

REPORT OF THE VICE-RECTOR (COMMUNITY INTERACTION AND PERSONNEL)

THE COMMUNITY INTERACTION AND PERSONNEL (CI&P) CENTRE OF RESPONSIBILITY, A RELATIVELY NEW MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO, WAS IN A PHASE OF CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR UNDER REVIEW.

The majority of the actions in this regard fared so well that the University has established itself as a national leader in terms of Community Interaction, and has established staff wellness as an integral part of its human resource management. In the year reported on here, this centre of responsibility thus could make a significant contribution to the realisation of Vision 2012 and the preparation for the next phase, the period until 2015.

While the routine pursuit of excellence and effective service rendering was continued, focused attention was paid to the implementation of the two projects for the Overarching Strategic Plan (OSP), continued diversification of the staff corps and the promotion of role playing, specifically with the objective of promoting the sustainability of the University.

PROJECTS FOR THE OVERARCHING STRATEGIC PLAN (OSP) TAKE SHAPE

The detailed planning for the OSP project, Youth Sport Initiative, was completed, including both the building of the facility (*the Soccer Centre*) and the model (*the Soccer Academy*). To supplement the funds provided by the University, a number of fundraising and financing initiatives were undertaken and the prospects are good that the University will be able to contribute to youth development, the identification of talent and the creation of opportunities in a sustainable manner by way of this project. A solid foundation for cooperation between the relevant academic and support service sectors has already gained shape.

The second OSP project, namely Staff Wellness, has already progressed beyond the planning phase and various initiatives and implementation actions were undertaken in 2009. These include the establishment of a Campus Health Service and the consolidation of and staff provisioning for a Wellness Unit in the Human Resources Division. The taking into use of the extended and upgraded medical facilities, the implementation of the system to serve students and staff, as well as initiatives such as Wellness Days, met with approval from the campus community. Sufficient budget provision has already been made for the continuation of the project once the funding from the European Union ends. Together with the routine attempts by the Division for Human Resources to continuously improve remuneration, the recognition of excellent performance and incentive measures, the Wellness Project should make a big contribution to ensuring the sustainability of the University by maintaining a healthy and valued staff corps. Just as the recruitment of excellent staff is of great importance, so is the retention of such staff.

Although it is not part of the OSP project, but supplementary to it, the HIV strategy of the University has grown from a one-dimensional medical service to a fully-fledged institutional strategy. This strategy has led to the establishment of a sustainable, well-equipped unit that has a big impact on campus and has helped to reposition the University as an institution that makes a significant contribution to dealing with the HIV issue in South Africa.

DIVERSIFICATION OF THE STAFF CORPS

The promotion of staff diversification remains an immense challenge. In addition to the initiatives and strategies that were followed in the past, the Legacy Project, which focuses

on the appointment and promotion of black and coloured staff, has started having a clear impact. Furthermore, an institutional plan was compiled that is aimed at ensuring high visibility and high impact with regard to the promotion of opportunities for women. This project, which arose from the University's signing of the Declaration on Women in Higher Education, should make a considerable contribution to the gearing up of staff diversification by 2015. In addition to the promotion of racial and gender equality, the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities has also enjoyed high priority, with the Director: Employment Equity and the Promotion of Diversity collaborating closely with Staff Wellness and the Office of Students with Special Learning Needs (*Disabilities*). In order to contribute to a receptive campus environment, the Director: Employment Equity and the Promotion of Diversity was also involved in a series of courageous conversations.

During 2009, comprehensive staff plans were compiled by each faculty and support service environment for the first time in order to bring about sustainability and appropriate planning on top managerial level. These plans were interpreted by the Division for Human Resources and will in future form the foundation for talks and decision making on a spectrum of staff-related matters.

COMMUNITY INTERACTION (CI) CREATES RELEVANCE

It is of considerable importance that the relevance and social responsibility of the University are extended continuously. In this regard, the promotion of Community Interaction (CI) by the division of the same name continued with rapid strides.

At the institutional level, the Community Interaction Committee of Senate met according to the planning in the University almanac and supervised the community interaction function in the institutional context. Faculty structures managed the function in the faculty context. The University's CI policy was subjected to a thorough and participatory review process in 2009 and the final documents were submitted to the appropriate management bodies for final approval. This revision formed part of a quality improvement plan that was compiled in response to the recommendations regarding CI made by the Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education on the basis of their audit.

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We continued to make available incentives for CI in the form of financial support for approved CI flagship projects and the Rector's Award for Excellence in Community Interaction, which consists of a certificate and a significant cash amount equivalent to the award for research.

Furthermore, the Short Programme on Service-learning and Community Engagement (*SPLSCE*), a credit-bearing short course aimed at building the capacity of academics with regard to service learning and community interaction, was presented by the Division for Community Interaction for the first time during 2009. This course will eventually articulate with a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education and the MPhil in Higher Education. The annual Teaching and Learning Conference of the Centre for Teaching and Learning (*CTL*) now also includes a fixed focus on service learning. An important discussion, titled "Does SU educate public good professionals?", was presented by the Division for Community Interaction in collaboration with *CTL*. All three Vice-Rectors, as well as senior academics, took part in this discussion.

This year, the Division for Community Interaction, in collaboration with the Division for Research Development, the Sustainability Institute, the Stellenbosch Municipality and community partners started conceptualising Science and Community initiatives and two pilot programmes were presented successfully. An application was directed to the Legacy Fund to finance a joint appointment between the Division for Research Development and the Division for Community Interaction that will focus on providing policy support for government departments.

The institutional CI database was completely redesigned and upgraded in a collaborative effort between the Division for Community Interaction, Information Technology and an external consultant. The marketing of CI at the University was continued by way of a dynamic website, branded CI items (*website, candles, umbrellas, brochures and T-shirts*), as well as extensive exposure in the internal and external media.

Events to celebrate the national days were also continued. In 2009, celebrations were arranged by the Division for Community Interaction in cooperation with other University divisions for Human Rights Day, Youth Day, Freedom Day, Women's Day and Heritage Day. Support was also provided to student structures to extend the volunteer service. The year also saw the Division for Community Interaction taking over the facilities management of the old Lückhoff School in Banghoek Avenue.

At the local or town level, the Rector-Mayor Forum, which executes the memorandum of understanding between the University and the Stellenbosch Municipality, met sporadically. The management and coordination of forum activities at the University was dealt with partially by the Division for Community Interaction. The Senior Director: Community Interaction played an active, leading role in the continuous functioning of *SWDCC (Stellenbosch Welfare and Development Coordination Committee)*, the Discussion Group for Emerging Businesspeople, the Task Team on Social Cohesion and the Lückhoff Task Team.

A second phase of the permanent photo exhibition at the Lückhoff School was completed successfully. The photographic exhibition received first prize in a national competition held by Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education (*MACE*). A framework for interaction with schools was established during the year in cooperation with local school principals and the Circuit Team Leader of the Western Cape Education Department.

At the regional level there was active participation in the Cape Higher Education Consortium (*CHEC*), which comprises all four universities in the Western Cape. *CHEC* has formal partnership agreements with the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Provincial Government. University staff were involved in a variety of working groups that function within the framework of these partnerships. Since the beginning of 2009, the management and coordination of *CHEC* activities at the University was handled by the Division for Community Interaction.

At the national level the University played a leading role in the establishment of the realisation of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (*SAHECEF*). At its launch, the Forum expressed special acknowledgement of the leading role played by the Vice-Rector (*Community Interaction and Personnel*) in this regard, and the Senior Director: Community Interaction was elected chair of this national body after its formal constitution. In 2009, the Senior Director: Community Interaction was also invited as one of only five university representatives nationwide to serve on the first panel for CI of the National Research Foundation (*NRF*).

At the international level, the University became a member of the Talloires Network, a respected international network of socially responsive universities. The Senior Director: Research and the Senior Director: Community Interaction were part of a *CHEC* study tour to Barcelona in October 2009 to study the functioning of the knowledge economy and knowledge transfer there, with the aim of introducing these learning experiences at the University in collaboration with *InnovUS*. In November 2009, seven SU staff presented papers at the third International Symposium on Service-Learning (*ISSL*) in Athens, Greece. The delegation included the Senior Director: Community Interaction and the Deputy Director: Service Learning. The conference costs of the other University staff were partially sponsored by the Division for Community Interaction.

Regarding role playing, the University developed a suitable model that is not just sustainable by itself, but also contributes to a demonstration of the importance of the University as a local, regional, national and continental institution.

The year under review was a challenging yet fulfilling one during which focused planning and purposeful implementation by this centre of responsibility made a significant contribution to the sustainability of the University on the way to 2015.