

## Staff Welcome Event 2020

Good Afternoon Colleagues

Today I am struck by how that greeting makes even more sense because it is a rare occasion to truly greeting **ALL** of my colleagues. It is so seldom that we get together as a collective like this and appreciate the hard work that goes into keeping an institution as large and complex as CPUT going. From the gates we drive through in the morning, to these well-manicured sports fields- it truly takes a village.

We gathered on these fields a year ago, and at the time I remember feeling that the spirit of regeneration and energy was starting to flow through us all. We were turning the ship around and there was a palpable sense of renewal. I left that event feeling a spirit of optimism and without hesitation, I can stand here today and proclaim that I still feel it. A while back the Marketing and Communication Department had a slogan 'We Are CPUT' and I was reminded of it when preparing this address. Yes we, as in all of us here today, are CPUT, but CPUT is also in our many thousands of alumni and in our retired staff members who dedicated their careers to us. When I think of what a major impact we have on the lives of so many people I never fail to be humbled and the responsibility of looking after this fine institution of ours weighs heavy on my shoulders.

But colleagues, I am also here to say that I cannot do it alone. My hand may be the one on the tiller but I need all of you to help me get CPUT to its next destination. We have achieved a lot since our last staff welcome event a year ago. Some of these successes include securing our District Six Campus with ClearVu fencing – a move that has been on the cards for many years, better security measures for those entering our campuses, massive residence upgrades which has changed student life for the better and our cash flows and financial stability has been significantly improved thanks to strong cost control and financial prudence. These are examples of incremental changes that we now take for granted but have been painstakingly pushed through the various institutional processes until they were eventually realised.

Then of course we have recently made a number of executive appointments which will ensure business continuity in key areas.

- Prof Gilingwe Mayende is the newly appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Operations. May I please ask Prof Mayende to stand
  - Then Prof Driekie Hay-Swemmer is the Executive Director in the office of the Vice-Chancellor.
  - Then we also welcome our new Registrar, Mr Sello Mokoena.
- 

- Jerome Corns is the newly appointed Senior Director in CTS based here on this campus.
- And finally, Dr David Phaho will joins CPUT as the DVC: Research, Technology Innovation and Partnerships on 1 March. So we await his arrival.

We also welcome all new staff members who may have joined us in 2019 or 2020, and who are attending this staff Welcome Event for the first time. I think that you will soon find, what we already know, that this is a fine place to work. There is a reason that some amongst us have celebrated career milestones of 20, 30 and 40 years of service at CPUT. We must be doing something right.

We are also doing something right when we consider the relatively peaceful start to the academic year. While we can never become complacent, it is worth taking a minute and appreciating that CPUT, which once dominated headlines for crippling protest action, had a seamless start to the academic year, while other universities lost weeks of productivity. This is because we have learned from our mistakes and we were agile enough to pre-empt the issues. Let us filter that same pro-activeness into all our other business operations – whether that be in our learning spaces or our administrative processes. We can and must do better.

In 2020 we will continue our focus on the following 4 areas.

1. Maintenance Backlogs
2. Student Housing
3. Facilities Upgrades &
4. Consolidation of our departments and faculties

We have already seen the positive impact that a calm, well maintained residence can have on student performance and we want to replicate that through all our buildings. Be patient with us as we work on this plan. We will surely get to your building, lecture room and office in due course.

You have a critical role to play in the longevity of CPUT and I hope that you are inspired to *do the best you can do* and *be the best you can be* while in our employ. Enjoy the day and I look forward to chatting to many of you as we enjoy the entertainment and lunch.

Thank You

