



# NUST BRIEF

## Management and SRC take pledge of excellence

The Vice-Chancellor, Dr Eroid Naomab, together with the Executive Committee, and the Students' Representative Council (SRC), signed a leadership pledge recently. The pledge strives to ensure collegial and the smooth engagement between the parties during their tenure.

A University's management and a students' body have key roles to play in safeguarding good governance. If this relationship is fragmented, it may have detrimental effects on the operations of an institution, and this is one of the main reasons that the Leadership Pledging Ceremony was held at NUST. Dr Naomab assumed office last month, and the SRC also just recently began their term, thus this proved as an opportune time to start off on a sound note.

The University's Chief Legal Adviser and Commissioner of Oaths, Joshua Kaumbi, presided over the ceremony. All signatories, amongst others, pledged to implement positive change, and to take personal accountability for their decisions and actions, as well as the consequences thereof. Dr Naomab emphasised that one should not only lead by the virtues of integrity, but that everyone should demand it from each other.

"Let us not compromise the future of NUST by allowing loyalty to individuals to stand in the way of objective truth," he said. He further singled out two of his key expectations from the SRC members, namely, managing a successful cultural transformation at the University and bringing about the change they would want to see. Dr Naomab concluded by stating that leadership is about influencing others through unleashing their potential to impact the greater good.

On behalf of the student leaders, the SRC President, Pamela Gertze, guarantees to serve both the Institution and the students with integrity. "We commit ourselves to promote academic excellence, true accessibility to quality education, promote the importance of mental well-being of our students and ensure a vibrant and conducive learning environment," she said. Gertze, who was previously the SRC Vice-President in 2020, is now also a Council member, a requirement that comes with her new role.

The SRC representatives are elected annually, and they serve for one academic year, as per the University's rules and regulations.



Group photo: EXCO and SRC members signed the pledge for their collegial and smooth engagement during their tenure.



Bottom left, Dr Eroid Naomab, the Vice-Chancellor and at the bottom right, Ms Pamela Gertze, SRC President sign the pledge.

## NUST houses pilot biogas fermenter



Pilot anaerobic bio-digester plant housed at NUST's IDL.

Recently, NUST and Namib Poultry Industries (NPI), which forms part of the Namib Mills group of companies, signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at promoting the use of renewable energy through the establishment of a biogas plant.

The project is housed at the University's Innovation Design Lab (IDL), under the Faculty of Engineering.

NPI produces 40 tons of chicken manure and other chicken by products daily and consequentially, there is a significant amount of waste water. As a solution to contain this wastage, and ultimately lower the carbon dioxide emissions, the idea of using waste to make energy, was born.

"We have partnered with NUST on our pilot anaerobic bio-digester plan. The output material of the biogas production is a high-value fertiliser which will be made available for local small-scale farmers to improve their crop production," Namib Mills Food Programme Specialist, Suvi Plaatjie elaborated.

Anaerobic digestion is a natural process where plant and animal materials known as biomass, are broken down by micro-organisms.

It is predicted that the full-scale biogas plant will use 40 tons of chicken waste to produce 9,258m<sup>3</sup> of biogas and 34 tons of dry fertiliser daily. "The biogas can be turned into electricity, while reducing the amount of carbon dioxide emissions. The biogas plant is also tailor-made for Namibia's arid climate that will serve as the first ever biogas fermenter in Southern Africa running on chicken manure with a net zero water consumption," Plaatjie added.

The plant is fed on a daily basis with a specific mixture of chicken manure and other chicken processing by-products such

as blood and waste water in different ratios. "Micro-organisms in the bio-digesters breakdown the organic waste to produce combustible biogas and fertiliser as a by-product in the absence of oxygen," Thomas Mwatulelo, a NUST alumnus and Researcher in the Department of Mechanical and Marine Engineering, explained.

The process is monitored and sampled every 24 hours through a gas test to scrutinise ammonia levels within the manure since it has a high concentration of Nitrogen. If the Nitrogen levels are too high, the mixture could become poisonous to the microorganisms. The project will further afford NUST students an opportunity to conduct research and to fully understand this innovative project.

## Bettering the lives of underprivileged Havana youth

In the heart of the Havana residential area in Windhoek, now stands a place where the unemployed youth can escape their harsh realities through an initiative called the Havana Youth Café (HYC).

Funded by the Embassy of Finland, through the Funds for Local Cooperation funding instrument, with co-financing from NUST, the Café is an investment to empower underprivileged young people.

Speaking at the official launch of the Café, Dr Delvaline Möwes, the then Acting NUST Vice-Chancellor, said, "The concept of the Café builds on the success story of RIabs, a South African award-winning non-profit company, established in 2009. Its mission has been to reconstruct communities through creating environments and systems where people are impacted, empowered and transformed through HOPE, Innovation, Technology, Training and Economic Opportunities." RIabs Namibia was established in 2012 under the auspices of the Namibia Business Innovation

Institute (NBII) at NUST, and has since trained nearly 1 000 youth under this project.

Prof Heike Winschiers-Theophilus, an academic in the Faculty of Computing and Informatics (FCI), and Project Manager of the University's ICTechHub, applauded the Mobile Telecommunications Company (MTC) for their gracious partnership through the actualisation of donations towards the project. "MTC is supporting the operation of the café with digital connection, equipment and service development under the NUST-MTC Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), jointly promoting inclusive and national tech innovation."

The launch of the café marks the beginning of a new chapter for the Havana community and its habitants.



Third from left: Prof Heike Winschiers-Theophilus, an academic from FCI; fourth from left: Ms Hannele Hupanen, Coordinator: Funds for Local Cooperation to the Finnish Embassy; and sixth from left, Dr Delvaline Möwes, the then Acting Vice-Chancellor at the Havana Youth Café.