

## NEWSLETTER

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### Celebrating the successful launch of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project



The College of Law at the University of South Africa (Unisa) proudly celebrated the successful launch of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project on 19 September 2023. This momentous occasion took place at the Bamboo Auditorium in the Kgorong Building on Unisa's Muckleneuk campus in Pretoria. It brought together distinguished guests and influential stakeholders, including



representatives from Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs), officials from Community Corrections offices in Gauteng, esteemed scholars and notable guests,

including Mr Phiko Mbambo, the Chief Deputy Commissioner of Community Corrections and international guest speaker, Prof Amira Paripurna from the Faculty of Law at Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia.



The launch event was orchestrated with precision and passion, guided by the capable hands of the programme director, Advocate Unathi Poyo, a member of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' project team. The day's programme was filled with inspirational moments, shared experiences and a collective vision for positive change.

The event commenced with a heartfelt prayer by Mrs Phola Mokgethi from Behind and Beyond Bars, a Christian-based NPO with a mission to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders into society. Mrs Mokgethi's moving words reminded us of the importance of second chances and

the potential for change, even among those who have made mistakes. She stressed the need for collaboration between the Department of Correctional Services, NPOs and Unisa to create a better South Africa that restores the lives of both victims and offenders.

Dr Lebogang Morodi, Director of the School of Criminal Justice at the College of Law, set the stage with a warm welcome address. He emphasised Unisa's role as a pillar of quality education and the institution's dedication to addressing societal issues. Dr Morodi highlighted the significance of the engaged scholarship project in bridging academic knowledge with community needs.

The event continued with enlightening speeches from esteemed speakers, including one by Mr Macdonald Rammala from the College of Law, who eloquently defined engaged scholarship as a powerful bridge between academia and real-world challenges faced by communities. He emphasised that academia's responsibility extends beyond publications to actively engaging with and enriching communities. He commended the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' project for embodying this ethos. The dynamic duo, Dr Francois Louw and Prof Kevin Sibanyoni, project leaders, provided an insightful overview of 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' and revealed

exciting collaborations with Community Corrections offices in the pipeline. They outlined their vision of building strong relationships with communities, combating the stigmatisation of offenders, and enhancing rehabilitation and offender employability. Their innovative approach involves interdisciplinary collaboration, community service programmes and curriculum development aligned with industry needs. Advocating for second chances and recognising the potential for positive change, the project promises a brighter future for those yearning to rebuild their lives.



Dr Louw and Prof Sibanyoni posing with the Tshokollo ya Setshabeng banner.

The event also featured presentations by dedicated individuals from NPOs, such as Mr Nkagare Makhudu from Morongwa Foundation and Ms Yoliswa Keswa from Imbokodo Support for Restorative Justice

and Reintegration. Their passionate commitment to offender rehabilitation and community development left a profound impact on everyone present. Mr Makhudu emphasised the societal responsibility of offender rehabilitation, underscoring the need for collaboration beyond the Department of Correctional Services. He conveyed the foundation's mission to drive community development, empower youth and facilitate the reintegration of rehabilitated offenders. Ms Keswa shared her journey and her organisation's work in restorative justice integration in communities, victim-offender dialogue and mediation. She highlighted that they are also providing counselling services to several schools in Gauteng.

A special highlight of the event was the address by Prof Amira Paripurna from Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia. Prof Paripurna shared valuable insights into community participation in offender rehabilitation, stressing the need for global collaboration to address the challenges faced by correctional services worldwide.





**From left to right: Prof Kevin Sibanyoni, Mr Macdonald Rammala, Prof Amira Paripurna, Mr Nkagare Makhudu, Ms Yoliswa Keswa, Dr Francois Louw, Dr Lebogang Morodi, and Prof Phumudzo Muthaphuli.**

As the day concluded, Prof Thabiso Matshaba's closing remarks praised the project's progress and highlighted the importance of second chances and community support in the journey of offender rehabilitation. His sentiments echoed the day's spirit - a celebration of collaboration, empathy and unwavering commitment to social betterment. Prof Phumudzo Muthaphuli, Chair of the Department Corrections Management, College of Law, delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks, acknowledging the dedication of all participants and reaffirming Unisa's commitment to empowering communities through informed and collaborative initiatives.



**Pictured, from left, are Prof Phumudzo Muthaphuli, Prof Thabiso Matshaba, Prof Kevin Sibanyoni, Ms Neo Masemene, Mr Joseph Hlatshwayo, Dr Francois Louw, Ms Nomalanga Mnisi, Dr Aaron Labane, and Ms Tandiwe Mdlungu.**

The launch of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project marks a significant milestone in the ongoing effort to positively impact the lives of parolees and ex-offenders. It is a reminder that change is possible and with determination, compassion and collaboration, we can build a more inclusive and rehabilitative society.

## Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng's heartfelt gesture brightens lives at Kalafong Hospital

In a heartwarming display of compassion and community spirit, members of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project, in partnership with the Morongwa Foundation, brought hope to those in need at a mental health awareness event held at the Kalafong Hospital Psychiatric Unit on 25 October 2023. This event was orchestrated by the Morongwa Foundation in collaboration with the Kalafong Provincial Tertiary Hospital Psychiatric Unit as part of their ongoing efforts to raise awareness about mental health care and encourage in-kind donations to support individuals facing mental health challenges.

Foundation, members of the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project stepped up in a profound way. They selflessly donated an old television set and essential toiletries for both male and female in-patients at the Hospital's Psychiatric Unit. This act of kindness reflects the unwavering commitment of 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng.' Their generous donation goes beyond their core mission, which is to build strong relationships with communities, eliminate the stigmatisation of offenders through restorative community service, and enhance offender employability and skills development.



In the spirit of giving back to the community and supporting their partner, the Morongwa

The generosity displayed by the 'Tshokollo ya Setšhabeng' Engaged Scholarship Project is a testament to the incredible impact that a united community can have. It showcases the profound difference that can be made when individuals come together with a shared vision of a brighter, more compassionate future. Their

selfless act serves as an inspiration, reminding us all that every small effort counts, and together, we can transform lives.