

STUDENT EXCELLENCE

Young MUT entrepreneur jets off to the United States

Still "wet behind the ears", Bright Hlongwane (20), a second-year Public Administration student from Umlazi's B section, has captured the attention of many in the academic and business world. On 6 July 2017, MUT academics, some Durban business leaders and Bright's friends gathered at the Durban Olive Convention Centre for his send-off party. He is a man who believes in "creating more job-makers than job-seekers". He has already founded two businesses, one in 2016 called UrbanZulu Group Pty Ltd, a brand marketing company, and Youth in Business, an NPO. "I realised that the country needed more job creators than job-seekers for the sustainability of the economy. The unemployment level is currently at 27%. For it to decrease, we need to nurture young entrepreneurs," said Bright.

On 8 July 2017, Bright jetted off to Stanford University, US, for an Advanced Entrepreneurship Programme. The main purpose for going to the US was to acquire knowledge that he will share with his peers. Such a programme will enable Bright to run his two businesses even better. He returned on 30 July 2017 from 'the Farm' - the colloquial name of Stanford University. Pavina Moodliar, HoD of the Public Administration and Economics Department, said Bright had set an example and everyone ought to recognise his ideals.

Bright's trip was sponsored by the Olive Convention Centre. He has received amazing moral support from his "father figures" Grant Gavin, Chairman of the Durban Entrepreneurs Club, and Avnish Ramjee, COO of Olive Convention Centre.



SRC President, Vezi Simelane and SRC Secretary General, Sandile Mbonambi in Ireland

Momentous visit for the SRC to Ireland!

In the history of MUT, this was the first time a SRC President and his Secretary-General had been part of a high-powered delegation with MUT's executive and senior management to Europe. It was a moment that would "change our lives forever", said Vezinhlanihla Simelane and Sandile Mbonambi, who travelled from Durban through Johannesburg and Istanbul (Turkey) before reaching Ireland.

Both have Professor Zodwa Dlamini, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagements to thank. At the time she said, "I want to see an MUT graduate that has travelled the world and is able to make global choices. Travelling the world opens one's worldview and can take the person to greater heights," said Professor Dlamini.

The SRC big guns also showed intellectual maturity. They engaged as part of the delegation and right at the outset, it was clear that they had the mandate for the development of students. They were well presented and easily communicated at international level. "We are coming back to further our studies here" was the hope the leaders entertained frequently.

The MUT delegation marvelled at how easy it was for the student leaders to assimilate into the Irish culture. They loved everything Irish. Within hours of landing in Ireland, the leaders had taught themselves how to get around the huge Dublin city using technology. They also learnt how to manage the budget allocated to them without getting back to the team requesting additional funds.



Bright, fourth from left, with MUT staff and his sponsors

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