

LETTER FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE (CUT) ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Dear Alumni

Happy new year, and all of the best for 2020!

Firstly, I would like to inform you that Mr GM Cindi has resigned as President of the CUT Alumni Association, with effect from 6 January 2020. There is thus a vacancy for a President on the Alumni Association. As the Terms of Reference of the association dictate that the Vice-President should assume all the responsibilities of the President in his/her absence, I have taken over the responsibilities of the President with immediate effect. I wish Mr Cindi all of the best for his future endeavours.

This year should serve as an opportunity to progress towards the realisation of the association's set goals and targets. The current Executive Committee seeks to address identified weaknesses through an adopted seven-point plan, the *Alumni Executive Strategy*. The primary purpose of the plan is to recreate the association as a vibrant, engaged and responsive platform for alumni. The seven key areas in the plan are intended to ensure effective communication with the institution through the Executive Committee; enhance the reputation of CUT as an institution; deepen a cordial relationship with the institution; and encourage participation through alumni programmes, amongst others. These key areas anchor our strategy to repurpose the Alumni Association.

We are making great strides in achieving our targets, albeit surmountable challenges, and are on the right path to putting the necessary systems in place to ensure that the association is a well-oiled machine, at the service of the CUT brand.

On behalf the entire Alumni Association, I would like to extend a sincere word of gratitude to the leadership of CUT, who remains open to engage the association in order to ensure that we achieve our plans. With the assistance of the institution, we have secured a better information technology (IT) system with which to manage the CUT alumni database. Please update your information via the CUT website. The institution has also undertaken a process to appoint a Deputy Director: Alumni and Stakeholder Relations, who will assist with ensuring that focused administrative support is rendered to the Alumni Association Executive Committee.

In addition, the Executive Committee reaffirmed its previous resolution on addressing historical debts and the matter of withholding graduates' certificates as a tool to force alumni to settle their academic debt. We are of the view that this approach by universities is unjustified. Hence, we will constructively engage with various internal and external stakeholders in an attempt to persuade them to support the call to release graduates' certificates. We will also continue to make friends and raise funds to assist us with the settling of historical debts in order for our members to receive their certificates. Furthermore, we will work very hard to reduce some of the current debt owed to the institution. In this regard, we kindly request all employed CUT alumni who owe money to the institution, to contact our Alumni Relations Office on 051 407 3791 or at mzamanit@cut.ac.za and arrange for payment, in order to settle your outstanding debt.

Regarding the association's activities for 2020, I am happy to announce that we will be launching the Lejweleputswa Chapter on 7 March 2020, and the Motheo Chapter on 14 March 2020. All alumni based in these respective regions are cordially invited to the launch. Please visit the CUT website for further details. In addition, we will be hosting a Benchmarking Summit in May 2020, to reimagine the role played by alumni associations in the higher education sector. We will also launch the Alumni Excellence Awards this year, the details of which will be announced in due course.

Finally, in line with the graduate attribute of citizenship and global leadership, which encourages us to make a meaningful and positive contribution to society, and be ethical and visionary leaders who can show leadership in different contexts, I would like to call upon all graduates of CUT to be responsible members of the society and to fight against gender-based violence whenever it rears its ugly head. We must be active participants in a war to end the abuse of women and children in our society.

In conclusion, I hope this new year holds new happiness, new goals, new achievements and a lot of new inspirations for you!

Kind regards

Mr Chabana Chabana
Vice-President of the CUT Alumni Association
(03 March 2020)