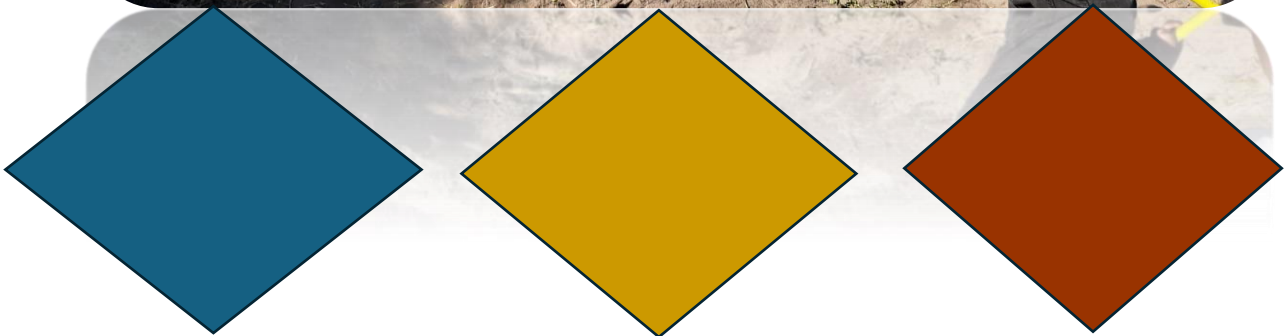


January-March 2024



**MUT STRATEGIC GOAL 3:
EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.**

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Prof Busisiwe Nkonki-Mandleni
Director CEAD

It is with a sense of gratitude to the MUT community to reflect on its active involvement in community engagements in pursuit towards Excellence in Community Engagement (MUT STRATEGIC GOAL 3). It is our mandate as a Directorate for Community Engagement and Development (CEAD) to co-ordinate community engagement at MUT and provide the necessary support to the MUT community. As a Directorate it is also our mandate to contribute towards development of our communities through community development projects as requested by the communities.

I am delighted to highlight community engagement activities that have not only given MUT a sense of responsibility to its communities but benefited towards their developmental advancement. As an anchor institution, the MUT faculties saw it necessary to share their expertise with the needy communities through community engagement projects. For the first quarter, projects addressed issues of environmental sustainability and resilience, food security, skilling of local communities in poultry production, and the development of young scientists through the Eskom Science Expo project which aims at bringing the National Eskom Science Expo to MUT venues and actively involve schools from the Umlazi district. The time and dedication that academic and support staff members as well as students bestowed to increase MUT's footprint into our local communities is an

indication of devotion to MUT's vision of becoming an academically excellent University of Technology anchored in its communities.

MUT, in various and many ways, has been impacting its communities through community engagement (CE), but quite minimal has been done to share these success stories with the broader community. For this reason, the CEAD Directorate, as one of its targeted marketing and communication efforts and ethical engagements with communities, has decided to partner with MUT Radio with effect from quarter 2 for Faculties to share their projects with the listeners of MUT radio. Monthly MUT radio broadcasts are lined up where one of our project leaders together with the project beneficiaries from

communities will feature live on radio to share success stories of the project.

Partnerships for reciprocity are fundamental at MUT for community engagement to thrive. MUT, through the CEAD Directorate, has entered into a partnership with Ikamva Youth Organisation which helps learners with their school homeworks and a host of other services and support to ensure they succeed. The MUT students volunteer their skills and knowledge by tutoring learners of local schools in Mathematics and Science subjects.

The CEAD Directorate has also been instrumental in community development through a schools' reading project that benefited five primary schools in Umlazi and one in Marianridge. This project has assisted

in the identification of learners who were not coping with the interactive exercises and referral to occupational therapists. The Reading Project Competition showcased the talent in the primary school learners and highlighted the significance of literacy promotion.

Having said that I am grateful to my colleagues (i.e. the CEAD team) that have worked tirelessly to carry out the mandate of the CEAD Directorate and to the support of the MUT management for their commitment to community engagement.

Be on the lookout for the next quarterly issue from the CEAD Directorate as we make every effort to share the community engagement work that benefits our communities.



MUT First Reading Project Competition: A Resounding Success!



Participants of the reading project competition.

On 14 March 2024, the inaugural MUT Reading Project Competition, a collaborative initiative between MUT and five participating primary schools in Umlazi Township, was held. This marked a significant milestone in the collaboration between MUT and local primary schools in the Township. The event aimed to promote literacy and educational growth among Grade 4 learners, fostering a culture of reading and comprehension.

Exceptional hosting and coordination by Emthethweni Primary School ensured the event's success, which saw 69 attendees, including learners, teachers, and

stakeholders. A total of 25 learners from five primary schools - Ngilosi, Sukuma, Mgijimi, Emthethweni, and Mbonini - participated, with Sukuma Primary School emerging as the overall winner.

Certificates and trophies were awarded to winners and participants. The success of the event was a testament to the collective effort of various stakeholders.

MUT provided organizational support and the trophies, while other principals assisted in the planning and mobilization of their learners. Emthethweni Primary School provided the

venue, ensured smooth logistics, and created a vibrant atmosphere. The Department of Education (Umlazi District) demonstrated their support by sending representatives to emphasize the importance of partnerships in educational initiatives. Speakers highlighted the pressing need to address literacy challenges, commending the proactive approach taken by all involved parties. Their ardent speeches called attention to the vital role of education in shaping the future and empowering communities.



Mrs Pillay, from the Department of Education delivering a speech.

Learners, carefully selected by their teachers, showcased their reading skills through a structured competition format. Adjudicators assessed fluency, expression, and presentation skills, ensuring fairness and impartiality throughout the competition.

Sukuma Primary School emerged as the overall winner, with learners from various schools demonstrating commendable performance. All participants received certificates and gifts, while winners were honored with trophies as a token of recognition for their achievements.

Key takeaways from the event included an emphasis on the importance of literacy and educational growth, the urgent need to prioritize reading and comprehension skills, and the crucial nature of collaborative efforts among stakeholders for success. The commitment to promoting literacy and educational growth among primary school learners was evident throughout the competition.

The Reading Project Competition showcased the talent and dedication of primary school learners and highlighted the significance of literacy promotion, the power of partnerships, and community collaboration in advancing literacy and education.

The CEAD Directorate looks forward to building upon this success, nurturing a generation of avid readers, and promoting a culture of lifelong learning within our communities.

Stay abreast for more updates and initiatives aimed at promoting educational growth and empowerment!



the judging process, and insightful presentations by experts from Eskom and MUT.

Participants gained a better understanding of project assessment and decision-making, equipping them to play a significant role in guiding and inspiring young scientists.

Eskom Science Expo

Refiloe Ntoji, Kavita Behara, and Dr R F Chidzonga of the Natural Science and Engineering Faculties Collaboration have embarked on an exciting journey of scientific exploration and innovation. Collectively, they have fuelled a collective passion for STEM education.

On March 26, 2024, educators and representatives from schools across the Umlazi district gathered at MUT for the Eskom Young Scientist Expo Judges Workshop. This collaborative effort between Eskom, MUT, and local schools aimed to empower teachers and MUT staff with the skills needed to evaluate student projects effectively.

The workshop featured in-depth discussions on judging criteria, practical exercises simulating

Another remarkable event took place on March 6, 2024, at Lamontville, hosted by MUT. This workshop, a joint effort by Eskom, MUT, and schools in the Umlazi district, showcased the enthusiasm of young learners for science and engineering. With active participation from 26 schools, comprising eight high schools and 18 primary schools, and 44 dedicated teachers, the workshop fostered practical learning experiences through interactive sessions, group discussions, and expert presentations.

These initiatives, highlight the dedication to promoting STEM education and nurturing the next generation of scientists and engineers. MUT's efforts continue to inspire and empower educators and students alike, fostering a vibrant community of innovative thinkers and problem solvers.

Ecosystem Rehabilitation and Restoration (ERR) Project.



Induction for new ERR members.

In the bustling corridors of MUT, a remarkable initiative is quietly making waves. Led by the passionate Miss Nkosi Sithembile and driven by the dedicated Nature Conservation students (Faculty of Natural Sciences), the ERR project has been making significant strides in and around Umlazi since its inception in 2017.

“I Raise My Hand My School is Green” is a pledge aimed at training more schools in caring for their environment. The ERR has successfully trained teachers and learners on rehabilitation and restoration methods.

Additionally, they have initiated the identification and collection of herbarium specimens. ERR conducts workshops and

campaigns both in-person and virtually, utilizing its social media platforms to raise awareness and educate communities about conservation and sustainable practices. These sessions often focus on plant and animal identification to deepen the understanding of ecosystems.

To further their mission, ERR analyzes water and soil samples to identify threats to ecosystems and advocate for their protection. One of the notable events organized by ERR is the "Show and Tell" event, which demonstrates the power of collective action in environmental preservation.

Continuing to grow, ERR recruits' new members and welcomes them into the organization through induction ceremonies. As a symbol of their commitment to environmental protection and to inspire others to join the cause, ERR plants trees at high schools such as Ndukwenhle High School. This act of planting trees not only demonstrates their dedication but also encourages the wider community to participate in environmental conservation efforts.

Food Security for Better Health (FSBH)



In the ongoing quest for healthier communities, the FSBH Project stands at the forefront.

Spearheaded by a dynamic team led by Dr C Hlungwani and comprising B H Nxasane, T R Kunene, M L Shabane, and Dr B E Mthembu, this initiative aims to revolutionize school nutrition through a comprehensive approach.

Growing cabbages at Masibambane Day Care Center.

FSBH's primary objective is to enhance school children's nutrition by incorporating fresh micro and micronutrients into the school feeding scheme. The journey towards food security and better health begins with three fundamental activities: land preparation, planting, and harvesting.

Several schools are benefiting from this initiative, including Zimisele Primary, Bavumile Primary, and iNgqayizivele Primary. Additionally, Masibambane is a day care center for physically challenged children located in Umlazi at Umhlabeni informal settlement, a walking distance from MUT North Campus.

Like other schools, Masibambane also has a feeding scheme that needs augmentation through gardening. However, due to the physical challenges of the learners, they cannot participate in gardening activities. In response, MUT students have taken full responsibility for growing various crops for the center, ensuring that these children also benefit from fresh, nutritious produce.

Schools that prioritize garden management reap bountiful harvests, and with the demand for vegetable gardens in schools far exceeding current supply, it highlights the urgent need for expansion, making the establishment of school gardens not just a necessity but a long-overdue investment in the health and future of our children - *together, let's sow the seeds of change and reap the fruits of our labour.*



Tree planting exercise.



Young environmental stewards.

Environmental Education and Sustainability (EES) Project.

The EESP led by Dr S T Mbanjwa is dedicated to fostering environmental awareness and action through a variety of learning programs and workshops.

The Environmental Leaders Programme empowers students to lead sustainability initiatives, nurturing them into future environmental stewards. Garden-Based Learning engages students in hands-on experiences within school gardens, fostering understanding of ecosystems and food production.

The Curriculum Integration Workshop equips educators with tools to seamlessly integrate environmental themes into the curriculum, bridging theory with practice. One-Day Workshops on Tree Planting and Vegetable Planting engage participants in meaningful

activities, fostering a deeper connection to the environment.

The Short Courses Youth Entrepreneur Programme sparks entrepreneurial spirit among youth while addressing environmental challenges, empowering them to innovate for sustainability. The Adult Basic Education & Training program provides adults with essential knowledge and skills for environmental literacy and empowerment, recognizing that learning is lifelong.

As ESP stakeholders embark on this journey of discovery and growth, everyone is invited to join in the quest for a greener, more sustainable future.

The goal is to cultivate a world where environmental education is not just a subject but a way of life.

The Agricultural Support Project (ASP)



The ASP-Poultry Production is driven by a dedicated team including P P Mlaba (Leader), S Manciya (Bookkeeping Records), and S L Mthethwa (Production Management).

ASP's mission is to arm farmers with the skills and knowledge needed for successful agricultural production and management.

ASP kicked off its poultry production initiative with the training of Engonyameni community poultry farmers on egg production techniques.

Through specialized training sessions, Umlazi poultry farmers are being equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in broiler production, opening new doors of opportunity in the agricultural sector.

Taking a hands-on approach, ASP team members visit local farmers to provide guidance and support, ensuring their success in the poultry industry.

Armed with expertise in both agriculture and economics, ASP lends a helping hand to farmers by assisting them in developing solid business plans for their poultry ventures.

Together, we're not just raising poultry; we are elevating communities, one farm at a time!



Participant proudly displays eggs.



IKAMVAYOUTH
THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

UMLAZI CHAPTER



MUT student volunteers.

MUT's partnership efforts are all about teamwork and working together. MUT has joined forces with the respected IKAMVAYOUTH organization. This partnership is not just about getting more volunteers; it is also about building strong connections and helping each other out in our communities. Together, MUT and IKAMVAYOUTH are creating a network of support and unity that strengthens our communities.

Recognizing the shortage of volunteers for organizations such as the IKAMVAYOUTH, particularly in subjects crucial for academic success, such as Maths and Science, MUT has intensified its efforts to mobilize student volunteers. This is in recognition that the strength of educational initiatives

hinges upon active participation. MUT through the CEAD directorate has embarked on a proactive campaign to mobilize passionate student volunteers, igniting a flame of service and dedication within MUT campus community.

This commitment stems from MUT's dedication to community engagement and the belief that education is a collective responsibility.

Volunteerism is not merely participation; it is about empowerment. To this end, MUT has spared no effort in equipping our volunteers with the necessary skills and knowledge to support learners effectively.

VOLUNTEER



Through these training initiatives, MUT ensures that volunteers are prepared to

make a meaningful impact in their roles, contributing to the holistic development of communities.

CEAD Directorate Partners with MUT Radio.

We are thrilled to announce a groundbreaking partnership between the CEAD Directorate and MUT Radio, marking a significant step in our efforts to amplify our impact and share our stories with the world.



CEAD has long been a beacon of community engagement, thanks to our project leaders unwavering dedication and sacrifices. However, there has been a gap in effectively communicating our endeavours through targeted marketing initiatives. Recognizing this, the CEAD Directorate has forged a strategic alliance with MUT Radio, which commenced in April 2024.

Through this partnership, MUT Radio has generously allocated various time slots to showcase our projects and their impactful success stories. In essence, MUT Radio will now regularly feature our activities. We are excited to introduce monthly 'Radio Shows,' where one of our projects will be spotlighted. During these shows, the project leader and selected community participants will share their experiences live on air. Together, we will narrate the journey of success, with our community partners bearing witness to the transformative impact of our effort's. This collaboration with MUT Radio promises to be an enriching avenue for celebrating our achievements, promoting community connections, and inspiring further engagement. We invite you all to tune in, participate, and celebrate the power of community-driven initiatives.

CEAD Directorate radio program schedule 2024

Radio shows			Date	Time
	Project name	Project/program leader		
1.	Ecosystem Rehabilitation & Restoration (ERR) Project	Ms Nkosi S	Fri 26/04/2024	11h30
2.	Agricultural Support Project (ASP)	Ms Mlaba PP	Fri 31/05/2024	11h30
3.	Impilo Community Project (ICP)	Ms Dube B & Mrs Motta GST	Fri 28/06/2024	11h30
4.	Mandela Month (01- 31 July 2024)			
4a.	Opening of the Mandela month	DVC: RIE - Prof Sibiya N	Mon 01/07/2024	11h30
4b.	Faculty of Engineering representative	Prof Bakare B	Fri 05/07/2024	11h30
4c.	Faculty of Management Sciences representative	Dr Sikwela MM	Fri 12/07/2024	11h30
4d.	Faculty of Natural Sciences representative	Prof Naidoo K	Fri 19/07/2024	11h30
4e.	Student Affairs	Dr Ntuli ME	Fri 26/07/2024	11h30
4f.	Official closing of the Mandela month	Director: CEAD Prof Nkonki-Mandleni B	Wed 31/07/2024	11h30
5.	Food Security for Better Health (FSBH) Project	Dr Hlungwani C	Mon 29/07/2024	11h30
6.	Environmental Education & Sustainability (EES) Project	Dr Mbanjwa ST & Mr Mhlongo S	Fri 30/08/2024	11h30
7.	Food Safety Training (FST) Project	Mr Manyatsa MJ	Fri 27/09/2024	11h30
8.	Reading Project (RP)	Ms Makhanya	Fri 25/10/2024	11h30
9.	Sivusisizwe B2M Africa Initiative	Ms Thabede D	Fri 29/11/2024	11h30
10.	Marianridge Community Development (MCD) Project	Ms Jenny B	Fri 06/12/2024	11h30

CEAD's Journey Towards Collective Impact.



Prof Sibiyi leading team building for RIE portfolio.



On the 15-17 of February 2024 the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation & Engagements (RIE), Prof N Sibiyi organised a team building outing with the intention to strengthen the RIE portfolio which CEAD is part of.

The aim of the team building outing was to allow the three Directorates (Community Engagement and Development, Research and Technology Station and Chemicals) to know one another and find areas of synergy.

The outing incorporated a unique 'team building' activity whereby participants were presented with an opportunity to conceptualise how they would contribute to the success of the RIE portfolio through imaginary and colourful drawings to bring life to the portfolio and embrace its diversity. Participants brought their innovative ideas to the table, contributing to a collective masterpiece. The twist came at the end when all the different ideas were merged into one big innovative creation for the portfolio.



The exercise demonstrated the power of collaboration and unity in diversity. The collective pieces of painting mirrored CEAD's commitment to embracing diversity and fostering collaboration with the Research Directorate and Technology Station and Chemicals (TSC).

Just as the individual drawings came together to form a larger creation, the exercise highlighted the importance of aligning projects of the three Directorates towards a common goal. In community engagement, the synergy of individual efforts can lead to impactful and sustainable outcomes that benefit the community as a whole.



CEAD staff demonstrating her contribution to the Directorate's success.

Beyond its strategic implications, the activity injected a sense of fun and engagement. It provided an opportunity for participants to relax, connect, and express themselves creatively, fostering a positive and energizing relationship.

As we reflect on the insights gained from the strategic planning meeting, let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration, innovation, and unity in our future endeavours.

Celebrating the Remarkable Journeys of Mrs Buyisiwe Ngidi and Dr Bonginkosi Zondi.



Dr Zondi and Mrs Ngidi

Absolutely! While it is true that this event did not unfold in the first quarter, some stories simply cannot be kept in the backseat of the news cycle!

Amidst laughter, reminiscence, and heartfelt farewells, we gathered on April 26, 2024, to bid farewell to two esteemed members of our family, Mrs Ngidi and Dr Zondi.

The event, organized by the CEAD Directorate, was a testament to the immense contributions and unwavering dedication both individuals have poured into MUT's collective growth. Under the theme "Till This Far God Has Been With Us," it was a celebration of not just endings, but the beginning of new chapters for our beloved colleagues.

Prof B Nkonki-Mandleni, our esteemed Program Director for the day, welcomed all attendees and explained the significance of the occasion, emphasizing the profound impact of our departing colleagues.

MUT colleagues and external partners shared stories and expressed gratitude for the invaluable contributions of Mrs Ngidi and Dr Zondi to their growth. Alumni joined in, reflecting on the mentorship and inspiration they received from our departing colleagues, shaping their professional journeys. The families of Mrs Ngidi and Dr Zondi delivered heartwarming speeches and were indeed proud of the successes achieved by their loved ones.

Dr Zondi expressed heartfelt gratitude for the enriching experiences and friendships cultivated during his tenure at MUT. Mrs Ngidi, in her reply, reminisced on cherished memories and expressed optimism for the future, filled with gratitude for the support she received from MUT, which contributed immensely to her career growth.



Mrs Ngidi and Dr Zondi delivering their farewell speeches.

A poignant farewell address was delivered by Dr Ighodaro, who highlighted the impact of Mrs Ngidi and Dr Zondi's unwavering commitment to excellence.

Moments of joy and camaraderie were captured as colleagues, friends, and family members came together to preserve memories of this special day.

The festivities continued with a delightful lunch, fostering further camaraderie and bonding amongst attendees.

AS WE BID FAREWELL TO MRS NGIDI AND DR ZONDI, WE CARRY FORWARD THE LEGACY OF THEIR DEDICATION, PASSION, AND EXPERTISE.

THEIR IMPACT ON THE CEAD DIRECTORATE WILL RESONATE FOR YEARS TO COME, INSPIRING US TO STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE AND EMBRACE NEW CHALLENGES WITH RESILIENCE AND GRACE.

WISHING MRS NGIDI AND DR ZONDI ALL THE BEST IN THEIR FUTURE ENDEAVOURS!



MUT colleague delivering a farewell speech.

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Dr Oluwabunmi O Popoola

Dr Ikponmwosa D Ighodaro

Prof Busisiwe Nkonki-Mandleni

SPREAD THE WORD!

Help us raise awareness about MUT's community engagement efforts by sharing our newsletter with your partners, collaborators, friends, family, and colleagues.

Together, we can amplify our message and inspire others to join us in our mission.

Your Feedback Matters!

We value your opinion - Please feel free to share your thoughts with us!

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Reading Project Competition

Mrs Behara Kavita, Miss Ntoi Refiloe and Dr R F Chidzonga

Eskom Science Expo Project

Ms Sithembile Nkosi

Ecosystem Rehabilitation and Restoration

Dr C Hlungwani

Food Security for Better Health

Dr S T Mbanjwa

Environmental Education and Sustainability

Miss P P Mlaba

Agricultural Support Project

Special Thanks to IKAMVAYOUTH Organization for Their Contributions:

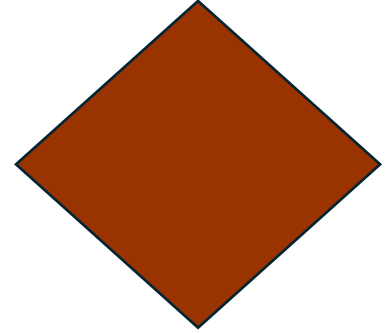
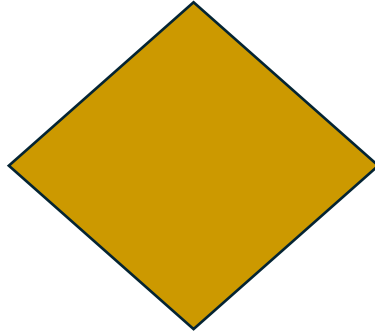
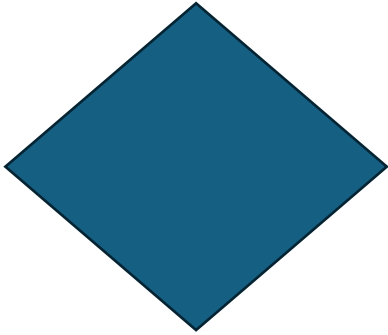
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Upcoming CEAD Events.

**Eskom Science Provincial Expo
August 2024**

**Reading Project Competition 3
12/09/2024 @ 10h00-14h00**

**CE/ Excellence Awards Day
26/11/2024 @ 09h00-14h00**



**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
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