

# SAED

## *First Year Orientation 2026*

By Lindokuhle Nkosi

The SAED First Year Orientation 2026 programme formed part of a multi-campus rollout that reached eMalahleni, Soshanguve, Arts, Polokwane, Mbombela, Ga-Rankuwa and Pretoria campuses. The initiative focused on welcoming first-year students and equipping them with essential knowledge about campus life, available support services and the opportunities that will shape their academic journey.

Across all campuses, the orientation created a platform for engagement, connection and learning, as students were introduced to the realities of university life. Each session reflected strong participation and energy, providing first-year students with a clearer understanding of what to expect and how to navigate this new chapter.



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# The Innovation Call to Action: Why the 2026 BRICS+ Summit Matters

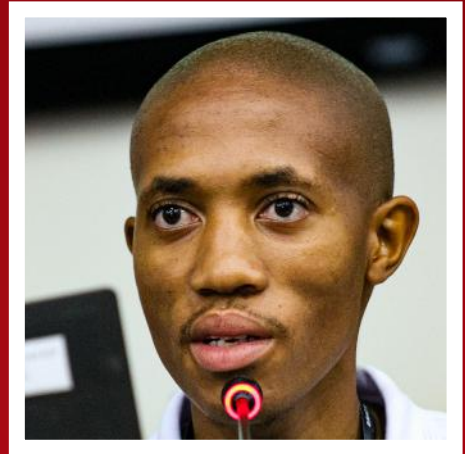
By Oratile Sekgwe & Lindokuhle Nkosi



■ Raymond Matlala, Chief Executive Officer, South African BRICS Youth Association



■ H.E. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former African Union Commission Chairperson



■ Litsitso David Morobi

The 4<sup>th</sup> BRICS+ Innovation Summit, held on 9 and 10 April 2026 at the Pretoria Campus of Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), brought together young innovators from BRICS+ nations and across the Global South.

Under the theme “*Harnessing Youth Innovation for Sustainable Development and Global Prosperity*,” the two-day event created a dynamic platform for innovators aged 18 to 35 to showcase their projects, connect with investors and mentors, and collaborate with peers from different countries.

Dr Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Engagement at TUT, emphasised the role of universities in driving societal change. “Universities are not just monuments for elites, but entities that will make a difference in society,” she said, adding that higher education institutions must not only respond to change but actively shape the future, with young people at the centre of innovation.

Founder and CEO of the South African BRICS Youth Association (SABYA), Raymond Matlala, highlighted the importance of the summit in creating opportunities for young innovators. “The purpose of this session is to create a platform for young people to showcase their ideas and to create opportunities for them to scale their projects and build meaningful networks,” he said.

Among the high-profile attendees was former African Union Commission Chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who addressed the role of artificial intelligence in Africa’s development. “Artificial intelligence is not simply a tool; it is a transformative force reshaping economies, industries, and societies. To harness its full potential, we must shift our mindsets from dependency to creativity, from consumption to production, and from passive adoption to active development,” she said.

Delegates presented their innovations across three key themes: Sustainable Development and Green Innovation, Artificial Intelligence and Digitisation, and Agri-tech Innovation for Food Security.

One standout project came from Litsitso David Morobi of Lesotho, who won first place in the Artificial Intelligence category. His innovation, Hae

Mall, is a digital marketplace designed to help small businesses sell their products online. The platform uses modern technology and AI to enable Basotho entrepreneurs to reach customers more efficiently, functioning similarly to a physical shopping mall but in a digital space.

The summit demonstrated the growing importance of youth-driven innovation in addressing challenges faced by the Global South. It also reinforced the need for governments and institutions to support young innovators in turning their ideas into impactful solutions.

As platforms like the BRICS+ Innovation Summit continue to grow, young people are encouraged to take action, leverage technology, and contribute to building a more sustainable and inclusive global future.



■ Dr. Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Engagement

Breaking new ground:

# Sibusiso Ocean Mamakwa

elected as inaugural deputy secretary

By Lindokuhle Nkosi

**S**ibusiso Ocean Mamakwa, outgoing Convocation Deputy President and Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management student, has been elected as the inaugural Deputy Secretary of the Association of University Convocations, marking a significant milestone for both his leadership journey and the broader higher education landscape.

Describing the moment as one of growth, Mamakwa said the appointment represents “breaking new ground” both personally and professionally, as he steps into a role that carries immense responsibility.

“It comes with a very big responsibility of being more accountable and working hard to ensure that the strategic goals of the association are met, while also protecting its image,” said Sibusiso.

The Association of University Convocations was established in 2024 at Walter Sisulu University, bringing together university convocations across the country under one unified platform. Mamakwa highlighted the importance of this initiative, noting the need for a coordinated approach to governance, transformation and institutional sustainability.

**“As someone actively involved in convocation matters, I realised the need to build a unified convocation platform that advances good governance and transformation. When the call was made, we knew that major institutions needed representation and we stepped forward.”**

A key focus of the association is strengthening its relationship with the Department of Higher Education and Training. Mamakwa emphasized that ongoing engagement and partnerships will be crucial in achieving this goal.

“Our relationship with the department can be strengthened through regular engagements and facilitated partnerships. We are encouraged by the support we have already received, including from Minister Buti Manamela, who joined us during the historic gathering at Sol Plaatje University where leadership was elected.”

Looking ahead, Mamakwa outlined key priorities for his term, including facilitating consistent engagement among university convocations and establishing partnerships with government, industry, and civil society.

He also encouraged graduates to actively participate in convocation programmes, emphasizing the importance of collective involvement in shaping the future of higher education.

While optimistic, Mamakwa acknowledged that the association may face challenges as a newly established body.

“One of the anticipated challenges is that we are still new, and recognition may take time. However, we are committed to working collectively and ensuring that our impact earns us the recognition we deserve.”

In closing, he expressed gratitude to TUT graduates for their support, referencing his leadership role within the institution’s convocation.

“We appreciate the opportunity given to us by TUT graduates to serve as Deputy President of Convocation. Indeed, we are moving from good to great.”

Mamakwa’s election signals a new chapter for university convocations and their growing influence in shaping South Africa’s higher education sector. 🌟



# Scroll vs Study:

## Inside the double life of TUT students

By Athule Rharha

For many students at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), the day does not end when lectures are over. Instead, it continues behind screens – filming, editing, posting and waiting for the next notification.

**W**hat was once a space for connection and entertainment has evolved into something far more complex. Social media is now a stage where students perform curated versions of their lives, often while battling the very real pressures of academic deadlines, financial stress and personal expectations.

For some, the pressure to “keep up” is relentless.

Students increasingly find themselves comparing their realities to the polished lifestyles they see online, lifestyles that may not reflect their own financial or personal circumstances. In this digital race for relevance, the pursuit of likes, followers and validation can quietly begin to compete with the very reason they came to university.

Yet, the story is not one-sided. Fana Ndlovu, a third-year Policing student, describes social media as both a burden and a breakthrough. “Content creation has been both a problem and an opportunity,” he says. “It takes time away from my studies, but it has also helped me build confidence, develop skills and even earn money.”

For Ndlovu, social media has redefined what it means to be a student. Through content creation, he has been able to collaborate with brands and build a personal identity beyond the lecture hall, opportunities that were once unimaginable for many young people, but the cost is time. “There are days when it becomes difficult to balance everything, especially when deadlines clash,” he admits.

That tension, between opportunity and pressure is something many students know all too well.

Nthabiseng Mbetoe, a second-year Policing student, has also found herself navigating this digital balancing act on platforms like TikTok. “It has been helpful because I can create content and earn a small income,” she says. “But sometimes it affects my mental health, especially when I receive negative comments.”

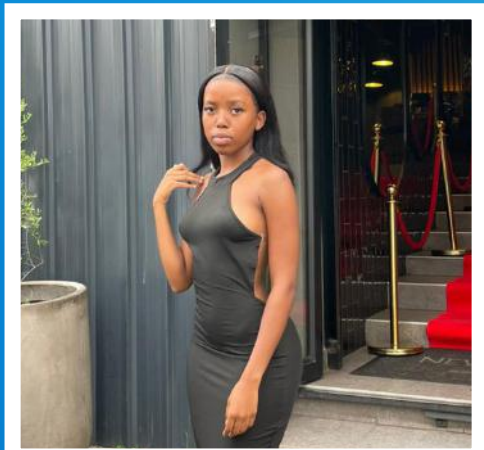
Her coping strategy is simple but telling, ignore the noise. Deleting or overlooking harmful comments has become part of protecting her peace in a space that can quickly turn hostile.

Across campus, stories like these are becoming more common. Social media offers students a powerful tool for self-expression, income generation and personal branding. At the same time, it introduces new forms of pressure, the need to stay relevant, to be seen, to belong.

And for students already navigating the demands of higher education, that pressure can be overwhelming.

The challenge, then, is not whether social media is good or bad, but how students choose to engage with it.

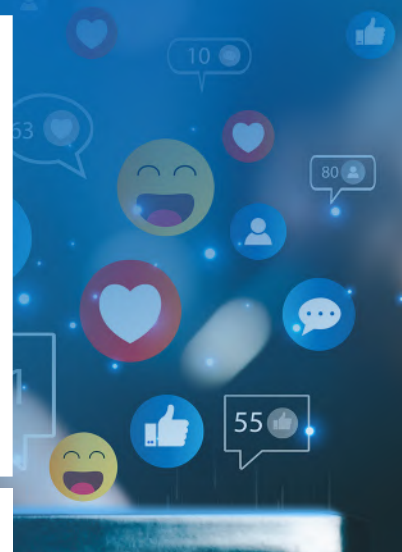
In a world where success is increasingly measured in views and followers, the real test may be learning when to log off, refocus and remember the bigger goal because beyond the filters, captions and algorithms, there is still an assignment due, a future to build, and a life that exists far beyond the screen. 🌟



■ Nthabiseng Mbetoe, a second-year Policing student



■ Fana Ndlovu, a third-year Policing student



# Autumn Graduations





# Beyond the classroom:

## Where TUT students find identity, culture and community

By Katlego Ratshelola

Being a student isn't just about chasing grades, lectures and deadlines. It is also about growth, connection and discovering who you are beyond the classroom. As the saying goes "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," and for many students at TUT, joining a society is the perfect way to bring balance to campus life. From cultural groups to academic clubs and creative communities, these spaces offer more than just a break from studying, they create opportunities to build friendships, develop skills, and truly feel at home on campus.

Cultural groups/ societies are where students find their place. The Ahi Tivaneni Magaza Cultural Society, led by Ntalo Mashakeni a Bed Student in Soshanguve North Campus was founded in 2024 in TUT, it is a vibrant student led group Dedicated to celebrating and preserving their ship stronger culture on campus. Established with the visions of creating a space where students can embrace their cultural identity, the society promotes traditions through music, dance, language, and storytelling. It also fosters unity and inclusivity by welcoming students from diverse backgrounds to engage in cultural exchange. With a strong focus on community leadership and development and belonging, the society offers a supportive, family like environment through events, workshops, and social activities, A HI Tivaneni Magaza Continues to enrich campus life for empowering students to take pride in their heritage.

These cultural groups highlight diversity and more cultures are being represented. There is also that process students association which is co-founded and led by third year electrical engineering student Lily Nqata, stands out as a dynamic cultural society dedicated to celebrating and preserving Xhosa cultural heritage while fostering unity on campus. "Cultural societies are important because they promote inclusion, understanding, and respect amongst students from different backgrounds" says Nqata when asked about cultural groups' importance. More than just a cultural group XSA creates an inclusive space where students from all backgrounds can connect, learn, and engage with Xhosa traditions through vibrant events and shared experiences. Its uniqueness lies in the balance between cultural pride and openness, welcoming not only amaXhosa closer but anyone interested in embracing and understanding the culture. Through strong leadership, collaborative initiatives, and a full and a focus on community, essay continues to grow as a powerful platform for identity belonging and cultural exchange at TUT.

All the way from Limpopo students brings the Bapedi culture to life on Campus, with the Bapedi TUT society. This group made an appearance during the SAED orientation by rendering a thrilling performance, which not only highlighted the Bapedi culture but also the rising Lekompo movement. "Our presence ensures that indigenous culture is visible, appreciated, and celebrated within the academic space" said Kabelo Maphosa- co founder and secretary of the Bapedi cultural society. This group aims to collaborate with other student organizations to broaden cultural awareness and unity on campus.

To enhance your confidence and build your leadership skills, and to also have a family within campus that shares the same goals and visions as you. Students can join the Top junior group, provided by SAED and the SGLD. 🌟



■ Bapedi TUT Society



■ Xhosa Student Association - TUT Pretoria Campus



■ Kabelo Maphosa-Co founder and secretary of BTS

# Bridging Talent and Industry: Inside TUT's Content Creation Masterclass



■ Salvation- a creator and TUT alumna



■ Murendeni - film and television producer and\_creator



■ Mr Jack Sibanyoni

By Katlego Ratzhefola

On 15 April, the Directorate of Extracurricular Development hosted a dynamic content creation masterclass at the Pretoria Campus TV Hall at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). The event brought together students from across all TUT campuses, including the newly established Giyani Campus, marking a powerful moment of connection and growth within the institution's creative community.

The program opened with a performance by the TUT Choir, followed by a warm welcome from the Director of Extracurricular Development, Dr Ndayiheseni Albert Mbada. Words of support from Secretary-General Mmapule Mpelane further set an encouraging tone for the day.

The masterclass featured a strong line-up of industry voices and creatives who shared practical insights into the evolving world of content creation. Murendeni highlighted the vast potential of the African creative economy. "Africa is not just an emerging market; it is the new gold. In content creation, film and television, we are only at the beginning. The story of Africa has not even started yet," he said.

He led a session focused on developing an entrepreneurial mindset, emphasizing how creators can turn their content into sustainable businesses through niche identification, monetization and personal branding. He also noted that building an original brand and understanding one's target audience helps creators remain resilient in the face of challenges such as public scrutiny.

Breakout sessions explored key areas within the content ecosystem. Paballo M unpacked strategies for building and growing a digital platform. "Content creation has money, but you will not get it if you're doing it solely for the check," he said.

Rothe Penny focused on monetization and brand collaborations, sharing practical insights into how she generates income through advertising on her platforms. She encouraged aspiring creators to start with what they have. "You don't need fancy equipment to start your journey as a creator, especially on TikTok. Be consistent so that you stay on the algorithm," she said.

Salvation guided students through content strategy and storytelling, emphasizing the importance of authenticity and strong narratives in creating impactful content.

The program also featured engaging performances, including a

musical set by TUT Idols finalist Thembekile Mthembu and a poetry rendition by Success, adding a creative dimension to the learning experience.

A panel discussion later in the day brought together Paballo M, Rothe Penny and Salvation to unpack how creators can turn content into sustainable income. The session was followed by a Q&A, allowing students to engage directly with the speakers.

The masterclass concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr Jack Sibanyoni, leaving attendees inspired and equipped with valuable knowledge to navigate the content creation industry. 🎥



# Modern side hustles using scents and brushes

By Oratile Sekgee

**A**t Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), more students are exploring alternative ways to earn an income, recognising that relying on a single stream of income is increasingly risky in South Africa's uncertain economic climate and high unemployment rate.

For many students, side hustles are not only about making money but also about gaining practical skills and independence.

Pontsho Matsobane, a Diploma in Law student at the Soshanguve South Campus, has turned her passion for nails into a growing business. What began as a simple experiment quickly evolved into an opportunity. "This started as a joke, but when my sister saw my work, she said I could make money from doing people's nails," she said.

Matsobane invested in her business by sacrificing one month of her NSFAS meal allowance to purchase equipment. Her determination has paid off, as the business now provides her with extra income while also equipping her with skills beyond her academic field.

Similarly, Thobile Simelani, a final-year Journalism student at the Soshanguve North Campus, started her perfume business in her second year to achieve financial independence and cover travel costs related to her studies. "I had to do practical's in my second year, and I knew my parents would not be able to give me money to go cover stories," she said.

Simelani explained that her business is relatively flexible, as selling perfumes does not require constant attention. However, balancing academics and entrepreneurship remains a challenge. "I have learnt that it is all about balance when you are a student and have a business on the side," she added.

She also hopes to expand her business by introducing more products in the future, although she currently prioritises her studies.

The rise of student entrepreneurship reflects a broader shift among young people who are identifying gaps in the market and creating opportunities for themselves. While these ventures may not always replace full-time careers, they equip students with valuable skills such as financial management, problem-solving and adaptability.

Through businesses rooted in lifestyle and beauty, students like Matsobane and Simelani are not only generating income but also building a foundation for future success. 🌸

**"This started as a joke, but when my sister saw my work, she said I could make money from doing people's nails."**

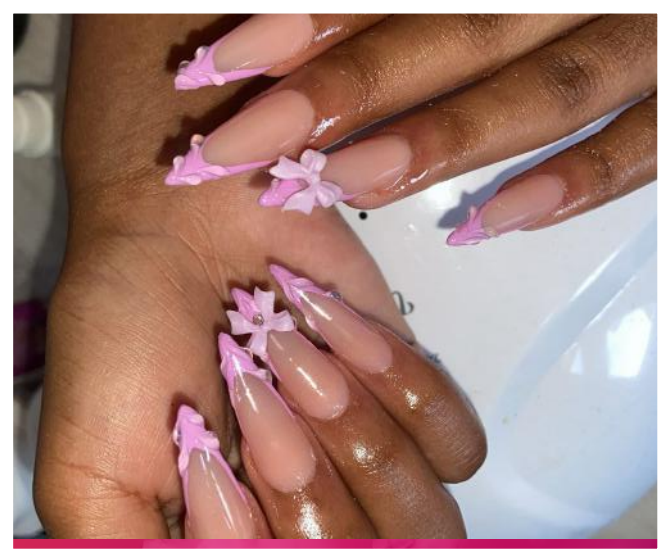
*Pontsho Matsobane*  
Diploma in Law



Spring vibe shown through nail art



Perfume collection for ladies



Nail art done by Pontsho Matsobane

# Behind the support:

## How SDS is addressing student mental health

By Kátlego Ratshefola

**S**tudent life often comes with pressures that extend far beyond the classroom. From anxiety and depression to challenges with relationships, identity, and adjusting to a new environment, many students find themselves navigating complex emotional and psychological struggles while trying to keep up with academic demands.

In response to these growing concerns, Student Development and Support (SDS) at Tshwane University of Technology plays a vital role in providing structured support and accessible counselling services aimed at promoting student wellbeing and helping learners cope, adjust and thrive within the campus environment.

When asked about patterns in who seeks support, counsellor Libona Blossom Bower noted that both female and male students approach SDS for counselling, although more female students tend to make use of the services. She explained that this trend is often influenced by broader systemic issues and aspects of campus culture that shape how students experience and respond to emotional distress.

In more severe cases, she highlighted that factors such as peer pressure, stigma and a general sense of shame can prevent students from seeking help early, often leading them to reach out only once their challenges have intensified.

One of the key challenges counsellors face within SDS is the limitation of their role. While they are trained to support, guide and help students navigate emotional and psychological difficulties, their scope does not extend beyond counselling. This means that although they can assist students dealing with issues such as anxiety and depression, they are not able to resolve external challenges like financial difficulties.

As a result, some students may leave sessions feeling more equipped to cope emotionally yet still face ongoing structural issues such as lack of funding, which remain beyond the counsellors' control.

SDS provides a range of structured support services designed to address the diverse needs of students beyond counselling. These include academic support services, career counselling, and psychometric assessments that help students better understand their strengths, abilities and personality profiles. The disability unit ensures that students with disabilities receive the necessary accommodations, while the language support team assists in developing communication and academic language skills. In addition, observation-based interventions help identify students who may be at risk and in need of early support.

“When you look at a student, you have to look at them holistically, beyond just the issue they present with,” said Bower. “Understanding a student’s academic, social and personal context allows us to provide meaningful and effective support.”

Students seeking assistance are encouraged to visit SDS offices on their respective campuses, follow their social media platforms, or access information through university newsletters. 🌐

**“Understanding a student’s academic, social and personal context allows us to provide meaningful and effective support.”**

*Libona Blossom Bower*

Counsellor



Miss Libona Bower

# "Carry the baton with pride": Remembering the birth of Bua Newspaper

By Lindokuhle Nkosi

Long before Bua Student Newspaper became a recognised voice on campus, it began as a simple idea, one rooted in opportunity, purpose and the determination to create space for student journalists.

For Baphelile Sambo, one of the founding members, that beginning was driven by a clear need. "Bua was born out of a need to support students, especially journalism students, who were struggling to secure opportunities for experiential learning outside the institution," she recalls.

What started as an initiative to equip students with practical skills quickly evolved into something far greater, a platform that would amplify student voices and shape campus conversations.

Sambo played a key role in those early days, contributing to the naming of the newspaper and serving as its first social media manager. "At the time, it didn't seem like much because everything was still small-scale," she says. "We were still acquiring furniture and cameras. But seeing the name in full print I was, and still am, in disbelief."

The journey to producing the first edition was far from easy. With a small team and limited resources, members had to take on multiple roles while ensuring the quality of their work met publication standards.

"One of the biggest challenges was making sure the stories were approved and worthy of the first publication," she explains. "That alone came with a lot of pressure."

Distribution itself became a mission. "We hand-delivered copies across departments and different locations because we knew the word had to get out. I even took copies home for my family and anyone I met."

When the first printed edition finally arrived, the moment was unforgettable. "It was a mixture of emotions, but more than anything, a deep sense of accomplishment. It felt like the sky was the limit."

The response from the campus community confirmed that their efforts had paid off. Students were curious, engaged and eager to see what Bua had to offer. Almost immediately, the publication began to establish itself as a trusted student platform.

Looking back, Sambo believes what made the first edition special was not perfection but passion. "For many of us, it was our first time working on a campus newspaper. We didn't necessarily have experience, but it showed what the institution could produce beyond the lecture room."

The experience also shaped her understanding of journalism. "Always verify your story, no matter how small it may seem. Every detail matters. And never take small beginnings for granted."

Today, Bua continues to grow, but its foundation remains rooted in the same mission, to serve students and give them a voice. For Sambo, its importance cannot be overstated. "It's crucial. It helps close the gap between students and management, and sometimes it even contributes to solving broader community issues."

Her message to the current generation of Bua journalists is simple, yet powerful: "Carry the baton and carry it with pride. Every skill you gain here becomes part of your toolkit, not just for the newsroom, but for life."

From humble beginnings to a legacy, Bua Newspaper stands as proof that student voices, when given a platform, can shape institutions and inspire generations to come. 🌟

**"Bua was born out of a need to support students, especially journalism students, who were struggling to secure opportunities for experiential learning outside the institution"**

*Baphelile Sambo*



# From Registration queues to policy tables: *The rise of Tshegofatso Malehodi*

By Lindokuhle Nkosi

**J**ust a few years ago, Tshegofatso Malehodi stood in long registration queues like many other students at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), uncertain of what the future held. Today, she sits in spaces where policies are shaped, conversations are led, and the voices of young people are amplified across the continent.

Her journey from student to Deputy Head of Education, Science and Technology at the Southern Africa Youth Forum is not just a story of success, but one of persistence, intentional growth and purpose.

"It started with small steps," she reflects. "I admired the work of leaders like Karabo Mohale and followed youth development opportunities closely. I kept applying, to SADC programmes, webinars, seminars, even when nothing came immediately." That consistency would eventually pay off.

Through platforms such as SAYoF and international youth engagements, Malehodi gradually found herself stepping into leadership roles, sometimes as a participant, other times as a facilitator. Her breakthrough came after participating in the Y20 programme focused on meaningful youth engagement and reforming global systems.

Her rise has not been without challenges. One of the issues she is most passionate about is accessibility in education, a barrier she believes continues to limit many young people. "Many matriculants struggle with APS requirements and access to higher education," she explains. "Some end up overlooking TVET colleges, yet these institutions offer practical skills that can be transformed into businesses and sustainable livelihoods."

Beyond South Africa, she points to funding as a major challenge across the SADC region, calling for stronger private sector involvement in supporting young leaders. At the heart of her journey is a clear sense of purpose. "I don't do things to chase clout," she says. "I believe in making long-term impact and contributing to something bigger than myself." That mindset was shaped early on.

Raised in a home where belief and discipline were constant, Malehodi credits her parents for instilling confidence and resilience. "I was always reminded that I am capable, that where I come from does not define how far I can go."

**"I was always reminded that I am capable, that where I come from does not define how far I can go."**

*Tshegofatso Malehodi*

She also draws inspiration from global moderator and journalist Nozipho Tshabalala, whose work continues to influence her perspective on leadership and communication.

Like many students, Malehodi's academic journey was not without setbacks. She faced the possibility of academic exclusion during her Diploma studies and later repeated a module during her Advanced Diploma, but instead of stepping back, she leaned in.

During that period, she took on leadership roles, became a regular voice on campus radio, and even secured start-up funding through competitions. "Nothing in my journey was wasted," she says. "Every setback shaped me into who I am today."

Her advice to students is direct and unapologetic: "Be selfish with your growth. Invest in yourself, protect your values, and seek guidance when you need it."

As for her legacy, Malehodi is clear. "I want to be remembered as a girl from a rural and township background who dared to dream, competed with the best, and came back to empower the communities she comes from." It is a vision rooted not just in ambition, but in impact. 🌍



# Tshwane University of Technology celebrates **World Book Day to inspire a new generation of writers**

By Oyama Gongo

The Directorate of Extracurricular Development (DED) hosted World Book Day at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) on 23 April 2026 at the Soshanguve South Campus. The event served as a vibrant platform to promote a culture of reading, writing, and artistic expression among young creatives, particularly those passionate about writing, poetry, and drama.

World Book Day was established by UNESCO on 23 April 1993 with the aim of promoting reading, publishing, and the protection of intellectual property through copyright. The global observance also encourages a deeper appreciation of books and authorship as essential tools for education and cultural development.

One of the highlights of the event was an inspiring session led by Calvin Mogajana, an award-winning author and radio presenter at TUT. Mogajana, who is visually impaired, shared his personal journey of overcoming adversity to establish himself in the literary world. His story of resilience and determination deeply resonated with students, many of whom aspire to pursue careers in writing and storytelling.

The programme featured engaging discussions and motivational talks aimed at empowering students to pursue their literary ambitions. Speakers emphasised storytelling as a powerful tool for self-expression, education, and social change. Students were also encouraged to take ownership of their creative work and understand the importance of intellectual property protection.

Attendees also benefited from insights shared by Zimbili Hleleni, a TUT student scriptwriter and member of the university's book club. Her presence reinforced the message that creativity and success are attainable for students from all backgrounds, regardless of their current stage in life.

Dr Shibambu from the Legal Department at the Soshanguve Campus delivered an informative session on copyright law. He cautioned aspiring authors about the importance of protecting their work.

**“To future authors, I would like to emphasise the importance of copyright. Protecting your work is not being selfish; it is being cautious against those who are always ready to claim other people’s hard work as their own,” said Dr Shibambu.**

He further explained that while individuals may draw inspiration from existing work, proper citation must always be practiced when referencing or quoting authors.

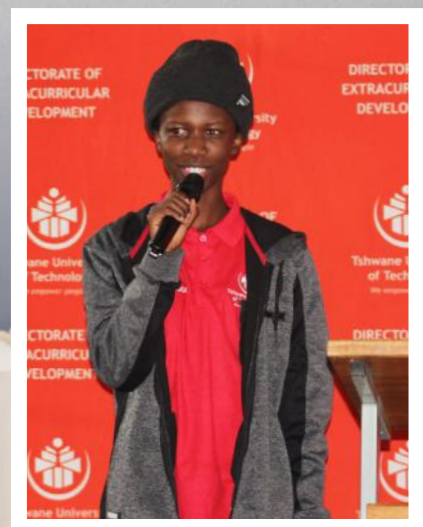
The event was not only educational but also highly motivational, reminding students that their voices matter and that their stories deserve to be told and protected. It reinforced the message that their passion for writing is valid, valuable, and worth pursuing. 🌟



■ Zimbili Hleleni a student, a script writer, also part of book club and book club and drama society under DED



■ DR Shibambu from the Law clinic



■ DR Shibambu from the Law clinic

