SEFAKO MAKGATHO HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

FOCUS on SMU

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Message from the SMU acting Vice-Chancellor

Professor L Ayo-Yusuf

Hi, I am Professor L Ayo-Yusuf, the Acting Vice Chancellor of the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. The past few weeks have not been easy for us as the SMU community and other stakeholders including our partners due to prolonged strike action.

As a university, we want to assure all our students, staff, parents and stakeholders that we are working very hard towards building a better SMU community.

We have resumed with all academic activities and operations of the university and will certainly make sure that majority of our students finish the academic programme for 2019.

The Deans of schools are working hard, jointly with the students and academic staff to ensure the implementation of recovery plans to reclaim lost time.

We invite you to be part of this journey to recovery as we continue to produce good quality health professionals and scientists as part of addressing the challenges facing the country.

A Popular African proverb says “you cannot clap with one hand, you need both hands to clap for victory”.

Let's work together towards building a better SMU community.

I thank you

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Heritage Day 2019

Message from the SMU acting Vice-Chancellor *Professor L Ayo-Yusuf*

South Africa celebrates Heritage Day as a commemoration and celebration of the cultural diversity and customs that form the rich drapery of South African society. Our country is made up of diverse cultures that unite us and bring prosperity; that is why we are known as the Rainbow Nation. This calls for a celebration!

As a country we have come a long way from the past, which was dominated by racial and cultural intolerance, isolation and discrimination. However, we still have a long way to go in addressing and managing our dusky past. As the people of our beloved country, we should unite to fight steadfastly for the creation of a truly non-racial, non-sexist and tolerant South Africa.

Desmond Tutu's legacy is one that teaches us that "humanity is bound up in us, for we can only be human together". As Africans, we are collectively responsible for blending our racial and cultural diversity. In this Heritage Month, let us all join hands and engage in discussions on how to further embrace our diverse cultures in strengthening social cohesion in South Africa.

Because it is not part of our heritage, each one of us should also commit to continue fighting Gender Based Violence (GBV) in all its facets and other ferocious behavior that seek to harm women, children, people with disabilities as well as foreign nationals. Let us embrace one another and celebrate our diversity and learn to coexist as part of our rich heritage.

Working together to build a better SMU community.

Ms. Maria Rambauli,
Chairperson of Council

SMU Alumnus Chairs Her Alma Mater Council

By Tumelo Moila

Maria Rambauli was recently appointed as Chairperson of SMU Council for 2019 and her leadership will further develop the vision of the council to be the benchmark institution providing holistic health sciences education that meets the health needs of the individual, the family, the community and the population. The motto of the council 'Knowledge for Quality Health Services' will drive Maria's commitment in bringing alumni together to drive the strategies, priorities and implementation plans of the council.

As a strategic intellectual Ms. Maria Rambauli will strengthen the governance and mission of the institution to provide high-quality primary health care-oriented health sciences research, education and services. Key areas of focus will be to "clarify the university strategy; ensure that policies are aligned to strategic imperatives; play an oversight role to all activities of the university and decision making; and manage disclosure and ensuring no conflict of interest'' said Rambauli.

As chairperson of the council working with the rest of the members her aim is to ensure performance of the institution not only on an academic level but also to drive upliftment of the previously disadvantaged segments of society. "The university has a leading role to play to its community and the bigger society by ensuring reputational success and growth" said Ms. Rambauli.

Maria has more than 20 years of experience in both the private and public health environment with commendable knowledge gained in governance; regulation;

leadership; strategic thinking; finance; risks; innovation; human resources, customer relations, and business intelligence. Over the years, she has developed core competencies in managing and leading high performing teams; managing large scale operations; growing business in a profitable and sustainable manner; and more importantly innovating for future success.

Her higher education journey started at SMU (previously known as Medical University of Southern Africa) where she obtained a Bachelor of Nursing Science and Art (1994) degree followed by a B.Sc. (Hons) Psychology degree at the same university. Further studies include qualifications in Human Resources Management at the University of Johannesburg (1998) and the Management Advancement Programme at Wits Business School (2005). In 2009 she completed her Master in Business Leadership at the University of South Africa (2009).

Dr Perpetua Modjadji – An Academic Role-Model

By Tumelo Moila

Dr Perpetua Modjadji

Focus on SMU reporter, ***Tumelo Moila*** had an exclusive interview with ***Dr Perpetua Modjadji,*** who recently obtained her second PhD qualification: Doctor of Public Health degree. Her thesis is titled: "*Growth patterns and socio-cultural beliefs and practices in Dikgale, Limpopo Province: A mixed-method study of primary school children and their mothers*". In 2009, she obtained a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Medical Sciences (majoring in Chemical Pathology), which studied the *"Nutritional factors involved in development of neural tube defects in offspring of women residing in a high risk area"* which proved the effectiveness of the South African Food Fortification Programme on the folate status of women of childbearing age, biochemically.

Tumelo Moila (TM): What is your vision for your academic career?

Perpetua Modjadji (PM): My vision as an academic is to climb the ladder to the platform of influence and to contribute significantly to the growth of the institution. I am working towards becoming a Professor, an NRF-rated scientist and a research collaborator on the national and international platforms, attracting funding to train postgraduates, mainly doctoral candidates, and representing my institution competently, anywhere and at all times.

TM: Who is your academic role model and what have you learnt from your role model?

PM: My role model is Professor Marianne Alberts; a clinical biochemist, and a researcher in one of the historically black universities in South Africa. She discovered me when I was in my third year studying BSc (Medical Sciences) in 1997. She recruited me to join one of her research projects and became my supervisor up until I completed my first PhD. From her I have learnt commitment and determination, despite having been in an under-resourced environment.

TM: What persuaded you to study for the second Doctorate?

PM: I never intended to pursue a second doctorate until I met a fanatically determined Public Health Practitioner and researcher; Professor Sphiwe Madiba, who discovered me during summer school in 2014. She recruited me to study towards a Doctor of Public Health (Dr.PH) while sitting in a Masters of Public Health class, knowing that I already had a MSc. and PhD. qualifications.

TM: I have noticed on your CV that you have six research awards from your two Doctorates. How did you do that?

PM: When I was doing matric at Ed-U College of Pretoria in 1993, I received a merit award for diligence. This shaped the way I viewed hard work, I started to believe that everything done with diligence would be acknowledged and rewarded. From that pivotal moment in my life, my approach has been to be diligent and determined with every task and assignment in front of me. I am a goal-orientated person and those awards were a result of this diligence and determination instilled in me as a young scholar.

TM: Your CV indicates that you have extensive experience in research and teaching, how will you apply your acquired experience to execute your duties and groom fellow academics to the best of your abilities?

PM: Since I joined SMU in 2016 and in the UL times, I have graduated 11 Masters Students, one Doctoral candidate and currently I supervise 13 Masters Students and have one pre Doctoral candidate identified. I am still under the mentorship of Prof Sphiwe Madiba, in the area of research and supervision of postgraduate students as an upcoming researcher. I also teach Theoretical Foundations for Health Education and Health Promotion in the Department of Public Health, being mentored by Prof Kelebogile Mokwena.

Learning how to save lives cost efficiently

By Maditsi Matlala

In the interest of ongoing professional development, Dr Tshimane Tshepuwane, in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (DOG), along with SINAPI Biomedical, extended a joint invitation to Professor Gerhard Theron, to deliver a lecture on the use of the Ellavi Uterine Balloon Tamponade (Ellavi UBT).

A new device, Ellavi UBT became commercially available in the 3rd quarter of 2019 and it is being used to prevent child birth bleeding complications which result in the deaths of mothers. It is based on the glove balloon used in South Africa since 2008. Prof Gerhard Theron also described the Ellavi UBT in the Postpartum Haemorrhage Monograph published in 2010 by the National Committee for Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths. This inventor, from the University of Stellenbosch, is a leading light in obstetrics and gynaecology, with many awards and many articles in peer review journals, to his name.

Watched by a captive audience of representatives of professional midwifery nurses, post-natal nurses, registrars, consultants, fourth year to final year Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) students, Theron meticulously demonstrated how to operate the Ellavi UBT.

Thereafter he gave a select group of consultants, registrars and professional midwives an opportunity to put into practice what they had learned in order to enable them to sharpen their newly acquired clinical skills.

Impressed with the Ellavi UBT and the ease with which the select group operated the device, Professor Sam Monokoane, the head of the DOG at SMU, expressed his wish to phase it in, at the Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital, where students fulfil their clinical obligations.

On state tender the SOS Bakri costs R4800 per unit whilst the Ellavi UBT is R150 per unit for public hospitals. It is not on state tender, presently. The Ellavi UBT is affordable for use in resource poor settings.

Prof Gerhard Theron

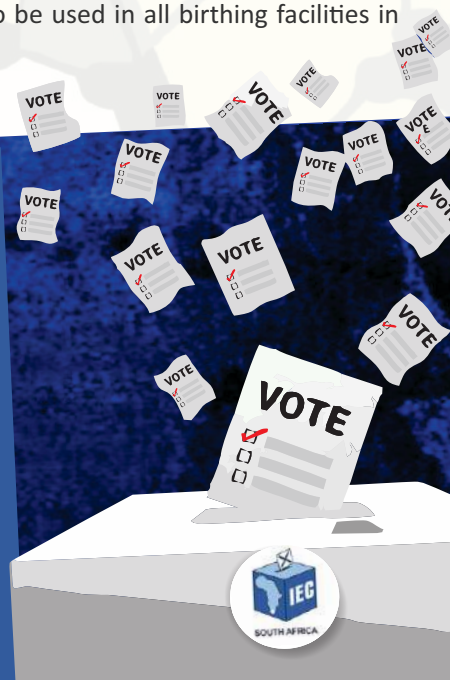
Already, all hospitals in the three rural regions of the Western Cape Province, and half of the metropolitan areas of Cape Town served by Tygerberg Hospital as a referral hospital, are using Ellavi UBTs since the 1st quarter of 2019. Though no data is available regarding lives saved with Ellavi UBT.

About 90 papers published in peer reviewed scientific journals do report a success rate of 87% of the Ellavi UTB if used for the correct indications. A decline in death rates due to child birth bleeding complications following Caesarean births is to be expected if Ellavi UBT is to be used in all birthing facilities in South Africa.

SRC 2019/2020
ELECTIONS

Date for SMU SRC and School Council Elections announced

The date for the 2019/20 SMU SRC and School Council Elections has been announced by the Acting Vice - Chancellor Prof O Ayo - Yusuf as 10 October 2019.

The Independent Electoral Scrutineers has been appointed in line with Section 23 (1) of the SRC Constitution to manage proceedings.

The Acting VC calls upon all political formations to participate in the elections in accordance with, and due observance to, the Procedural Timetable, Electoral Rules and Procedures.