



From the Director's Desk

We are thrilled to share with you the first quarterly newsletter which covers our work. The purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to keep you updated on the initiatives and activities that constitute the work of the Social Justice and Transformation (SJT) Unit. This newsletter also gives practical expression to our strategy and communication plan as a department. This year is significant for the SJT Unit since we will be reviewing two important strategic documents, i.e. the VUT Integrated Transformation Plan and the VUT Employment Equity Plan. Central to the reviews of these documents is increased stakeholder engagement which will see the Unit embark on a consultative process spanning a period of six months from March to August. We would like to call on you to please participate in the reviews and send us your input. The target is to have both the Integrated Transformation Plan and Employment Equity Plan submitted to Council in September. There is an expectation that once Council approves these two documents contracting will be made with all line managers as part of performance management system. We trust that you will find the information useful.

The update covers both transformation and equity activities at the Vaal University of Technology for the first quarter of the current academic year. It should be noted that VUT plays a leading role at sector level as far as broad social justice and transformation matters are concerned.

Transformation Structure

One of the strategic objectives of the Vaal University of Technology is about institutional transformation and to this end this function is driven from the reconfigured Deputy Vice Chancellor: Governance and Organisational Transformation. The Social Justice and Transformation Unit is responsible for the day to day implementation of VUT's Integrated Transformation Plan, it also plays a huge role in enhancing the image of VUT in the eyes of its stakeholders through public meetings, road shows and events.

1. Review of the VUT Integrated Transformation Plan

Since 2010, the Vaal University of Technology has been guided by an Integrated Transformation Plan. Work has now begun to review the current Integrated Transformation Plan for approval by Council towards the end of the year. Consultations are planned to take place in all campuses between March and August.

2. Young Black Women Project

This is an example of a focused approach to developing young black female academics in the institution. This project is driven by our Research Directorate.

3. Next Generation Scholars Programme

The VUT has also initiated a programme aimed at diversifying our academic staff profile, this project is run from the Social Justice and Transformation Unit.

4. Restorative Dignity Project

One of the initiatives of creating an enabling environment and a sense of belonging for staff is the Restorative Dignity Project which entails various activities ranging from creating reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities, developing social justice policies and to promoting awareness of non-discriminatory practices.

5. Inter-cultural Day ,14 March

An annual event in the calendar of the university is the Inter-Cultural Day which aims at forging social cohesion amongst staff and students. This year's event was held on Saturday 14 March and was attended by students from the various countries as well as staff. International and local students had an opportunity to showcase their different cultures through food, song and dance.

6. Residences First Year Experience , 21 March

The Social Justice and Transformation Unit participated in the Residences First Year Experience. This event held on 21 March, Human Rights Day, organised by the Residence Department was held at the Lapa Lounge with the aim of orienting all residence students about the services rendered by the various university departments. Residence students had the opportunity to relate to the importance of a human rights culture as part of the Human Rights Day Celebration.

7. VUT Women Roundtable , 26 February

The SJT Unit organised a VUT women Roundtable discussion on 26 February, which was addressed by Dr Mamsie Motshekgaga-Sebolai, HERS-SA Board Member on the topic, Barriers Facing Women in HE: Challenges, Opportunities and Prospects: A HERS-SA Perspective.



8. Public Lecture on Race and Equity , 27 February

A Public Lecture on Race and Equity Transformation in South African Higher Education was held on the 27 February and was addressed by Professor Sakehla Buhlungu, Dean of Humanities, UCT on the topic "Developing the Black Professoriate – What is

Stopping HE Transformation?, this was followed by a presentation on "From Skewed to Stalled Revolution in Higher Education" delivered by Emeritus Associate Professor, Dave Cooper, UCT. This event was organised jointly by Social Justice and Transformation Unit, Research Directorate and Corporate Affairs.

9. Human Rights Memorial Lecture , 23 March

The VUT, Sedibeng District Municipality and North West University, Vaal Campus, hosted a human rights memorial lecture as part of the Human Rights Month, which was held at the NWU Vaal campus on 23 March. The guest speaker was the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng District Municipality and Deputy Chairperson of the VUT Council, Cllr Simon Mofokeng. The VUT Deputy Vice Chancellor: Governance and Organisational Transformation, Prof. Gordon Zide was one of the respondents.

10. Naming Committee , 23 March

This committee is chaired by the DVC: Governance and Organisational Transformation deliberated on the approach to naming of institutional buildings and related facilities in line with the university's naming policy. A survey is to be conducted as part of the first phase in soliciting stakeholder participation in the naming process.

11. HESA Regional workshop on African Languages and Mathematics, 19-20 February

A VUT Delegation attended the HESA Regional Workshop on African Languages and Mathematics, held at UJ where VUT played a leading role as a member of the HESA Transformation Managers Forum (TMF) and Transformation Strategy Group (TSG).

12. HESA TMF/TSG , 23 February

The VUT plays a leading role in both the HESA Transformation Managers Forum and the Transformation Strategy Group, chaired by Prof Zide, DVC: Governance and Organisational Transformation, VUT and Prof Swartz, VC, NMMU respectively. Cello Gardner, ED, HR, VUT is a member of the TSG, whilst George Mvalo, Director: Social Justice and Transformation is the convenor of the HESA Transformation Conference Task Team and Joseph Radebe is a member of the TMF.

13. Social Cohesion Advocacy Workshop and Advocates Reference Group ,

The university also participated in the Social Cohesion Advocates Strategic Workshops organised by the Minister of Arts and Culture. The VUT is represented in the recently constituted Social Cohesion Advocates Reference Group's sub-committee chaired by Judge Yvonne Mokgoro.



14. Symposium on the Advancement and Financing of the Social Justice Mission of Higher Education Institutions , 29-30 March.

The VUT also played an active role in the above symposium which was held at the UCT Graduate School of Business on 29/30 March. Staff from SJT and Corporate Affairs attended the symposium.

Equity Structure

As part of institutional realignment the employment equity function now falls under the Social Justice and Transformation Unit with very close working relations with the HR Department. The EE Practitioner, Victor Mashilwane joined the department in March

15. Successive Employment Equity Plan

The VUT has an Employment Equity Plan which was approved in 2010. Plans are currently underway to develop a successive Employment Equity Plan which will be tabled at Council for approval during the third term.

16. Employment Equity And Diversity Committee Workshop , 11 February

During this reporting period, employment equity workshops were held for the Members of the Employment Equity and Diversity Committee and line managers.



some of the EEDC members at the workshop

17. BBBEE

Preparations are under way for the annual VUT BBBEE rating process.