Scores of learners attend 4th Namibia Book Fair

After returning from the U.S. in 2010, Helvi Itenge, a Namibian Author was so excited to attend various local events to exhibit her work. Much to her disappointment, at the time, there were no such platforms in Namibia, and this is how the Namibia Book Fair (NBF) was born.

According to UNESCO 2019 statistics - globally, at least 750 million youth and adults still cannot read and write and 250 million children are failing to acquire basic literacy skills. This results in an exclusion of low-literate and low-skilled youth and adults from full participation in their communities and societies.

Changing the status quo

Itenge founded the initiative with assistance from various partners. Last week, the Official Opening Ceremony of the 4th NBF took place under the theme: ‘Read Together, Build Together.’ More than 200 primary and high school learners attended the event and had the opportunity to participate in activities such as story-telling sessions, picture book reading and learning to make books. “My personal aspiration is for this event to become a significant symbol that enlightens us all to read more books, write more books, and invest in local schools and home libraries in Namibia, together we can promote a culture of reading and writing in all corners of the country,” says Itenge.

The guest speaker at the event, Mavis Elias, is a NUST alumna who studied Civil Engineering, a field that is commonly dominated by men. Elias says her inspiration to following this challenging career path started with the love of reading and gaining knowledge. Damian Katjimune, a Grade 10 learner from Hochland High School said: “It was my first time coming for this Book Fair and I found it interesting and it encouraged me to read more.”

Alumni department comes to life!

A new department, aimed at strengthening relations with the Institution’s graduates, was opened at NUST a few weeks ago. Referred to as the Alumni and University Foundation, the Department will also be responsible for fundraising initiatives. The Director of the Foundation, Kaitira Kandjii, says there are currently 10 000 alumni on the database. “This is just a starting point. In the months to come, we plan on reaching out to all the 30 000 alumni that have graduated from the institution, dating back to the days when it was an Academy,” he said.

Kandjii added that alumni are instrumental in enhancing a university’s image. Soon, an association will be created, giving an opportunity for former students to network, get mentorship and contribute to the University’s human and financial resource capacity, amongst others.

“Financial aid will enable the provision of bursaries and grants to needy students as well as assist the University to upgrade its infrastructure and increase its bandwidth, which is currently a challenge. Having an active alumni department will encourage current students to remain connected to NUST, well after graduating,” remarked Kandjii.

Last month, the Department hosted a meet and greet’ event for the alumni in northern Namibia. Kandjii says the response was favourable and similar initiatives will be held in other parts of the country.

Moreover, the NUST Act of 2015 requires that there should be an alumni representative on the NUST Council, therefore this new department will enable this appointment. For more details former students are urged to email kekandjii@nust.na and alumni@nust.na.

Pleasant surprise from the Head of State

H.E. President Dr Hage Geingob made a surprise visit to our campus to attend a lecture that was held as part of the activities for the International Education Week (IEW).

The President sat in the back row of the Auditorium amongst the audience and listened to the lecture delivered by Prof Louis Fourie, former Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Knowledge and Information Technology Services, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The topic was ‘Promoting Partnerships and Internationalisation in Preparing Graduates for Industry 4.0.’

The overall objective of the IEW is to promote internationalisation and global citizenship education. The expected outcome of the IEW is to produce holistic graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, who are global citizens and are able to function completely in global contexts.

During the week, a series of activities took place, such as cultural exhibitions, an international lunch and a movie night.

Schools and partners

Schools represented included: Crescent Learning Academy; Rocky Crest High; Amazing Kids; People’s Primary; Jan Mohr Secondary; Hochland High, and Green Leaves Primary. The sponsors and partners included: FNB Namibia; Development Bank of Namibia; Goethe Institut; Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture; ChiNamibia; Senga Event and Hire; Namibia Library and Archive Services; NUST, University of Namibia; International University of Management; Devine Graphics; The Namibian Newspaper, and Yambeka Children Media.

Rating:

- Rated Best Higher Education Institution in Namibia (PMR since 2002)
- Rated Most Innovative Institution in Namibia (PMR 2014, 2016)

Compliance:

Compliant with the Namibia’s Data Protection Act No. 29 of 2003.