



COMMUNIQUE TO ALUMNI

UPDATE ON UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

Monday, 23 July 2018

Dear Alumni

The first semester of 2018 was indeed another prolific six months for the university. Please allow me to share a few developments with you:

- ❖ The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Alumni Association took place on 26 May 2018, during which a new President, Mr MC Cindi, and Executive members were elected. These elections are critical to, *inter alia*, ensure the continuous representation of the university's alumni on the CUT Council, as well as a well-functioning Alumni Association. Congratulations to Mr Cindi and his Executive Team!
- ❖ In addition, Management approved an allocation from the university's Strategic Fund to enhance the support to our alumni. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Resources and Operations, Dr Gary Paul, and the Executive of the Alumni Association are currently exploring a number of interventions to strengthen our Alumni Association.
- ❖ Several activities to enhance teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement practices at the university were recorded during the first semester. Measures to strengthen partnerships and funding opportunities for CUT were also implemented. The relevant faculties and sections, in collaboration with CUT Innovation Services (CUTIS) and Executive and Senior Management, concluded several partnerships and agreements.
- ❖ Related to our transformation drive, a series of consultations with all stakeholders, and finalising proposals for the Next Generation Women's Leadership Programme and the University Transformation Advisory Committee, reached a point where it was crucial to hold a Transformation Summit on 10 May 2018 to review the areas of focus, and to confirm the shared vision of transformation. All university stakeholders, including the Chairperson of the Ministerial Transformation Oversight Committee, and our alumni, actively participated in the summit.
- ❖ Regarding administrative structures and resources, good progress was reported on activities related to communications and marketing, human resources, and the institution's facilities and infrastructure plans. The installation of the integrated security system is progressing well, whilst occupational health and safety (OHS) is another critical element that has been attended to.
- ❖ Following the second-semester registrations, as at 22 July 2018, a total of 4 192 first-time entering undergraduate students are currently registered at CUT for the 2018 academic year. The overall headcount is 19 082 students. This figure includes 547 international students.

- ❖ In keeping our commitment to CUT's phased approach to sustainable insourcing, Management, in collaboration with the unions, have finalised the insourced staff cohort for 2018, and Council approved the establishment of a further ten permanent positions in Protection Services, at a total cost of R1,893 million per annum. Management and the unions' leadership are currently engaging on further possibilities of insourcing.
- ❖ The higher education sector remains under tremendous pressure, mainly because of unpaid NSFAS allowances due to delays at NSFAS' national offices. However, despite these challenges, CUT managed to process 36 618 allowances to NSFAS-supported students in 2018 to date, including upfront payments to more than 1 800 first-year students who were awaiting final approval from NSFAS. Our efforts to improve the systems and processes of Financial Aid, and the commitment by our staff members and student leadership, clearly yielded positive results.
- ❖ The Free State Department of Education/CUT Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academy was officially launched on 30 May 2018. This academy, as a hub for the development and training of educators and lecturers in the field of STEM, aims to ensure better understanding and greater appreciation of these subjects amongst school learners, so that universities can increase the production of world-class programmes in STEM and high-quality research outputs, especially in these areas, which are crucial to the National Development Plan's agenda.
- ❖ The Lejweleputswa Innovation Platform, funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) for an initial period of two years, at a total budget of R1,82 million, to be allocated annually following evidence of due performance, has been secured. The Welkom campus will host the administrative hub of the platform.
- ❖ Following engagements with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) since December 2017, CUT received an Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant (IEG) of R376 million for the next three years. The IEG is earmarked for the construction of residences at both campuses; a new Teacher Education Building and Multi-purpose Hall at the Welkom Campus; and new Management Sciences and Jewellery Design buildings at the Bloemfontein campus.

CUT is indeed a sound institution, but it is because of its people. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our alumni for your support to the university during the first semester of 2018. We look forward to your continuous support in the remaining part of this year and beyond.

Best wishes in your respective careers for the second term. Let us, as a team, continue to challenge the *status quo* and move the boundaries in our endeavours to "*reimagine CUT as a transformational, transformative, entrepreneurial and engaged university and 'model' university of technology in Africa*".

Kind regards

Prof. Henk de Jager
Vice-Chancellor and Principal