAMONS, DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT OFFICE AND PATRONELLA BASSON, POET



PHUMELELE ZONELA, CULTURAL RESEARCHER



KENEILWE NATU, STUDENT ACTIVIST AND RESEARCHER



PROF. HILARY GRAHAM, VISUAL ARTIST AND THEORIST



OYAMA VANTO, CULTURAL ACTIVIST

CAREER SERVICES UNIT



ENGAGEMENT OFFICE'S CAREER SERVICE UNIT TEAM

The Career Services Unit at Nelson Mandela University's Engagement Office has been actively involved in facilitating various events and initiatives aimed at enhancing students' career prospects and fostering connections between students, alumni, and employers. These efforts include participating in professional development opportunities, such as attending webinars like the Graduate Attributes Webinar on Financial Literacy, where they gain insights from industry experts like Koshiek Karan. Career Services also fosters alumni connections through events like the Alumni Connection

Breakfast Session, providing opportunities for students to engage with former graduates in a meaningful way. Additionally, the unit actively participates in industry forums and career fairs, such as the CHIETA Regional Skills Forum and the Computing Science & IT Fair, where students have the chance to interact with potential employers and explore career opportunities. Initiatives like the Working Wardrobe marketing drive and the Persons With Disabilities Career Fair demonstrate the unit's commitment to inclusivity and supporting students from diverse backgrounds in their career development journey. Through these diverse activities, the Career Services Unit plays a vital role in preparing students for the world of work and facilitating meaningful connections within the professional community.

COMPUTING SCIENCES & IT Careers Fair

11 APRIL 2024
09:00-15:00
Mapungubwe, North Campus

All past and current Computing Sciences and IT Students welcome to attend

Make sure you:

- Create a platform for your personal interaction with company representatives.
- Take the opportunity to actively compare employers.
- Broaden your scope of the world of work in relation to your chosen qualification.

What companies have to offer?

- Graduate Placement
- Internships
- Bursaries

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY Change the World mandela.ac.za

COMPUTING SCIENCE & IT FAIR

The Career Service Unit presented at the Umhlobo Wenene FM "Our Breakfast" show (well known as the BEE) Soqhayisa Senior Secondary School in Motherwell on 30 January 2024. The school received a 100% matric pass rate from the year 2020 – 2023.



Career Services hosted a successful annual Computing Science and IT Careers Fair on 11 April 2024. Companies in attendance included 1Nebula, BATSAMAYI, Entelect, KPMG, Mercedes-Benz, South Africa - IT Hub, Open Box Software, Wirk and Standard Bank.



Career Services embarked on a marking drive to call for donations toward the Working Wardrobe.

Working Wardrobe
Donate to Elevate
Suited2BRecruited

Help students put their best foot forward by donating **gently used corporate clothing** for interviews and networking

WHY DONATE

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

Your contribution will empower students to present themselves confidently in interviews

SUPPORT FUTURE LEADERS:

Help shape the next generation of professionals entering the world of work

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

Live the value of Ubuntu by giving back to our student community

ACCEPTED ITEMS:

Professional Suits
Business Attire
Dress Shoes
Coats and Blazers
Hangers

OPERATIONAL HOURS:

Mondays – Thursdays:
09:00 – 15:00

LOCATION:

Career Services Office,
South Campus, Main Building, Ground Floor
(opposite cashiers)

CONTACT US:

Email: careerservices@mandela.ac.za
Telephone: 041 504 4619

FAREWELL MESSAGES



NICOLE COLLIER- NAIDOO

We bid farewell to Nicole, who's passion and activism has been truly inspiring. Nicole's innovative ideas and insightful perspectives have contributed immensely to the Engagement Office. Her commitment to making a difference is commendable. We will miss your enthusiasm dearly.

MUANO NETHENGWE

As Media and Communications Coordinator, Muano has helped give our work a voice. His creativity, attention to detail, and infectious personality have been instrumental in promoting our initiatives and engaging with our stakeholders. Thank you for your hard work and dedication.



FAREWELL MESSAGES



CHULUMANCO ZAMISA

As Project Assistant, Chulumanco has provided invaluable support and assistance in various aspects of our projects. Chulumanco's positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond have truly made a difference. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors Chulumanco!

SOLETHU XABA

Well wishes to Solethu, who worked in the Engagement Office as Project Assistant. Solethu's reliability and efficiency is one of the things that stood out about him. We are grateful for the opportunity to have witnessed your growth and development during your time with us Solethu.



EDITOR'S NOTE



Compliments for reaching the end of another exciting edition of our Engagement Office Newsletter! I am thrilled to share the effort and passion that went into crafting this edition. Behind every article, feature, and image lies a dedication to planting seeds of inspiration and amplifying

the voices of our multiple stakeholder communities. From highlighting impactful initiatives to celebrating the achievements of our incredible team members, this newsletter is more than just a collection of articles - it's a celebration of the demonstrable expression of re-imagining Nelson Mandela University as a socially engaged university, in service to society.

As we come to the end of this edition, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this issue come to fruition. Filling the editorial and creative lead on this issue, alongside my brilliant colleagues has been a joy. The objective of our Newsletter is to curate stories that reflect the energy, enthusiasm, and principles of the Engagement Office, while showcasing the work that informs our vision.

Thank you for diving into these pages and immersing yourself in the narratives; driven by the exceptional work done by ordinary individuals. And remember, this Newsletter is not just ours - it's yours too. It's our voices, stories and learning that make this publication truly special.

Thank you for your continued support, and participation in making the Engagement Office Newsletter a reflection of the incredible community we are privileged to be a part of.

Ntombovuyo Linda

Change the World

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