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### Charting the Road to 2030: Vice-Chancellor Sibiya Leads MUT into a Bold New Era



Professor Nokuthula Sibiya

On May 30, 2025, a historic milestone was celebrated at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). In a gathering filled with hope and ambition, Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Nokuthula

Sibiya unveiled an extraordinary vision for the future, known as Vision 2030. This strategic blueprint represents a pivotal moment for MUT, shifting its trajectory toward becoming a prominent global player in higher education, research, and innovation.

Under Professor Sibiya's inspiring leadership, which began in August 2024, a transformative wave of change is sweeping through the university. Her campaign promises are evolving into reality, with Vision 2030 embodying the essence of this progress. "Today marks a turning point in the history of Mangosuthu University of Technology," she proclaimed with passion. "We are stepping into a global conversation—one in which MUT's voice is finally being heard, loud and clear, on the world stage."

This is not just a plan; it is a call to action. It invites every member of the MUT community to join in this exciting journey and to contribute to a future filled with limitless possibilities. Together, we are poised to make an indelible mark on the world, driven by innovation, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. The road to 2030 is not just about the destination; it's about the courageous steps we take together to redefine what's possible. Let us embark on this incredible journey with pride and determination!



Strategy Development Task Team (SDTT) From left Dr Liile Lekena-Bayaga, Mapule Sikhosana, Hlengiwe Hlengwa, Dr Refiloe Ntoi and Dr Yvonne Mvuyana



Executive Management Staff showing off the appreciation of the new MUT values, which is **MY MUT**. Facing the camera is Professor Nokuthala Sibiyi, Vice-Chancellor and Principal

## A Vision Rooted in Global Engagement and Innovation



Centre, Dr Boatamo Mosupye, Dean of the Black Honors College at Sac State, California with her team, next to Professor Nokuthula Sibiya with the MUT delegation

Vision 2030 is not merely a strategic plan—it is a bold declaration of our aspirations. It seeks to reclaim the narrative for a historically disadvantaged institution, transforming obstacles into opportunities for global prominence. At the heart of this vision lies our expanding international presence, especially in the realms of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and STEM education.

Under the dynamic leadership of Professor Sibiya, our journey towards transformation has already begun. A defining moment occurred during her recent visit to the United States, where MUT forged a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DS Innovation, a leading tech firm. This partnership, formed in collaboration with the Southern University of New Orleans (SUNO), a renowned Historically Black College and University (HBCU), lays the groundwork for pioneering AI-driven research, innovative student mobility programs, and robust



Sac State University President, Dr Luke Wood with Vice-Chancellor Professor Nokuthula Sibiya



Left, Dr Loretta Cheeks, CEO DS Innovation

digital infrastructure development.

The significance of this partnership resonated through the pages of the *Arizona Informant*, a premier African American newspaper. “This is more than just a headline—it marks a historic moment,” Professor Sibiya proclaimed. “A historically marginalized institution, rising from the shadows of discrimination, is now being recognized on the global stage for its innovative spirit and visionary outlook.”

As she rallied the university community, Professor Sibiya reminded us all: “To our students, academics, and partners—you are the heartbeat of this vision. Thank you for walking this transformative journey with me. We are MUT. We are rising. And the world is watching.”

With Vision 2030, MUT is not merely planning; we are actively constructing it. Guided by Professor Sibiya’s visionary leadership, our university is on track to become a beacon of innovation, inclusion, and international excellence.

Looking ahead, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor is pleased to announce an upcoming international AI summit scheduled for July 2026. This event will solidify Durban’s status as a hub for global academic exchange and technology-driven development. It will bring together visionary leaders, researchers, and innovators from around the world, showcasing MUT’s steadfast commitment to shaping the future of higher education.

“Together, let us embrace this vibrant journey toward a brighter future, where innovation knows no bounds and where we all rise together”, said Professor Sibiya when she gave feedback on this huge milestone at the Vision 2030 launch.

## Transforming MUT from the Inside Out: An Inspirational Journey



Professor Nokuthula Sibiya, middle with flowers, welcomed by staff members on her first official day, 1 August 2024

When Professor Nokuthula Sibiya stepped into the role of Vice-Chancellor and Principal at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT), she not only broke a glass ceiling; she ignited a beacon of hope and possibility, heralding a new era in the university's legacy. As the first woman to lead this esteemed institution, her appointment transcended symbolism—it signalled a profound wave of transformation.

Less than a year into her tenure, Professor Sibiya is driving a change agenda that embodies inclusivity and vision, grounded in the core belief that true progress begins with people. She emphasises the importance of nurturing values and recognises the potent force of dialogue in shaping a brighter future.

One of her pioneering initiatives, the MUT Gender Forum, serves as a testament to her commitment to challenging stereotypes and championing gender equity. This platform is not just about creating opportunities for women, but also about orchestrating a culture of inclusion that reverberates throughout the institution. The Executive Committee is dedicated to ensuring that practices at MUT are not only gender-sensitive but also reflective of progressive ideals.

The momentum of transformation resonated powerfully during the university's 2024 Women's Day celebration, themed "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress." Here, Professor Sibiya passionately reinforced her vision for a gender-balanced leadership team, declaring, "True transformation begins when every voice is heard, and every potential is nurtured." Her words echoed the belief that empowerment is a collective journey.

Yet, at MUT, transformation extends beyond empowering women; it also acknowledges the necessity of engaging men in this evolution. In a groundbreaking initiative, Professor Sibiya convened a Men's Conference on May 19, 2025, inviting male staff to reflect deeply on their roles and responsibilities as allies in this mission.

"This meeting is a call to arms for men who refuse to settle for less; those who dare to lead with integrity," she inspired the audience. The conference, themed "From Warrior to Wisdom," encouraged men to transcend outdated notions of masculinity, inviting them to cultivate emotional intelligence, take accountability, and pursue personal growth.



MUT men just before the start of the conference

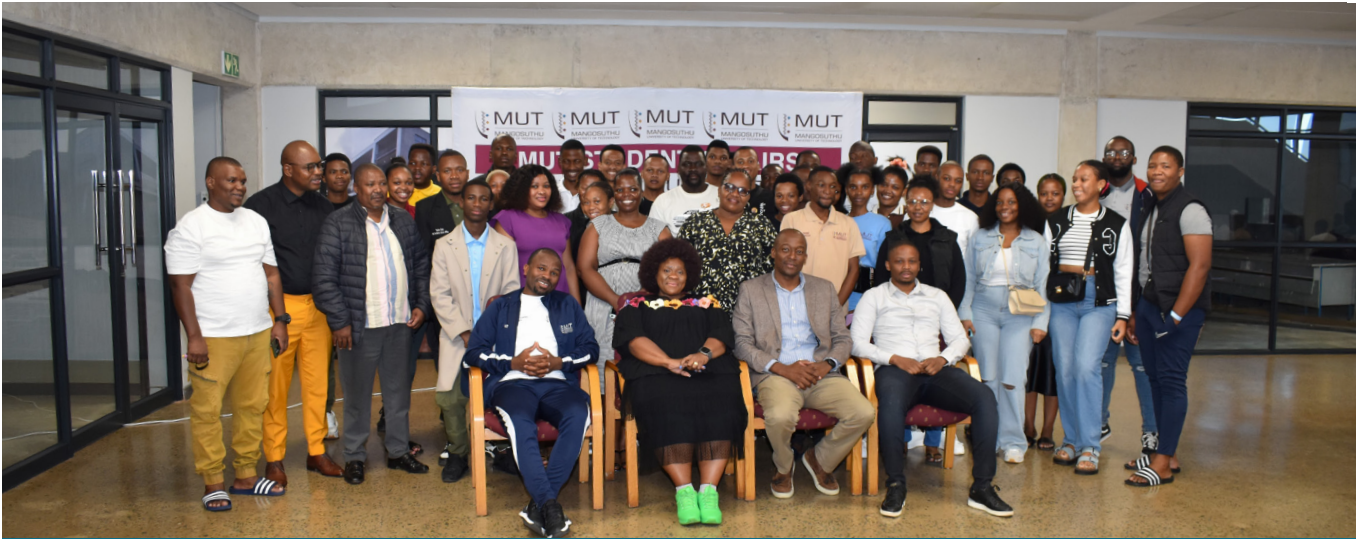
Powerful voices, such as Advocate Mpumelelo Zikalala and Thembinkosi Ngcobo, challenged attendees to rethink their roles not only in the workplace but also in their homes, emphasising the importance of mental health, regular check-ups, and open communication. In a society that often discourages vulnerability among men, their messages resonated deeply, underscoring the need for change.

As MUT boldly strides toward its Vision 2030 goals, one undeniable truth shines through: This institution is not merely transforming; it is leading a movement. Through unwavering commitment, collaboration, and a vision fuelled by inclusivity, MUT is shaping a future where every individual can thrive, and every voice matters. Together, they are not only envisioning change but courageously creating it.



Some of the happy MUT faces

## Vice-Chancellor inspires future leaders at House Committees' induction



Professor Nokuthula Sibiyi, seated, second from left, and Housing staff and House Committee members, and MUT student leaders

Again, Professor Nokuthula Sibiyi, MUT Vice-Chancellor and Principal, shared her visionary leadership with the house committee students during their induction, held on 2-3 June 2025. Renowned for her inspiring leadership and vision, as she stepped onto the stage, the room fell silent. Her presence commanded attention, and her smile radiated warmth. "Good morning, everyone," she began, her voice steady and uplifting. "Today marks a pivotal moment—not just for each of you, the future leaders of our university, but for our entire community."

She reflected on the transformative role that student leaders play within the university. "Each of you is stepping into a position of trust," she continued. "You are the voices and the advocates for your peers. Your responsibilities go beyond managing the day-to-day; you are here to foster a culture of inclusivity, innovation, and resilience."

As she spoke, Professor Sibiyi shared her own journey, recalling the challenges she faced as a

student and how those experiences shaped her understanding of leadership. "Leadership is not merely a title," she emphasised. "It's an opportunity to serve, to connect, and to uplift those around you. The lessons you learn here will resonate long after you leave these walls."

Her words struck a chord as she encouraged the House Committees to embrace collaboration. "You are not alone," she assured them. "Lean on each other. Share your ideas and challenges. Together, you can create solutions that will make our campus a better place for everyone."

Professor Sibiyi then shifted her focus to the broader impact of their roles. "Remember, what you build here extends far beyond our university," she reminded them. "You have the potential to sow seeds of change throughout society. By fostering a safe and inclusive environment in your residences, you are preparing to step into a world that needs your compassion and leadership."

The students listened intently, and the atmosphere



Sphakamiso Madlala, Housing Superintendent

was charged with a sense of purpose and possibility. As she concluded her speech, the Vice-Chancellor urged them to lead with integrity. “Carry the values of unity and dedication with you. Inspire those around you. You hold the power to make a lasting difference—one small act at a time.”

Cheers erupted as she finished, the students invigorated by her passionate words. They were ready to take on their roles, knowing they had not only the university’s support but also the unwavering belief of their Vice-Chancellor. The vision of a brighter, more inclusive campus community was now firmly within their grasp. Together, they would embark on a transformative journey, igniting change and leaving their mark as the leaders they were destined to become.