

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE EXPRESSES CONFIDENCE IN UB



Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Skills Development during a tour of the Department of Media Studies studios.

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Education and Skills Development has expressed confidence that the University of Botswana has potential and capacity to help Botswana transform into a knowledge-based economy.

Chairperson of the committee, Hon. Wynter Mmolotsi, made the sentiments on behalf of the committee at the University of Botswana

on July 28, 2021. The University hosted the Parliamentary Committee for a familiarisation tour of its research and training facilities. The delegation comprised Members of Parliament, Hon. Kainagura Hikuama of Ngami, Hon Oabile Regoeng of Molepolole North and Hon Sam J. Brooks of Kgalagadi South.

Following the tour, Hon Mmolotsi applauded the University for discovering its potential and

undertaking to assist the country to transform into a knowledge-based economy.

He said given the devastating impact of COVID-19 and consequently the urgency to transform Botswana into a knowledge-based economy, the University of Botswana should play a strategic role to help revitalize the economic.

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UB EXPERTISE

Hon. Mmolotsi said their visit to the University of Botswana was an eye-opener. He said the Parliamentary Committee learnt a lot and was impressed by what they saw. As such, they felt confident that UB graduates were market ready and possessed the entrepreneurial edge to drive Botswana's transformation agenda towards a knowledge economy.

Earlier on, Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, had informed the MPs that UB was going through a transitional period towards becoming a research-intensive institution of higher learning.

Professor Norris said as a national asset, UB was obliged to play a pivotal role in Botswana's transformational agenda from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy. Underpinning such transformation, observed Professor Norris, was the need for UB to turn its research into tangible products and services that could be commercialized to generate revenue for the country.

Professor Norris observed that some

multi-national companies were hatched in universities, and have made significant contributions towards development of their countries through research that yielded solution to societal problems.

He added that in the long run, such companies managed to generate millions for their respective countries. "As an Institution we have the ability and capability to do the same for this country. The major thing is to reinvent ourselves as a university, become a university that fosters competitiveness and is research based," said the Vice Chancellor.

Giving a vote of thanks, Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Professor Happy Siphambe, enumerated a number stakeholder engagements the University of Botswana was involved in to help in community development.

Professor Siphambe said through the Faculty of Social Sciences Department of Law offered free legal services to members of society who could not afford legal fees. Besides the legal clinic, UB also has a psychology clinic, which offers individuals psychosocial support and other services, observed Professor Siphambe.

Meanwhile, during the tour of the visit the MPs were taken to the Faculty of Medicine where they were shown a number of laboratories. They were also briefed on the training of medical students and shown the equipment they use for practical lessons. Dean of the Faculty, Professor Oathokwa Nkomazana said students also gained experience through attachment in various clinics and hospitals.

The MPs were further taken on a tour of Block 247 housing the Family and Consumer Science Workshop and were informed that the facility had the potential to add value to the country's economy especially in the textile sector.

Another potential money-spinner for the knowledge economy was the Media Studies studio where the MPs were shown state of the art facilities comprising a television studio, online radio station as well as training and production equipment.

At the Faculty of Engineering and Technology the MPs were introduced to the ingenuity and high quality products that students create using various technologies to impact society.



The MPs were also taken to the Faculty of Medicine where they were shown training equipment for medical students.

Bachelor of Fine Arts Gem Strikes it Hot in South African Theatre

"BREAKING NEWS: I have joined the cast of MuvhangoSA. I have waited too long for this day and now all I can say is Thank you God! I know this will shock a lot of people back home as I have kept this a closely guarded secret. See you tonight @SABC2 9pm!"

#AngelaAtlang.

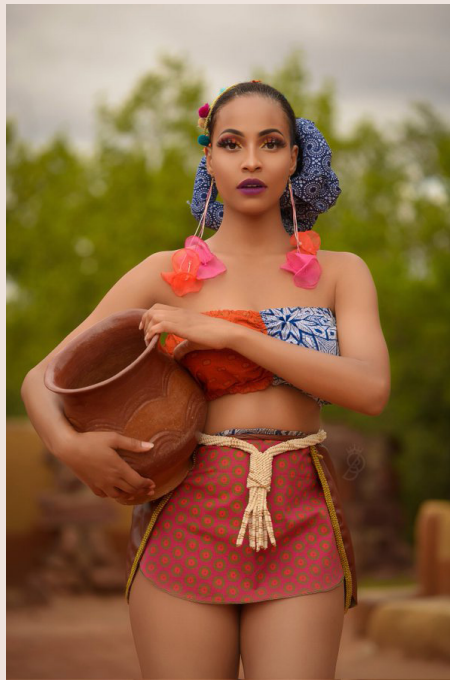
The date was August 16 and the clock had just struck 9.35am when Ms Angela Atlang, a University of Botswana Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre Studies) graduate tweeted this message. It was a dream come true for her and the University of Botswana in its drive to produce well rounded and globally competitive graduates with immense ability to grow the arts industry.

Muvhango is a popular drama series on South African television channel, SABC2 and Ms Atlang, 26, joined the cast playing Itseng Motsamai, James Motsamai's estranged sister, a seductive but hard and gritty woman who plies her trade as a strip dancer. Ms Angela Atlang is an actress and a model who hails from Maun having obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Studies from the University of Botswana in 2018.

Not only is she an actress but Ms Atlang is model and has appeared on several advertisements and music video performances working alongside Botswana artists. She has also worked with companies such as Ebony Hair and several others as a model. Her acting career started at a tender age after she spotted her colleagues rehearsing for drama competitions. Later on, she joined a drama club at junior school where she got so much recognition, earning her the "Best Actress Certificate".

In 2014 Ms Atlang enrolled for Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Studies at the University of Botswana to follow her passion and realise her dream of acting after dropping from her AAT programme. While at UB she met a 'lovely group of lecturers in Professor Connie Rapoo, Dr Thulaganyo Mogobe, the late F.K Omoregie, and Dr Kerr. She acknowledges the lecturers for their commitment and passion to nature her talent.

Ms Atlang says she also took part in other stage performances outside school such as "Broke, Broken, and Alone" theatre production, produced and directed by Kabo Timela in 2019. She played the lead role in KG'OESAKENI:



Ms Angela Atlang

THE DANCE MUSICAL theatre production by Lapatata Arts Ensemble in 2017. She has also acted in Botswana's popular drama 'Mareledi' (Makgabaneng) in 2017 which was unfortunately not aired. She also worked as a production assistant under wardrobe in 'Mareledi'- Makgabaneng.

She was also part of the 48 Hour Film Project with Hisgalus Films group, Botswana in 2014 and her team scooped second position and walked away with the Best Supporting Actress Award.

A media release from Muvhango production team, says Ms Atlang has welcomed the challenge of playing this complex character because it will help her development and journey in the performance arts space. "I believe that my work ethic will endear me to the viewers. They need to constantly see me grow. I should not stay stagnant and I believe that will endear me to the viewers," she is quoted as saying.

Muvhango producer, Mr Herbert Hadebe is also quoted saying over the short space of time Ms Atlang has proved herself more than capable of rising to the occasion.

Drs Moren and Lesego Stone Recognised for Guest Editing Special International Journal



Drs Moren Tibabo and Lesego Senyana Stone

Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, has commended Drs Moren Tibabo and Lesego Senyana Stone for their remarkable achievement in guest editing a special international tourism journal.

The two academics edited the Tourism Review International (2021) Volume 25 (2-3) Special Issue on Tourism and Community Development. The peer-reviewed journal provides a forum for primary research and critical examinations of previous research. It advances excellence in all fields of tourism research, promotes high-level tourism knowledge as well as nourishes cultural awareness in all sectors of the tourism industry by integrating industry and academic perspectives.

Consequently, Professor Norris appreciated the academics for editing the Scopus and Web of Science indexed Tourism Review International, saying such was important to the UB strategic goals of creating and delivering high quality applied research and innovation as well as enhancing economic and stakeholder engagement besides societal impact.

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DRS RECOGNISED

Dr Lesego Stone, is a Tourism Management Senior Lecturer in the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the Faculty of Business while Dr Moren Stone, is also a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Environmental Science in the Faculty of Science.

The academics explained that the purpose of the journal was to explore successes, failures, challenges and opportunities countries face in pursuit of tourism as a development tool. In so doing, the journal critically appraised contemporary perspectives on tourism and development, in particular, sustainable tourism development, which despite increasing doubts with respect to its legitimacy and viability, remains the dominant tourism development paradigm.

The editors say they invited scholars to submit multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary papers as well as conceptual

and empirical papers that added to existing knowledge on the topic.

Authors were encouraged to submit papers addressing a range of themes. Papers published in the special issue include those dealing with the following themes: Tourism and community development nexus debate, Community-based tourism and human livelihoods, Communities perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development, Community involvement/participation in tourism, Community empowerment, Tourism development and institutional frameworks, Challenges and opportunities of community development from tourism, Tourism development and sustainability, Contemporary issues affecting tourism and development nexus and Tourism and climate change nexus.

Drs Moren and Lesego Stone said they made a proposal to edit the special issue to the journals Chief Editor after which a call for papers was published online. They received 58 expressions of interest (EOI) from which 25

authors were invited to submit full papers. However, only 24 authors submitted full papers. Based on reviews, 12 papers were accepted and published in the special issue.

Meanwhile, the two academics together with other UB scholars also submitted paper titled "The impacts of covid-19 on nature-based tourism in Botswana: Implications for community development". They published the paper in collaboration with Professor Patricia K Mogomotsi and Dr Goemeone E.J. Mogomotsi.

As the journals special guest editors, Drs Moren and Lesego Stone also submitted an introductory chapter entitled 'The State of Tourism and Community Development Research and Future Directions' which they published in collaboration with Professor Gyan P. Nyaupane. According to Drs Moren and Lesego Stone special journals sometimes take a year or two to get published. Theirs was processed within just 18 months. The University community joins Professor David Norris in congratulating the academics for a job well done.

PROFESSOR JOTIA AND AGARWAL RECEIVE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Professor Agreement Jotia, who is School of Graduate Studies Acting Dean, was recognised for his contribution in the field of Social Studies Education - Democracy and Education.

The University of Botswana has awarded two of its academics, Professor Agreement Lathi Jotia in the Faculty of Education and Abhishek Agarwal in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology Teaching Excellence Awards.

Professor Jotia and Agarwal received the awards in recognition of their innovative ways of teaching, and impact in their student's learning. Professor Jotia, who is School of Graduate Studies Acting Dean was recognised

for his contribution in the field of Social Studies Education - Democracy and Education while Agarwal's was in the field of Mechanical Engineering.

Teaching Excellence Awards are incentives

US Ambassador thanks UB for supporting Fulbright Scholars



US Ambassador to Botswana, Mr Craig Cloud, had the chance to view some of the equipment being used in the rehabilitation and robotics laboratory.

that are provided to a staff member to recognise and reward excellence in teaching in a tangible way. The Award is intended to raise the profile of good teaching and improve the overall quality of teaching at UB. Award recipients are selected based on a framework and criteria that exemplify the state-of-the-art of teaching and best practice.

The overarching aim of the Teaching Excellence Awards is to implement one of the University of Botswana's Values that productivity will be ensured "through the setting and rewarding of high standards of performance underpinned by dedication to quality, continuous improvement, efficiency and effectiveness throughout the institution" (UB Guidelines for Teaching Excellence Awards and Teaching Innovation Grants, 2007).

The second aim is to fulfil the University's Mission "to advance the intellectual and human resource capacity of the nation and the international community" (UB Strategy: Creating a Future for the Knowledge Generation; 2020-2029).

The Teaching Excellence Awards and Teaching Innovation Grants are part of our academic quality enablers that will develop a learning-centred environment, advance scholarship in generating research-based and evidence-based teaching and learning practices, and facilitate rewards for academic excellence in the work performed by those who have teaching responsibilities.

US Ambassador to Botswana, Mr Craig Cloud, has thanked the University of Botswana for the support it gives Fulbright scholars during their research studies in Botswana. Mr Cloud thanked the University during a tour of the Faculty of Medicine Rehabilitation and Robotics Laboratory in Gaborone last week.

He said the Fulbright scholarship was an important programme because it was a tool through which academics exchanged ideas. As such Mr Cloud observed that the programme helped in the cross fertilisation of ideas around the world.

He spoke passionately about academic collaboration between learning institutions in Botswana and the United States of America and expressed the desire to see more professors from Botswana teaching in the US.

Regarding the rehabilitation and robotics laboratory, Mr Cloud said it was critical for the development of an integrated approach to health service delivery especially for management of non-communicable disease (NCD). The aim of the project is to use technology and robots to increase access to rehabilitation services after stroke and HIV-related stroke besides understanding neural and motor re-learning after HIV and stroke.

Mr Cloud said the approach was critical to reduction of increasing death and disability due to NCDs. "I hope to see more projects of this nature among all institutions in the country including increased collaboration to enhance problem-solving of social ills," he said.

According to the project overview, it has been discovered that people living with HIV (PLHIV) in low and middle income countries (LMICs) such as Botswana are now able to survive longer and as a result, they have increasing risks of death and disability due to non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular diseases such as stroke.

Stroke is the leading cause of death and long-term disability worldwide. Consequently, PLHIV will now have a double burden of long-term disability and HIV management. There is a growing concern that increasing rates of stroke and other NCDs among PLHIV will erode health gains achieved in the last decade. Few countries have examined the ability of LMICs such as Botswana to support the rehabilitative care for HIV plus NCDs including stroke and no studies have attempted to understand the neural and motor relearning process after HIV-related stroke.

Fulbright Scholar and lead investigator from the University Pennsylvania, Dr Mishelli Johnson said given the above, UB found it imperative to develop and use technology, specifically robotics and therapy games, to increase access to rehabilitation services after stroke including the HIV-related type.

Dr Johnson said some UB students had created a series of assessment therapy games aimed at motivating users to engage in therapeutic activities using robots.

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UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA AND NGO COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP PROMISES TO REINVIGORATE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR



Mr David Tibe and Professor David Norris after signing the MoU. The partnership is expected to revitalise the NGO sector.



Professor John Delpont

The University of Botswana and the Non-Governmental Organisations Council (NGO Council) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through which they undertake to work together to enhance the voice of civil society and achieve impact in national development. The partnership will also promote global partnerships towards establishing third stream income, in collaboration with the government of Botswana and development partners to ensure a sustainable foundation for the development of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Speaking at the signing ceremony on August 27, 2021, Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, reiterated his view that universities existed to help in the development of the country through, among others, impactful research. Professor Norris said, therefore, the University of Botswana would, through its new strategic plan, position itself as an engine of economic growth and social transformation for the country.

"Apart from capacity building in terms of developing the critical manpower that can serve the economy, our research efforts should be geared towards developing the country," he added.

He observed that the NGO Council was equally important in fostering nation building and social cohesion besides facilitating active

participation of communities in decision making as well as creation of their own wealth and prosperity.

The Vice Chancellor said the NGO Council must not only be defined as a source of intervention during crises but it must as well be a driving force for social justice. He added that given the dwindling government resources, the onus was now on the University of Botswana and NGO Council to help rejuvenate economic activity in the country.

Professor Norris revealed that through stakeholder engagement the University was in the process of developing economic clusters that would eventually become pillars for stimulating the country's economy.

Giving an overview of the MoU, UB Stakeholder Relations Manager, Professor John Delpont, underscored the need for the University of Botswana and NGO Council to work collaboratively in making Botswana visible to the global third stream funding community. Professor Delpont observed that it was becoming extremely difficult for Botswana to attract foreign direct investment. As such, civil society organisations and institutions of learning must work together to attract third stream income for research, social justice and development, he said.

Responding, NGO Council Chairman, Mr David Tibe, gave a brief history of the NGO

Council that it was established, among others, to create strategic partnerships for resource mobilisation as well as an endowment fund that would serve as a basket of funds for civil society support. Mr Tibe observed that the civil society sector had been through a rough patch in its quest to source funds.

Consequently, he was upbeat that the partnership between the NGO Council and the University of Botswana could not have come at a better time since it would help reinvigorate the civil society sector once again. He said the partnership with the University of Botswana would open a number of opportunities for the NGO Council to re-articulate its mandate as well as for the civil society sector to play an active role in helping to reduce poverty in the country.

Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs, Mr Motse Othabanye, said he was excited that the University of Botswana was now visible and impactful in society. Mr Othabanye added that it was critical for the University of Botswana to embark on research that would help society to resolve its problems easily. In that regard, he said the NGO Council and University of Botswana partnership would help in capacitating the civil society sector to serve Botswana better.

UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA STIRS TEAM BOTSWANA TO HISTORIC OLYMPIC GLORY

The University of Botswana is honoured to celebrate two of its staff members who recently contributed to the success of Botswana men's 4x400m relay team which scooped bronze at the just ended 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan. The duo, Mr Justice Dipeba and Ms Kagiso Tlhabano-David, accompanied Team Botswana as athletics team Head Coach and team psychologist, respectively.

Mr Dipeba is the Sports Officer in the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation (Student Affairs), having joined the University in 2015. He is also UB Track and Field Club Head Coach. Mr Dipeba cut his teeth as an athletics coach in 2003 starting off as volunteer, going on to be assigned his first national duty the following year. Mrs Tlhabano-David is from the Department of Careers and Counselling (Student Affairs). She is also an official of the UB Boxing Club.

"UB has contributed enormously to my success. I was once a student there. UB has sent me to the major games particularly the World University Games, where I reached the finals in the 200m and set the national record. I was the first Motswana to run 200m under 21seconds" says Mr Dipeba.

By the time UB employed in 2015, Mr Dipeba says he was already part of the UB Community, having been a volunteer athletics team coach since 2008. "The University of Botswana has always supported me. It made it possible for me to succeed by providing the facilities to train the national athletes and by giving me time to serve in the national team when I got selected to lead the team to the major games. I am very thankful for the support, without it I think it was not going to be easy to produce the results that you are witnessing now," says Mr Dipeba.

Since then, it has been an amazing experience and growth for Mr Dipeba, and with his coaching proficiency he was now able to train athletes who could compete at major games such as the Olympics. Isaac Makwala who went to set the African record in the 400m twice, winning the Commonwealth Games, Africa Championships, All Africa Games and reaching the finals at the Olympic Games, is one of his protégés. In fact, the University



Mr Justice Dipeba showing off some of the silverware he won for his immense contribution to sport development.



Mr Justice Dipeba and Botswana's 400m champion, Isaac Makwala, feeling excited after a sterling performance.

of Botswana Stadium has been Makwala's training venue since 2013.

The Tokyo experience will remain dear to Mr Dipeba. "The team's performance was outstanding. We did not only win the bronze medal, we broke the African record in the relay, twice, and to coming to think of it, it took more than 20 years to break but it took us 24hrs. That is very special," he added.

Besides volunteering personnel, the University of Botswana further played a critical role in the buildup towards this historic moment by hosting the Olympic bound team at its High-Performance Centre (HPC) for high performance testing. Sports codes that participated in the tests were volleyball, boxing, rugby and athletics.

Among the athletes were Amantle Montsho, Baboloki Thebe, Christine Botlogetswe and Nijel Amos. The HPC conducted the high-performance tests to gauge the athletes' fitness levels based on international standards. The aim was to help the country enhance its

performance at international meets. The HPC is housed at the UB Campus Indoor Sports Centre and is sufficiently equipped with modern facilities to conduct high level tests for both local and international athletes.

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US AMBASSADOR THANKS UB

The project is funded by National Institutes of Health, Center for Aids Research at University of Pennsylvania, Botswana Upenn Partnership, University of Pennsylvania: Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Department of Bioengineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Applied Mechanics, the Rehabilitation Robotics lab - GRASP Lab as well as University of Botswana: Department of Biomedical Sciences, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Cognitive Sciences, and the E-Health Unit.

