



# THE VOICE

Mangosuthu  
University of Technology

Issue 2 | 2015 | SPECIAL EDITION

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP LEARNS THROUGH AN IMMERSION TOUR OF TANZANIA

### OVERVIEW OF THE TOUR

Hard work, tolerance, entrepreneurship and academic excellence are some of the lessons that student leaders learnt during a recent tour of Tanzania. A delegation of 16 excited and eager MUT student leaders departed from OR Tambo International Airport for Kilimanjaro Airport on an educational tour on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2015.

The MUT delegation spent nine days exploring places like the City of Arusha, Mount Kilimanjaro, Dar-es-Salaam, Morogoro and Zanzibar. The tour was aimed at exposing MUT student leaders to other institutions of higher education in Tanzania and to create opportunities for them to engage, learn and share best leadership practices with those institutions.

MUT was hosted by the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) and the College of Business Education. In the past, concerns have been raised about whether MUT is doing enough to expose student leaders to the world outside their institutions and the South African experience. Given that MUT is a leading advocator for a holistic student development programme, the Student Leadership Immersion Programme is an effective and strategic response to the concerns that have been raised.

Student leaders were led in this developmental tour by the Dean of Students, Mr Thami Mchunu and three other university officials that included the Student Development Officer, Mr ME Ntuli; Enactus Faculty Adviser, Mrs TP Khoza and an Accounting Lecturer, Mr BK Zwane, who also played the role of a mentor to student leaders.





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### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TOUR

#### Arusha:

Upon arrival in Tanzania, the group headed to Kisongo, Arusha to the host university, the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) where they met university officials and Jofrey Raymond Kusongwa, a PhD student who had previously visited MUT. Jofrey led the MUT guest on an orientation about his university, NM-AIST. The university was the brainchild of Nelson Mandela. During the visit here the MUT delegation learnt about the academic programmes at NM-AIST and also got the opportunity to deliver its own presentation.

#### Dar-es-Salaam:

The next stop was Dar-es-Salaam. On the first day in Dar es Salaam, the MUT delegation met officials from the College of Business Education (CBE) who shared important insight into student governance and student services. The group proceeded to the office of the South African High Commissioner, His Excellency Mr Mseleku, who urged the group to project a positive image of SA. The delegation also learnt about Tanzania's contribution to the freedom struggle.

#### Zanzibar:

The third stop saw the group travel to Zanzibar. The east African island was a major slave-trade centre in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The province of KwaZulu-Natal has a special relationship with the island as Chatsworth is home to many Zanzibaris.

#### The historic town of Morogoro:

The group then visited a historical site in a town known as Morogoro. The site was occupied by South Africans that were in exile in Tanzania during the apartheid years. The premises have now been converted into a university campus known as the Solomon Mahlangu Campus.

#### Lessons in Entrepreneurship :

The informal business sector is flourishing in Tanzania. Evidence of self-reliance, that Julius Mwalimu Nyerere, the founding father of Tanzania, instilled in the nation are still there for the world to see. The visit to the sector made student leaders appreciate South African informal traders. They were amazed by the resilience of Tanzanians rising above their challenges.

The tour was a great learning experience for student leaders. Through the interactions they had at the various cities in Tanzania, they gained insight into how they can take the lessons learnt and use that to benefit students they lead at MUT. Overall, the nine-day experience was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, one that both student leaders and staff will cherish forever.

