

From the VC's Desk

Highlights | Thought Leadership

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NEWS



VC leads the Executive and Members of Senior Management in cleaning the campus as part of Mandela day



On the 21 July 2023, the SMU Vice Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbaty, led SMU staff members on a campus clean-up campaign as part of Mandela day celebrations.

Origins of Mandela day?

The former South African President Nelson Mandela's birthday, 18 July was declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the Nelson Mandela International Day in 2010. The celebration of this international day recognises and gives credence to the former President's commitment to human rights, conflict resolution and reconciliation. It is an annual celebration of Nelson Mandela's life and a global call to action for people to recognise their individual power to make an imprint and change the world around them.

A global movement for positive change begins with small actions. As each person acts, they fuel momentum toward positive change, raising awareness and expanding the reach of Mr. Mandela's values with regard to fighting injustice, helping people in need and reconciliation.

The meaning of Mandela day

The Mandela Day Campaign message encourages people to use 67 minutes of their time to support a chosen charity or



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serve in their local community. The 67 minutes symbolically represent the number of years the former President fought for human rights and the abolition of apartheid. This day recognises the icon's leading role in and support for Africa's struggle for liberation and unity, and his outstanding contribution to the creation of a non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa.

A call to action

In concluding the activities of the day, the VC indicated that, "it is important to note that Mandela day is a reminder to all of us that we need to serve others without expecting anything in return".

The VC further indicated that given the varied needs on campus, it is important that serving becomes a common practice in the university. The activities of Mandela day can be aptly summarized in through his quotation below:

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."
~Nelson Mandela~



Make everyday a Mandela Day