



Sibanyoni

vows to bring about
excellence and operational
efficiency at SMU

Mr Fana Sibanyoni has recently been appointed as the Chief Operations Officer at SMU, a new position that was created as part of ensuring that there is operational efficiency at the University.

Born and bred in Lydenburg, Mpumalanga where he also started his lower primary education, Fana stayed with his grandparents and only later joined his mother at Badplaas in the same Province where he developed his passion for being a mechanic. He explains that being raised by his grandparents has influenced his value system greatly.

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His break came while he was doing Matric when Anglo was recruiting students from underprivileged backgrounds for study in the fields of Medicine, Accounting and Engineering. At the time, the organization had partnered with three universities namely, Wits, University of Cape Town and the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. He was then admitted to study for a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering at UKZN in 1988 until 1994.

As part of the study programme, he was absorbed by Anglo in various of its mining operations such as gold, coal, platinum for vocational work during mid-term and end of year holidays. He was placed in various mines in North West and Free state. After completion of his studies he was placed in Carletonville as a junior engineer in training for 1 year and was later poached by SASOL where he completed his training and qualified as a fully competent Engineer.

soft skills. Having being trained and groomed in the mines was more like being in the military space. High level of discipline and aggressiveness defined the environment in mining with a lot of focus on outputs than being people centric, he added.

His qualifications and vast exposure in a variety of fields honed his people skills and enriched his softer skills and this served him well when he grew into more senior and executive roles in Management.

Fana later joined the financial services sector by working for ABSA in the properties/ built environment and is also proud to have worked for a number one listed properties company Growthpoint Properties, a role which he believed set him well for opportunities in diverse environments.

He joined WITS University as its first Chief Operations Officer. He was quick to point out that he joined that university at the height of the FeesMustFall campaign. Amongst his key deliverables was a half a billion ICT network project and in-sourcing of about 2000 employees contracted by external service providers. He appointed a Chief Information Officers to



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I started working for different organizations. It was at SASOL where I was introduced to surface operations. The Environment was completely different to mines. I explored various petro - chemical companies beyond SASOL and eventually moved into property related companies. My first stint was with the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA) in Durban.

This is where I was basically introduced to the built environment, a complete departure from hardcore manufacturing and technical duties, said Mr Sibanyoni.

It was while working in the built environment where he grew into a manager more than being technical. He felt the need to study beyond technical fields and enrolled for a Master of Business Administration with the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business. *This completed and made me a well-rounded individual with a good balance of technical and*



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drive and turn around the ICT environment and drive the network project and bring stability to the environment.

Fana explained that at the heart of the lockdown when institutions were forced to offer services online, it was one of his major responsibilities to ensure that WITS students scattered across the country had the necessary infrastructure to continue with their learning activities. He had to rely on the Alumni muscle of the institution, they reached out to ensure that there was data and laptops for students and Wits became amongst the first to implement remote learning to rescue the academic year, which was completed on time.

Fast forward to August 2021, he received two calls from University of Mpumalanga and Fort Hare and was offered the positions and felt that the time was not right to go to Mpumalanga and chose to go to Fort Hare.

Then an opportunity came at SMU.

I had to undergo very gruesome recruitment processes at SMU and in February this year I found myself in an interview and a month later I was informed that I was the successful candidate, he recollected.

Fana started at SMU on 01 June 2022 and hit the ground running and is glad to have been warmly received by the SMU community.

Despite all the challenges that the institution is going through, I am fortunate to have joined SMU at the time when the storms appear to be much calmer and the university is moving into a positive direction. I therefore find it easy to settle and make a meaningful contribution to SMU following the vast experience acquired in a variety of sectors including private, emphasized the COO.

Focusing on his role at SMU, the COO was upfront to mention that his major responsibility is to focus on the human and infrastructure aspects to support the Academic project. He is responsible for five areas namely; Human Resources, Built Environment, Security Services, Student Affairs and ICT.

His immediate priorities are to build the organizational structures below those of the executive; to continue with the restructuring until its concluded; ensure that the infrastructure projects are delivered on time and on budget and according to the right standards; to streamline processes to ensure there is operational efficiency and effectiveness and ensure that the University delivers on its mandate; to entrench performance management system in line with the 2021-2025 strategic plan. *We depend on grants from DHET and funds from*

NSFAS as well as the Sibusiso Bengu Development Fund, I need to ensure we deliver the projects on time, on budget and required quality. The DHET finds it difficult to allocate more funds to institutions that appear to be incapable of rolling out the projects and taking care of the funds and using them appropriately. We need to have a well-oiled and efficiently run institution.

He also has a mammoth task of ensuring that the entire staff has contracts in place which are aligned to the plans of the University.

He was impressed by the short time it took the Vice-Chancellor Prof Mbatia to start turning around the University while other Universities are still battling. *When I look outside, SMU is a construction site and one of the problems facing many universities is to spend the funds and be accountable. You also hear in meetings that we are beginning to do well in the academic space. It looks like the mindsets are now at the right place. The recent launch of the Technology Transfer Office at SMU is also a step in the right direction. It reminded me of the Wits Tshimologong digital innovation precinct concept of taking ideas and growing them into prototypes that are ultimately commercialized. This will ensure that the University grows its financial research muscle and boost the third stream income initiatives, he said.*

He has strong views about staff and student protests. *It worried me to realize that there were strikes at SMU almost every year. I could still pick the trauma caused by protests from my interactions with some staff and students. I must say I have seen the worst in my previous portfolio as well. However, students and staff must know that while we acknowledge that there is a place for protest, it must be done within the ambit of the law. We should all coexist to preserve and protect this University considering the critical skills we produce, he added.*

Talking about the future he said,
In the medium to long term, we need to benchmark operations and services to ensure that we compete and excel beyond what we currently do, improve our ranking, take the institutions to greater heights in terms of infrastructure, entrench a culture of environmental sustainability and partake in the green initiatives to rescue us and the planet.

The COO says he is aware that there are high expectations from him to provide visionary leadership and he is equal to the task.



Stakeholders meet to celebrate Prof Mbatia as SMU VC

The SMU community together with Academic Partners – a recruitment agency that was responsible for the process to find a suitable Vice-Chancellor for SMU converged to celebrate Prof Peter Mbatia's appointment. Even though Prof Mbatia has been with SMU for two years now, the parties felt it was befitting to celebrate this milestone.

Mr Vuyo Stiya, managing director at Academic Partners explained that they do not see themselves as a service provider but strive to become partners in the recruitment process with organizations that they work with. He said their organization thought it would be best to celebrate Prof Mbatia after his appointment to SMU and thanked the University for entrusting them with the responsibility. Academic Partners handed over a sketch of the Vice-Chancellor as a token of celebration during the ceremony.

Speaking on behalf of the executive management, Acting DVC Academic and Research Professor Patrick Demana extolled the Vice-Chancellor for his exemplary and inspiring leadership. "I have

personally seen how the VC has addressed difficult situations when dealing with staff and student issues and how he narrowed the gap between Council and Management. We now speak common language while at the same time observing our different roles", said Prof Demana. He further thanked Mbatia for turning SMU into a construction site through amongst other projects, the 2000 bed student accommodation, the ICT infrastructure project, the water reticulation project and the overall vision of modernizing the campus.

Ms Odette Ramsingh, the Senior Director responsible for Human Resources took attendees through the recruitment journey of the VC. She aptly described it as a process that had many moments. "The highest admin position will always be subjected to high scrutiny as it should", explained Odette.

She further explained that HR had to navigate its way around the interview process as the country was placed on hard lockdown just two days before the interview could take place. "When we checked



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around, everyone said they have never done online interviews for senior management. We decided to be agile and adapted and held the VC interviews online. I have never received so many calls wanting assurances that HR will get it right”, said Odette. She also thanked Academic Partners for their support during the journey and was happy that no one found fault with the recruitment process despite the rumours and views that there were ulterior motives. Odette further expressed that SMU was able to attract the right person with the right skills and at the right time. Turning to Prof Mbatl, she said, “Your skills, experience and leadership is visible for everyone to see. When we sit and retrospect all the time, we know that we are in the right direction. You helped me to see what is possible at SMU”, she concluded.

SRC President Philani Mdakani described the process to recruit the VC as a tough one and thanked HR for forging ahead. He also thanked the University Council for standing firm. “Despite the difficulties surrounding the appointment of the VC, we are very much grateful that it is him who was chosen for this position. We see a lot of progress within the university since his arrival. In the past funding will be given but there was nothing to show for it”, he explained. Speaking about the Vice-Chancellor Mdakane said he is a man of great stature and acknowledged him for ensuring that policies are put in place at SMU. “The number of policies approved means that this is a university of systems. SMU was vulnerable to abuse before because of lack of policies and processes”, he said.

The SRC President also said the Vice-Chancellor's state of the campus report inspire confidence as everyone feels they are part of the institution. Mdakane called on everyone to protect the SMU brand as the VC also works hard to do the same.

The APSA/SAPTU union was represented by Mr Monedi Lekabe who said during his 35 years at SMU and its predecessor universities, he has served under different Vice-Chancellors and Prof Mbatl was amongst the greatest leaders he came across. “We admire your strength and wisdom as we navigate the space of change management and we would like to wish you more strength as we move the University forward”, said Mr Lekabe.

Reiterating the call to protect brand SMU, Nehawu Chairperson Dr Tshifhiwa Mulaudzi said, “One of the reasons there have not been strikes is because we need to protect brand SMU. It always touches

us that we must be mindful of the image of the University in what we do”.

Mulaudzi said because of the leadership of Prof Mbatl, the University is now enjoying confidence from a number of stakeholders, investors and sponsors and everyone is inspired to come to work. He urged the Vice-Chancellor to continue to build a sustainable university and ensure that the Pharmacy building is completed by the end of the year.

In his remarks, the Vice-chancellor Prof Peter Mbatl expressed his gratitude to the delegation and everyone responsible for organizing the event. “I am very emotional and touched by the gesture you have taken to welcome me to SMU. Being at SMU has been a blessing and extremely rewarding for me after a first year of turbulence”, he said.

Speaking about how he landed at SMU, he said when the call came from Academic Partners that there was a vacancy for a VC at the University and was encouraged to apply, he initially declined. Referring to his previous experiences, he said “when there is a broken system and you want to fix, there is a lot of resistance. When you close the taps, people get upset”, said Mbatl.

The VC further said SMU is on a path to success because all the stakeholders now understood what their roles are and that the executive and senior management team are truly alive to what is expected of them.

Mbatl also commended labour, students and everyone for beginning to engage each other with levels of respect and for their maturity. “The level of respect we now have for each other is good. One thing I learnt as I travelled the world is that you need to respect one another regardless of stature. At SMU today, we are learning to respect each other. When I engage with students and labour, it is with certain levels of respect. It has not been an easy journey for the past two years, but I think it's coming to a stage where it is obvious that the future bodes well for our institution”, he said.

He thanked, management, SRC, Labour, students and staff for working together to build the university and creating a culture than many may emulate in future.



The Internal Audit Director flies the SMU flag high at the AFIIA Conference



During the last week of May 2022, the Director responsible for internal audit at SMU, Mr Tshepo Mofokeng was part of the South African delegation to the African Federation of Institutes of Internal Auditors (AFIIA) conference. The conference being the first hybrid (both in person and virtual) since the advent of the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020.

The conference under the theme “Surviving turbulent times and rebuilding successfully” was held at the Avani Hotel in Livingstone, Zambia. It was hosted by AFIIA in conjunction with the Institute of Internal Auditors of Zambia. The theme was relevant as the world and the African continent was emerging out of the Covid period with lockdowns and limitations of economic, social and educational activities. Furthermore, this theme was opportune as it allowed the presenters and attendees to ponder about building for the future after the hectic period.

The conference was structured into two phases being the:

- The Board and Audit Committee Forum from 23 to 24 May 2022, and
- The 8th African Federation of (AFIIA) International University from 25 to 27 May 2022

The conference included speakers from across the continent (with South Africa being represented), Europe, the USA, and the Middle East. These were senior internal audit profes-

sionals, senior government executives, scholars, business leaders, regulators and other thought leaders.

The conference was opened by Zambia's Minister of Finance and Planning. He acknowledged the role played by the internal auditor in the public service in Zambia under the leadership of the Internal Audit Controller based in the finance department. Reflecting on its role in promoting corporate governance, he indicated that corporate governance should be a key pillar in reducing and eradicating inequality, poverty, and unemployment.

In summary there were two new key issues that emerged out of the conference, and are as follows:

- The Risks of Cybercrimes in institutions and organisations.
- Organisations and institutions embracing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) indicators for development, enhancing stakeholder value and sustainability.

The cybersecurity topic was presented by the CIO of a leading energy company in Zambia. He emphasized that data has become a new currency or in other terms the new oil. Several syndicates and organizations hack other entities for all types of reasons. Some of the reasons might be:

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- To demonstrate their strength and capability as hackers.
- To use the data to blackmail another organization.
- To use the data for fraudulent activities.
- To create chaos in another organization etc.

Using a case study of an energy company that was hacked in one of the countries in the last five years, he demonstrated that it was easy to hack the company because:

- The company was not **prepared** to be hacked.
- The company didn't appropriately consume **threat feeds**.
- The **Incident Response** capabilities of the Company seemed uncoordinated.
- The company probably wasn't leveraging on **Artificial Intelligence cybersecurity solutions**.

He further indicated that a lot of companies, organizations and institutions are at the greatest risk of being hacked as they may have not done an adequate risk assessment around the protection of their data.

ESG stands for **E**nvironmental **S**ocial and **G**overnance processes, indicators and their reporting. It refers to the three key factors when measuring the sustainability and ethical impact of the academic, investing, and operational activities of the institution. These factors are a subset of non-financial performance indicators which include ethical, sustainability and corporate government issues such as making sure there are systems in place to ensure accountability and managing the institutions performance objectives.

This is a new area of corporate governance and reporting within the country. However, the University has also pursued a public mandate but had not followed a model or standard that allows synchronization of the public mandate, the academic mandate and sustainability.

Being part of the conference engendered empowerment, knowledge sharing, insight, and inputs by the SMU internal audit function in the following matters:

- Contribute towards the body of knowledge in internal controls, corporate governance, and risk management.
- Understanding and fully appreciating the state of internal audit, fraud management and governance processes in the continent.
- Learning and appreciating the culture of doing business with peers from other countries in the continent.
- Understanding the kind of opportunities and the accompanying risks in the horizon in the public and private sector in the continent.
- Appreciating more the rapid changes brought about by climate change, cultural change, legislation, and new technologies.
- Explore some of the new auditing and risk management technology tools in the market.

All these aspects will positively contribute to the body of knowledge of the University in governance, risk management, internal audit, and internal controls.



Department of Nursing Science spent 67 minutes on Nelson Mandela Day refurbishing St. John the Baptist Old Age Home

The Department of Nursing Science (DNS) led by the Community engagement team which is Coordinated by Dr RF Mathevula, heeded the clarion call on International Nelson Mandela Day by identifying the St John the Baptist Old Age Home (SJBOAH) in Winterveldt, to benefit from the 67

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minutes of service, rendered by its academic staff and students. The 2022 theme was “Do what you can, with what you have and where you are.”

The home was established by the Roman Catholic Church and is funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The SJBOAH is a residence for 24 men and 28 women. It has four registered professional nurses: two working night shift and the other two working on day shift, one registered staff nurse and one registered assistant nurse along with six cooking staff, four cleaning staff, 2 laundry staff, two gardening staff and one driver constitute the old age home's staff complement.



Ninety DNS students from various levels of study, along with 11 academic staff of the department, divided themselves into working groups each with a specific activity to do, on the premises of the SJBOAH. The one group, armed with paint, roller paint brushes and brushes painted the security room, while the other groups focused on the dining hall, the duty office and the consulting room to give them a fresh look as well as cleaning the pavements. The duty room office is essentially a multi-purpose office which is being used, among others, for dispensing of drugs by registered professional nurses who also use it as a nursing station for report writing, staff meetings and storage of over the counter medication.

To cater for the nutritional needs of the residents, the other group, that was led by Prof Deliwe Phetlhu, the head of the DNS, dug trenches and prepared the rich clay soil to plant vegetables such as Spinach, Green Beans, Carrots and Beet roots in the vegetable garden behind the bedrooms.

“Anyone coming to assist here at our old age home qualifies to be named my relative. I become as excited as I am a product of the SMU, having worked in POME mentoring medical students in community services. I become excited because I know what SMU is capable of doing for the community”, said Ms Japhtaline Mosuwe, the matron in charge at the home.

SMU launches the Technology Transfer Office



A Technology transfer office has been officially launched at SMU to ensure that the intellectual property and licensing rights of researchers are properly handled and eventually commercialized. This move will ensure that the objectives of the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act are put in practice within the University.

Amongst the people who spoke during the launch of the TTO were Prof Patrick Demana who was acting Vice-Chancellor, Ms. Jetane Charsley head of National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) Mr. Vusi Skosana acting executive innovation enabling and head of Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), Ms. Gugulethu Dlamini of SMU student entrepreneurship and innovation hub and other relevant stakeholders.

Prof Patrick Demana used the occasion to acknowledge the team led by Prof Mapaseka Seheri for their hard work and dedication in making sure that SMU has such an important office. He further declared that there is an emerging trend in the world in which countries have established national

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offices with the aim to support public institutions including universities. "It is for this reason that our government through the department of Science and Innovation has established the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO), it is for this reason again that SMU received a considerable amount of funding to establish the TTO. The mandate for this office will encourage, support and ensure that projects will go to the market through commercialization. The support of NIPMO has come after a realization from government that the economic growth lies in the commercialization of various projects from various entities including universities" said Prof Patrick Demana.

Demana also said he was confident that SMU has researchers who can produce projects that can be commercialized. "There is a researcher who has identified a different type of a strain of bacteria for TB which attracted some funding and interest from researcher as far as America who are currently collaborating with our researchers at SMU in an attempt to develop drugs that may contain this type of a strain. We are also looking at other projects that works with medicinal plants which have potential to be commercialized", he stated.

Prof Demana also mentioned that the university has developed a new business model with one of its key drivers being the entrepreneurship and commercialization. "I strongly believe that the Technology Transfer Office will play a significant role in ensuring that this university becomes financially sustainable going into the future", he said.

The Director responsible for Research and Innovation Prof Mapaseka Seheri mentioned during her presentation that the University is making positive strides in terms of publishing research papers. In 2021 the university published 553 papers compared to the 282 published in 2022. There is also growth in papers published in international journals. Research collaborations are increasing even above the South African baseline.

Prof Seheri said the establishment of the office came at the right time as she believed that SMU was on an upward trajectory in terms of research. She took delegates through the process from when a proposal was submitted for the establishment of the office to NIPMO in 2021. Following approval, the Manco of the University approved the incorporation of technology transfer into the SMU structure. She further indicated that the recruitment process for the staffing of the office is underway.

Speaking on behalf of TIA, Mr Vusi Skosana said the mandate of his organization is to provide financial and non-financial support

to innovators and inventors. He said TIA has the following funding instruments; the Technology Development Fund, the pre-commercialisation fund and the Seed fund including some accelerator programmes. He congratulated SMU for reaching such a milestone.

Ms. Jetane Charsley from National Intellectual Property Management Organization (NIPMO) remarked on the importance of the Technology Transfer Office and said it was crucial that work is protected before it is published as this will help with any legalities when it is commercialized. She also spoke about the changes brought about by the IPR Act such as benefit sharing for Intellectual Property creators. She said this provision means that while the university own the piece of intellectual property, once the work is tangible and successfully commercialized, researchers will have a right to 20 percent of the first 1 million rand of revenue that accrue to the university and 30 percent of the net revenue thereafter. Researchers will be rewarded for their intellectual inputs and capabilities. She emphasized that the TTO should be equipped with highly skilled people and encouraged all SMU researchers to make contact with the TTO personnel as they will make their ideas a reality.

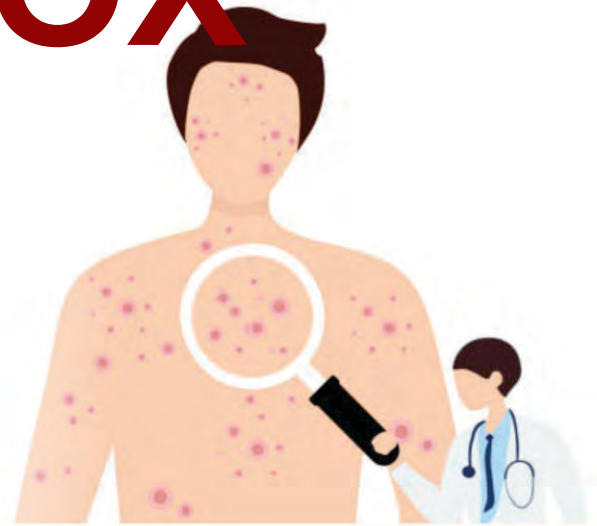
Speaking on behalf of the entrepreneurship and innovation hub at SMU, Ms Gugu Dlamini said SEIH will continue to encourage and support students as well as lecturers to not only speak about entrepreneurship but to lecture with an entrepreneurial approach so that the TTO can better be utilized. All these efforts go towards cultivating an entrepreneurial university, that affords its students the platform to use all the new knowledge and convert into a unique solution that help up-scale small business, large business and those in between. She further said by doing so, the university will be building capacity in the graduates that leave with fully operational businesses and in the researchers that are producing ground breaking research papers that have potential of being commercialized and moved into the market.

According to one of the leaders of the project Mr Mohlatlego Sebola, it was initiated in July 2020 when a group of delegates from SMU went to make an inquiry at the innovation hub at NIPMO offices. "We were warmly received by Mr. Jase and his colleagues who then adopted us and committed themselves in helping us open our own Technology Transfer Office at SMU" said Mr. Sebola. He said NIPMO has been involved with the project from the conceptualization phase to formulating the structure of the office until it was launched. He thanked all the stakeholders for the support they provided throughout.



MONKEYPOX

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?



While in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, having had to get used to the 'new normal' way of living over the past two years, news of a multi-country outbreak of monkeypox has caused concern and anxiety amongst the public. Professor Hannelie Meyer from the School of Pharmacy and Head of SAVIC at SMU provides answers to common questions on Monkeypox.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a zoonotic disease, meaning that it is an infection transmitted from animals to humans. It is caused by the monkeypox virus, which is a member of the Orthopovirus genus in the family Poxviridae. Currently there are two known clades of monkeypox virus, i.e. the Central African Clade and the West African Clade, with the latter being the cause for the current outbreak. The monkeypox virus belongs to the same family of viruses as the smallpox virus, which was eradicated globally in 1980. Compared to smallpox, monkeypox is less contagious and causes less severe illness.

How serious is the outbreak of monkeypox?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of 22 June 2022, 3 413 confirmed cases and one death (from Nigeria) have been reported from 50 countries, of which most cases were reported from the WHO European Region. Other regions reporting cases include the African Region, Americas, Eastern Mediterranean and Western Pacific Region.

Do we have cases of monkeypox in South Africa?

To date, two cases of monkeypox have been confirmed by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD). The very first case, reported last week, is a 30-year old male from Johannesburg with no travel history. The second case, a 32-year old male from Cape Town, also with no travel history, was reported on Tuesday this week. In both cases, because of no history of travel, it is possible that there was local transmission. However, at this stage the two cases are not linked and contract tracing will continue to establish if the cases are linked, and to identify any other related cases of monkeypox.

What are the signs and symptoms of monkeypox?

The incubation period for monkeypox is approximately 6-13 days. The disease starts with general symptoms such as fever and general flu-like symptoms, progressing to a skin rash 1-3 days later. The rash usually starts around the face and the extremities, which develop into blister-like lesions. The lesions progress to pustules, which develop into crusts that will dry and finally resolve. Other signs and symptoms may include headache, swelling of the lymph nodes, back pain, muscle aches, and lack of energy. On average the duration of symptoms of monkeypox is 2-4 weeks.

How contagious is monkeypox and how is it transmitted?

The monkeypox virus is not highly transmissible and prolonged physical contact is necessary for transmission. The virus is transmitted from person-to-person through close personal contact or skin-to-skin contact with the rash of the infected person as well as respiratory droplets e.g. via sneezing. Because the monkeypox virus is very stable on surfaces such as clothes and bed linen contaminated by an infected person, the disease can be spread through materials that have been contaminated by an infected person. Current reports suggest that people with multiple sexual partners are possibly at an increased risk of acquiring monkeypox; however this has not yet been confirmed. In addition, monkeypox can also be transmitted from an infected animal to humans. Any person is at risk of infection if they have had close contact with an infected person. People therefore need to be vigilant in protecting themselves and those around them.

How is monkeypox diagnosed?

Monkeypox is diagnosed based on the person's clinical presentation, of which the rash is usually the most important sign. The rash could be similar to what is seen in other diseases, hence possible exposure is also considered. Finally, specimens are submitted to the National Institute for Communicable Diseases for laboratory testing to confirm the diagnosis of monkeypox.

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What should you do when diagnosed with monkeypox?

Immediate isolation by avoiding close contact with others, is most important to prevent transmission and interrupt the cycle of transmission. Isolation must continue until fully recovered, which means the rash on the skin has disappeared with all scabs cleared. Furthermore, do not share items like towels and brushes with anyone in the household and disinfect touched or used areas around the house.

How dangerous is monkeypox and can it be treated?

Monkeypox is usually a mild disease with self-limiting symptoms, lasting between 2 and 4 weeks, without medical intervention needed. People who are at risk for more serious symptoms include those who are immunocompromised, children and new-born babies. Although severe cases are possible, the case fatality rate is estimated at approximately 3–6%, according to the World Health Organization.

Currently there is no specific treatment available in South Africa for monkeypox. Because the monkeypox virus is very similar to the smallpox virus, it is possible to use antiviral drugs that are used for the treatment of smallpox. However, none of these drugs are available in South Africa. Symptomatic treatment might be necessary, for example, treatment of fever, and prevention and treatment of secondary bacterial infections. Should symptoms get worse, people should seek medical care, because the possibility of complications such as secondary infections, sepsis, bronchopneumonia, encephalitis and infection of the cornea cannot be excluded.

Is there a vaccine to protect against monkeypox?

Presently there is no specific vaccine available in South Africa to protect against monkeypox. However, because of the similarity of the monkeypox virus to the smallpox virus, the smallpox vaccine is estimated to be approximately 85% effective against monkeypox. There is some evidence suggesting that the vaccine may prevent disease if administered as post-exposure prophylaxis. Currently there is only

one FDA-approved smallpox vaccine, that is being used for prevention of monkeypox, which is not available in South Africa.

Following the success of the smallpox vaccine, smallpox was eradicated in 1980 and routine vaccination against the disease among the general public was stopped. This also applied to South Africa, which means that people older than 40-50 years, who were still vaccinated against smallpox before 1980, might have some immunity. However, because immunity wanes with time, it is impossible to predict the level of protection these individuals might have against monkeypox.

In the absence of a vaccine, how can we protect ourselves against monkeypox?

We can continue to use the similar protective measures, as we have been using for COVID-19, especially good hygiene practices. In countries where monkeypox has been detected, travellers are urged to wear masks. Masks are especially important for individuals with respiratory symptoms like coughing, a sore throat, and shortness of breath, and those in contact with them. Condoms will not protect against monkeypox, because of skin-to-skin contact and fluid exchange during sexual intercourse. Healthcare workers should wear appropriate personal protective equipment, and laboratory personnel should take precautions to avoid occupational exposure. Close contacts of monkeypox cases should self-monitor for the development of symptoms up to 21 days from the date of exposure to a case.

Is monkeypox now a pandemic and are there travel restrictions?

Although this is the first multi-country outbreak of monkeypox and the largest outbreak of monkeypox recorded, the World Health Organization has not declared monkeypox a pandemic, neither have they recommended any travel restrictions.



<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/monkey-pox-monkeypox-virus-virus-7217582/>



Research addresses concerns about school leavers being under prepared for Higher Education

The School of Pharmacy's Senior Lecturer: Student Supporter Dr Lindi Zikalala-Mabope's PhD study addresses concerns regarding South Africa's school leavers being underprepared for higher education, leading to attrition and low throughput rates, with graduates not adequately prepared for the world of practice. Dr Zikalala-Mabope's responsibilities as a Student Support Officer in the School include recruitment, selection, orientation and induction of first years, training on problem based learning (PBL) pedagogy, and mentorship. Her immense commitment towards teaching and learning is evident from being the recipient of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA) Teaching and Learning Commendation award (2011), and the Vice Chancellor's Senior Distinguished Teaching and Learning Excellence Award (2016). Focus on SMU reporter held an exclusive interview with Dr Zikalala-Mabope to understand more about her research.

What is your PhD research all about and also share its findings?

This PhD study addressed concerns regarding South Africa's school leavers being underprepared for higher education, leading to attrition and low throughput rates, with graduates not adequately prepared for the world of practice. A mixed-methods explanatory and sequential study was used to develop a structured student support programme for the Bachelor of Pharmacy's problem based learning (PBL) programme at SMU. The framework

for the programme is based on student input, process, output and outcomes. Data included correlations between the selection process, academic performance and pre-registration professional outcomes, with contributing factors explored. Evidently success depends on cognitive and non-cognitive skills, with students or groups of students who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school identifying multifaceted factors affecting their academic performance and a need for referral for assistance and/or support. Findings showed the necessity for a dedicated student support officer, with structured and comprehensive, context-specific interventions, tailored to address the unique needs of students and to collaborate with other referral units within the university. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation of the programme is paramount for accountability and ensuring that graduates produced are 'fit for purpose'. The structured support model developed in this thesis, makes a valuable contribution to pharmacy education at SMU as well as other higher education institutions in South Africa. Ultimately student support is central, as they are our human capital.

Looking at your PhD thesis, what needs to be done for SMU first time entering students to have a proper transition from high school to tertiary education?

Engaging with the students from the first encounter is paramount. I believe that, each profession should know

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their students, arrange an orientation and induction for every student accepted into any programme/school (introduce teaching and learning processes and strategies they'll be using). This is to make sure that students know what to expect and the academics (especially those involved with the first module/subject know where they come from, so as to know what to expect. Not excluding the university orientation and induction – introducing the new students to the available facilities, etc. We need to adequately prepare a diversified student body, by applying culturally responsive teaching strategies. As a practical example, one-on-one mentorship from the beginning of the year, PBL programme promotes student-centred learning, team work, critical thinking, authentic scenarios, and activation of prior learning, etc. It creates an environment in which the student should feel safe to even make mistakes, as well as collaborative teaching and learning. Early year's students should be accommodated in residences on campus.

Most of the students in the early years are housed off-campus, which requires considerable time for travelling and not so easy access to the facilities provided in the university. Currently, this poses a challenge especially for first-time-entering students to be integrated within campus life. Some feel left behind, which leads to mental health challenges, etc. Such cases require urgent intervention, but SMU does not have capacity for the number of students being referred. Management should give attention to this unit as well. My personal involvement in, and the experience gained as a student supporter, facilitator, mentor coordinator in the undergraduate and a postgraduate BPharm programme student, have made me understand how important it is to make a difference to someone in need. Thus, I live with the slogan “#TouchOneTouchAll” which drives me to help those who are willing to be helped academically and/or socially. It is necessary to know your students individually within a professional relationship, to be able to assist when the need arises and it is important to note that there are no one size fits all.

What are the core challenges that first time entering students face?

Many students who meet higher education admission standards struggle in their respective programmes because they lack the necessary skills and/or abilities to navigate complex institutions of higher education, placing students at a disadvantage from the start. Students often come to university with unrealistic expectations regarding both learning and the social environment in which they may find themselves. These

are some of the challenges I have noted that students go through i) Individual or personal factors include goals, lack of motivation, anxiety, study methods, intelligence, less attention, planning, increased mental conditions, decreased class attendance, and interaction among student. ii) Internal organisational factors include professional characteristics of instructors, language, acclimatisation, space, proper facilities and equipment, teaching and learning strategies, academic and social systems of university. iii) External organisational factors affecting students including parents' educational level and their approach to dealing with a student's academic failure, the socioeconomic status of families, unclear and uncertain occupational prospects (e.g. currently many graduates have no jobs). It is important to note that these challenges do not only affect the first years. You can have a student who does well in first year but performs differently in the second year.

What impact has your research done within SMU?

The responsive student support model developed and proposed by this study can have important implications, not only for the student outcomes, but can also serve as a framework for improving curriculum design, teaching and learning and teaching support systems. Therefore, such a process can be recommended to the entire institution to increase the throughput of this diverse population of students and programmes. This study shows that early monitoring and evaluation of the student academic performance by a student support officer, dedicated and committed to the structured student support referral programme, within the profession is essential and invaluable. This Model has been implemented in the School of Pharmacy to date. The outcome of this study will demonstrate the need of individualised remedial measures that can be applied to reduce the attrition rate and stimulate success among a diverse student body in any programme. It further shows the effectiveness of early monitoring and evaluation of students' performance from across all year levels to ensure potential intervention. The model proposed by this study can have important implications not only for the student outcomes, but also serves as a framework for improving curriculum design, teaching and learning and teaching support systems. It can be recommended to the entire institution to increase the throughput of this diverse population of students and programmes. Furthermore, it is clear there is no 'one size fits all' in terms of selection, teaching and learning and/or support, as these are determined by the context. Monitoring and evaluation of every programme is paramount for accountability and ensuring that graduates produced are 'fit for purpose'.

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Timely turnaround time is imperative to optimise the efforts. Having a student support has made it better to identify students' needs within time for better outcomes. There should be joint commitment from across the student support establishments and when it works this makes a synergistic coordinated effort that will be incredible for improving the students' academic and social achievement. All student support divisions should be adequately monitored, evaluated and supported in order to ensure the effective implementation of their programme.

How do you balance your time for research, supervision and lecturing?

The journey of balancing academic responsibilities, family commitments and other demands was never easy for me. Even after registering for my PhD, my academic duties took priority, I had no time to focus on my studies as I had an open door policy with students for either academic and/or social support. Lecturing/Facilitation: was my priority, as I was able to see where/why students were having challenges and developed intervention strategies to be suggested during the one on one counselling sessions. For any need which required experts I did referrals as I'm not a counsellor. Supervision: There's a saying that a PhD candidate should be the one spear heading the research, meaning do all follow-ups with the supervisors. Luckily all my supervisors were within the campus, but all of them have other Masters students and they were very busy. It was upon me to make sure that I find time to meet with all of them and/or one by one. I used to say I'm not a writer, but a doer. I'll like to thank them for their patience and walking this journey with me till the end. Research: was mostly prioritised especially during writing retreats and sometimes during holidays. This meant early mornings and late nights as well. I had to sacrifice time away from my loved ones to achieve this degree. Eventually, I had to be self-centred and took time to complete what I had started with the help of my supervisor.

What challenges did you encounter during your PhD journey?

- Separating academics and family responsibilities to focus on research I could not miss work/take leave, as I felt students will be left unattended.
- Inadequate data filing – student records.
- Funding: Needed a new laptop and yearly registration was a challenge – had to source funds from the research department.
- Lack of assistance in obtaining pre-registration data from the statutory body was a nightmare, although I ended up getting assistance.

- Lack of assistance in obtaining data from 2008-2009 from the SMU management information system (MIS)
 - Writing was a challenge as I'm not a writer but a doer – thanks to my supervisors' constructive and objective criticism.
 - My husband was in and out of hospital until he lost the battle in 2020.

How would you go about motivating a researcher who is going through challenges?

- *Advice from my side - You cannot do it alone*
 - Schedule fixed dates and time to focus on your research.
 - Find places away from distraction. Search and attend long (or weekend) writing retreats to increase your commitment, productivity and accountability.
 - Thanks to the research office for all the opportunities granted.
 - Have internet access at all time: to communicate with your supervisors, assistants, etc.
 - Design a plan to capture; when did you send the work, to who? When did you receive feedback from who, etc.?
 - Arrange meetings to meet all supervisors at the same time, to avoid having to deal with different views.
 - Work on the corrections, suggestions, etc. immediately after the meeting.
 - It's ok to feel discouraged at times (data could not give the prediction I had to change resubmit the topic), but tell yourself that you are not a quitter you'll complete what you have started.
- *Take some walks in between*
 - Believe in yourself! Know that you can do it!!
 - Challenges are there to mould you. When I lost my husband, I had to move in with my supervisor (who is a workaholic) for a month. I left her place when the thesis was sent to the external examiners.

#TouchOneTouchAll!!

Department of Biochemistry and Biotechnology



Focus on SMU spoke to Dr Stanley Gololo, the acting Head of the Department of biochemistry about the work of the department.

Please outline how the biochemistry department is structured including who leads it and the reporting lines, the units that constitute the department and its key performance responsibilities?

Dr Stanley Gololo: Currently the department is headed by myself on an acting basis, following the untimely demise of our esteemed Prof Motlhatlego Alfred Mogale (May his soul rest in peace) and has five more academic staff members. The HoD reports to the Dean of the School of Science and Technology and we have module co-ordinators and the postgraduate studies co-ordinator who are reporting to the HoD. I can state it without fear that upon a visit to the department, it would not be easy for one to detect the hierarchal arrangement in the department.

This is so because we believe that we all have a responsibility to take the department forward and do justice to the legacy of our late leader, Prof Mogale. The department comprises two units that are not so separable from each other, namely the Biochemistry and Biotechnology disciplines, which inform the new name of the department being Biochemistry & Biotechnology. The department in its entirety is tasked to contribute to the objectives of the Strategic plan 2021-2025 of the School of Science and Technology such as Teaching & Learning, Research & Innovation, and Community Engagement, which contribute to the core business of the University.

How does the biochemistry department relate to different schools, especially as the schools make meaningful contribution to the university's core business of teaching, learning research and community engagement?

Dr Gololo: Biochemistry by its own nature, as a discipline, transcends many other fields of study both within our School and in other Schools. Our curriculum content and the training

offered articulates directly into postgraduate programs of many disciplines such as Pharmaceutical Sciences, Virology and Chemical Pathology, just to mention a few. As such, staff members in our department are engaged in co-supervisory activities with colleagues from many departments scattered across the entire University.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the way teaching and learning is being conducted - what adjustments did you have to make in terms of teaching, learning, research and community engagements in biochemistry?

Dr Gololo: Covid-19 was indeed an unprecedented eventuality in the recent history and comparable only (ironically) to the Flu wave experienced in the early twentieth century (February 1918 – April 1920). Whereas the University had already adopted a blended mode for Teaching and Learning entailing both online and contact modes prior to Covid-19, its implementation was proceeding on a snail's pace and the advent of the pandemic called for the business unusual approach.

The department also had to follow suit with adjustments as the rest of the University in embracing online learning. While research was also negatively affected, however, it was during the pandemic era that the department realised an improved research article publication output.

In addition to the challenges intertwined with restricted movement, assessments also had to be conducted online and at times the quality of process would be negatively affected. With online teaching, it could be guaranteed that teaching was taking place, however, as to whether learning also took place needs to be carefully analysed. This challenge is seen in the manner that our students are struggling with the contact

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assessments and the pass rate is likely to be generally low this year compared to the past two years of heightened Covid-19 related restrictions. The department will nevertheless continue to embrace both online and contact teaching and learning with continuous evaluation of the outcomes.

What is the state of research and postgraduate studies in the department of Biochemistry?

Dr Gololo: The department is currently having students at all levels of the postgraduate studies, i.e., Honours, Masters, PhD and Postdoctoral level, which present opportunities for improved research output. The department has also realized the graduation of two PhDs, 1 Masters and 12 Honours students during the May 2022 graduation ceremony. The

publication output of the department has improved from an average of three (3) articles per year to an average of six (6) per annum. Briefly, one can say that it is work in progress but a promising one.

What are the future Research plans for the department?

Dr Gololo: The department endeavours to improve on the peer recognition returns amongst the research community. Such efforts are channelled towards continued participation in service rendering in the form of External assessments of dissertations and thesis from both local and international Institutions of higher learning, serving as Reviewers and Editors in Scientific Journals, and pursuing NRF rating by staff members.

Wastewater Surveillance Research



The environment and health research Unit of the South African research council initiated a nationwide multi-institutional surveillance and research program through academic and research institutions aimed at surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 within the country using the wastewater system. The program is conducted in 5 Provinces (Limpopo, Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal), 10 metros/ municipalities with at least 76 different wastewater treatment plants being investigated across the country with Sefako Makgatho Health Science University's Department of Micro-biological pathology conducting the surveillance and research for the Tshwane municipality and representing the Gauteng region from January 2021.

"I am proud of the department for flying the SMU flag high in contributing to matters of national importance as such", said Dr Andrew Musyoki Wastewater research-team leader.

Every week the department receives samples of wastewater from 10 different wastewater plants spread across the Tshwane municipality and test them for the presence and quantity of detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA and the different variants circulating in the communities (a component that was added to the surveillance research later in 2021). The team then relays the data to the Tshwane district municipality and relevant partners every week.

"The primary goal is that the data may advise infection prevention and control. The data gives a snapshot of what is happening within the Tshwane district and shows the infection hot spots. This plays a key element in guiding response teams", said Dr. Musyoki.

Through the program, the department of Microbiological pathology has received various laboratory equipment that will continue to serve the program and other postgraduate research endeavors going forward. The program has built capacity in performing various techniques of laboratory investigation of SARS-CoV-2 in 7 postgraduate students and 3 staff members within the department so far. These skills can be used in their

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individual academic projects other than wastewater SARS-CoV-2 surveillance now and applicable to other projects in the future.

The data from the wastewater surveillance has correlated well with the diagnostic surveillance data and in some cases has gone ahead to detect infection surges before the same is picked through the diagnostic data. This has proven to be a key tool for surveying community wide trends irrespective of healthcare

seeking behavior. The data has also been key in tracking the emergence and spread of different variants of SARS-CoV-2.

The data is made available to the public through a dashboard (<https://www.samrc.ac.za/wbe/>).

Head of Department: Prof. Maphoshane Nchabeleng
Wastewater research-team leader: Dr. Andrew M Musyoki
Senior researcher: Dr. Marcelle Le Roux

Research Projects with bright prospects to change lives



Many families are grappling with members who are addicted to Nyaope. Many, who go through rehabilitation programmes easily relapse and continue to take Nyaope, which subjects their families and the communities they live with, to all kinds of trauma.

The lingering question that has been troubling the family members, the community and public health practitioners is - why do Nyaope addicts relapse as soon as they are discharged from rehabilitation centres?

Prof Kebogile Mokwena is the NRF Chair in Substance Abuse and Population Mental Health at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, and her research attempts to focus on these and other questions relating to nyaope addiction and its impact on physical, social and mental health. While studies on physical and mental health focus on the nyaope users themselves, the impact of nyaope use extends to the family and wider community, hence the need to focus on the impact of nyaope use on the social and mental health of the families of the users.

Although a variety of studies are continuing, among completed ones are the following:

A study conducted with a master's student in the Department of Urology, School of Medicine, reported that nyaope use compromises erectile function among males. This was reported by nyaope users during a range of qualitative studies, and the study confirmed this by blood samples and use of an internationally validated tool.

The study was jointly supervised by Profs Shingai Mutambirwa and Kebogile Mokwena, and was published in an international journal. With another masters student in the Department of General Surgery, with Profs Koto and Mokwena as supervisors, they conducted a study which sought to investigate and explain the

stomach cramps experienced by nyaope users, which is reported by almost all the users.

The study was done by examining the gastro-intestinal tract, and the findings were that nyaope is associated with chronic and acute chronic gastritis (inflammation of the lining of the stomach), as well as candida and H.Pylori. A small sample was used in this exploratory study, and there are plans to increase the sample size for robust conclusion. There are plans to collaborate with another university for the bigger study.

“Nyaope users always complain about stomach cramps if they have not smoked nyaope for some time, and the cramps are relieved by using nyaope, which results in the use of nyaope as a means to alleviate the pains, and so encourages continuous use of nyaope even if they try to stop. However, not much attentions was paid to investigating these pains, and so these findings are significant in that the recommendations from the study include treatment suggestions for nyaope users at least to address the painful stomach cramps, which consists of standard treatment gastritis, Candida and H.Pylori, which is expected to make it easier for the users to quit Nyaope”, said Prof Mokwena.

The last study, which was conducted by a doctoral student, focused on the mental impact of Nyaope on the families of the users, and found high prevalence of depression and anxiety among such family members. Previously, a qualitative study by a Master of Public Health (MPH) student reported the same findings, but the doctoral study quantified the depression and anxiety.

According to Prof Mokwena, together, these studies contribute to future considerations for the rehabilitation of nyaope users by rehabilitation centres, which is expected to improve treatment outcomes.



Open Day 2022

a showcase of exciting academic programmes offerings for learners

Thousands of Grades 10 and 11 Learners attended the 2022 Open Day at the SMU's Sports Complex. The Communication and Marketing Department (CMD), the event organiser, spared no effort to ensure that the learners, their teachers and their parents took to their various homes, a most abiding out of this world experience, about the open day.

The five schools, namely Health Care Sciences, Medicine, Oral Health Sciences, Pharmacy and Science and Technology set up the most eye catching stalls, information packages and presentations to expose the learners to a wide range of programme offerings.

This premier event was open to learners who were all dressed up in their colourful uniforms. The learners must be studying gateway subjects such as Mathematics, Physics and Life Sciences, in line with SMU's admission requirements.

They travelled from feeder areas of Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Free State and Limpopo provinces, by bus, taxis and by foot accompanied by their life orientation and science and mathematics teachers.

Music thumping from huge speakers played by SMU FM DJ's welcomed and wowed the learners as they patiently sat in the stadium pavilion, waiting to be led into the exhibition hall by student ushers.

On the ground floor, 40 exhibition stalls with SMU branded décor, over 50 staff and students in T-shirts, stood ready to welcome and to speak to the learners. On the first floor of the hall safety and security department set up their stall with Close Circuit Television (CCTV) monitors and a huge drone to show

the learners how safe and secure the campus is for them to study at.

The learners got exposed to the proverbial Aladdin's cave. They visited most eye catching stalls and collected information brochures about courses in SMU branded information bags. They also got exposed to exciting scientific exhibits, human body mannequins and got an opportunity to touch and fidget with, in absolute awe.

Fancy technology exhibits and chemistry experiments that were conducted by senior students, gave learners whose schools lack laboratories, an eye witness account of experiments that they could only imagine about. They saw cutting edge technologies, study facilities, accommodation and sporting facilities of SMU.

Curious learners also asked questions about experiments that were conducted for them. Others asked for finer tips on mathematical, physical science and chemistry problems they are grappling with, at their schools. Others asked questions about the courses offered at the SMU.

The Primary Emergency Care (PEC) stall, with the eye catching first aid equipment, such as jaws of life, Oxygen tanks, fire-fighting hosepipe attracted the learners and kept them captivated, throughout the demonstration by exhibitors at the stall. Mr Wisdom Ndlovu, school of medicine, explained to learners what PEC care treatment is all about. He said PEC is the first treatment outside hospital that a patient gets exposed to, when injured or sick. The paramedics are equipped with knowledge to manage critical or injured patient as they are taught how to manage, treat and safely

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package the patient on the road, or being airlifted the hospital.

At Ms Winie Makhura MSc student in Chemistry, School of Science and Technology, demonstrated the rate of reaction doing exothermic reaction using hydrogen peroxide as starting material forming Oxygen plus water and sodium iodide as a catalyst and the reaction was combustion reaction breaking the bond between hydrogen and oxygen and heat was released.

Dr Hlengiwe Mpongose, orthodontics department, School of Oral Health Sciences, explained the process to be followed to become an orthodontist, namely, to first study for a Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) and enrolling for a Master of Dentistry (M.Dent) degree in Orthodontics.

Ms Gomolemo Mahakwe lecturer in speech language audiology pathology told the learners about speech disorders, language, voice disorders, feeding and swallowing problems.

Ms Nomaswazi Nkosi, BSc Pharmacy third year student, school of pharmacy, told learners about what pharmacists do and gave a learner an opportunity to follow a procedure on dispensing medicine and analyse the script to see if it is legit one.

Hopefully, the elaborate exhibitions laid out for them will move many of the learners to make SMU their one stop partner at which they will to further their education.



Investigating SARS-CoV-2 exposure, Vaccination, Breakthrough Infections in a Cohort of Medical, Dental and Allied Health Students and Healthcare workers at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital

A group of independent researchers at SMU undertook a study that aimed to investigate SARS-CoV-2 exposure, vaccination, and breakthrough infections in a cohort of medical, dental, and allied health students and healthcare workers at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital. Dr Andrew Musyoki Deputy Head: South African Vaccination and Immunisation Centre and SMU Senior Lecturer and Course coordinator for MBCHB 3 is one of the scientists heading the study.

“The study was done to understand the immunological status of the population with regards to infection, prevention and control” said Dr Andrew Musyoki.

For this purpose, volunteers were called to enrol as participant from the 11th to 29th April 2022. Various enrolment sites were active throughout SMU campus.

This study involves two main phases. The first phase of the study focused on determining the seroprevalence of COVID-19 exposure among the study population while the second phase embeds a follow up for a time-period to determine and investigate COVID-19 health related event among selected participants.

The study had 1122 respondents in total, 385 males and 737 females. 915 participants are affiliated with SMU and 147 from DGMAH with 60 joint appointee. The participating schools Medicine: 350; Pharmacy: 118; Science & Technology: 87; Health Care Sciences: 117 Oral Health Sciences 135. 479 Participant has experienced or suspected COVID-19 case.

The second part of the study which focuses on following up on selected participants until breakthrough infection occur or the end of the study time-period commenced on 06 June 2022 will run for 8 months.



SMU Harambee Annual Fund Challenge



In the Spirit of Harambee, Ubuntu and Oneness, we pledge to pull together to raise a minimum of One Million Rands for SMU's needy students.

OUR MISSION

SMU is to deliver a high level cadre of health care professionals trained by experts from the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Oral Health Sciences, Health Care Sciences and, Science and Technology.

We have a large number of brilliant students but lack sufficient resourcing to finance their various needs to fully experience a dignified university student life.

It is against this background that SMU has initiated the **SMU HARAMBEE ANNUAL FUND CHALLENGE** to raise funds to support our needy students.

THE NEED

Join our Vice Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbatia and SMU in raising funds for a bursary program designed to assist academically qualified but financially disadvantaged students. Additionally, the initiative intends to donate to the university's Hands of Compassion food

security project, which delivers meals to underprivileged students on campus.

THE CHALLENGE

Prof. Mbatia encourages students, staff, academics and alumni to participate in a structured giving program. We are called to make a minimum monthly contribution of R10 for students, R100 for staff, and R200 for alumni. In response, Prof has given a lead donation of R10,000 and invites SMU executives to donate as well.

WAYS TO GIVE

1. Payroll donations
2. Online donations: <https://smu.devman.co.za/devman/online/giving/>
3. Pay Scan – Zapper
4. SMU banking details:
Ref: Standard bank
Acc: 070754128
Branch code 020909
Q013 - Name Surname

