



Word From The Administrator 

Prof Blade Nzimande officially opens Ikhala TVET College Engineering Campus



RESOLUTE: Prof Blade Nzimande addressing community members, students and learners from various schools in Sterkspruit.

“To burn and destroy education infrastructure is counter revolutionary”- Prof Nzimande

Written by
Tshepo Boshiane

The Sterkspruit community in the Eastern Cape is now set and ready to add to the development and training of the country's scarce-skills workforce of engineers and artisans.

This comes after the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation Prof Blade Nzimande on Thursday, 18 April 2024, officially opened and handed over a newly built state of the art Engineering Campus of Ikhala TVET college.

Speaking on behalf of the Minister in the

Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ms Maropene Ramokgopa, Mr Tembile Yako said the government is tirelessly working towards realising the National Development Plan 2030 vision.

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The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Administrator, Mr Freeman Nomvalo, convened an urgent meeting with the leadership of the South African Technical Vocational Education and Training Student Association (SATVETSA) on the 23rd April 2024. The meeting dealt with students' increased unhappiness with the delays in the payment or non-payment of allowances, as well as the disappearance of allowances in students' accounts. In this meeting, the students expressed serious concerns about the efficacy of the current mode of disbursing allowances.

NSFAS has devised a payment mechanism to address these ongoing challenges with the assistance of its banker which will be implemented for the payments that are due at the end of May 2024. In terms of the mechanism, NSFAS will distribute allowances directly to students' bank accounts.

All TVET students who do not have bank accounts are encouraged to open bank accounts with banks of their own choice. The scheme will communicate to all NSFAS beneficiaries requesting them to update their details to enable the smooth implementation of this direct payment mechanism.

NSFAS is aware of the persistent challenges experienced by some students on the April allowances which have already been disbursed. The scheme has deployed senior NSFAS officials and servicing administrators to all affected institutions to address these challenges. NSFAS is also attending to the challenges of students who may have not received their allowances so that the new mechanism is not burdened by legacy issues.

NSFAS is equally mindful of challenges experienced by university students; however, this direct payment mechanism will currently be applicable to TVET college students. University students will continue to receive their allowance through their institutions until the end of July 2024.

Students who were paid on the direct payment platform until April, should continue to use those funds. The new arrangement is only from May onwards; more communication will be sent on the off-boarding process.

The NSFAS Administrator assures all NSFAS-funded students that the scheme, in arriving at any decision, will put the interest of students first. This will be done by providing equitable access to financial and other resources for eligible students in an efficient, transparent, and professional student-centric manner.

This week's Highlights

CPUT honours the late and former NSFAS employee Vuyani Mtshikana - On Monday, 22 April 2024, during the Autumn Graduations, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) conferred and honoured Mr Vuyani Mtshikana with a (Posthumous) Magister Technologist in Business Administration certificate.

Vuyani, who was affectionately known as 'Vee' or 'Vido', worked under Business Operations at the Contact Centre Service Unit.

He passed on February 06, 2022.



Call to action: Former NSFAS beneficiaries

Take the First Step Today! Begin repaying your NSFAS loans and pave the way for future students.

Your contribution matters – let's make quality education accessible to all. **Start Now!**

Remember, every payment counts, no matter how small it!



Name of Account: NSFAS
Branch Code: 210554
Bank: First National Bank
Account Number: 500 600 28203
Ref Number: Must be the debtor's ID NUMBER

For any enquiries, beneficiaries are encouraged to contact the NSFAS Contact Centre Mondays to Fridays from 08H00 - 17H00 on telephone number 0800 067327 or email collections@nsfas.org.za.

Sterkspruit community in Eastern Cape handed over with engineering campus of Ikhala TVET college

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“The minister asked me to assure you that she will support the higher education department in engaging treasury for the development of more TVET colleges,” he added.

Ms Pamela Majodina (Member of Parliament), appealed to students and leaners to preserve the campus, as it will grant them the opportunity to lead the country through theory and practice.

Prof Blade Nzimande expressed the importance of ensuring equal footing between rural areas and urban areas. “If you teach one learner in the rural area, you have taught the whole community. Please look after this building. To burn and destroy education infrastructure, is counter revolutionary,” the minister appealed to students.

The minister further indicated that TVET colleges should be institutions of choice, and SETAs should ensure that they assist in expanding programmes within the institution.

As a token of appreciation following the official handover and opening of the engineering campus, Prof Nzimande was then handed over with a blanket from the Tribal Authority by Chief Nkopane.

This year, NSFAS will be funding 1,311,945 students.

IN PICTURES: Ikhala TVET college engineering campus opening and handover



Minister’s Hand-over Projects

- Free State: Opening of the National Artisan Development Academy in Bloemfontein
- Limpopo: Official hand over of the computer lab & agricultural site
- KwaZulu Natal: Mkhuze Skills Centre Launch
- Eastern Cape: Opening of Ikhala TVET College, Sterkspruit Engineering Campus, Sterkspruit

Upcoming Projects

- North West: Computer lab handover, Naledi Primary School in Ottosdal
- Limpopo: Opening of Skills Development centre, Sekhukhune TVET college Groblersdal

Portfolio Committee on Higher Education concerned about NSFAS inefficiencies, but welcomes minister’s intervention

“Investigations into allegations of corruption currently underway should continue, and that all those implicated in alleged corruption be investigated” - Ms Nompandolo Mkhathswa

Written by
Tshepo Boshiane

The Portfolio Committee on Higher Education has expressed grave concerns over recent inefficiencies of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) relating to the management and daily administration of the of scheme.

However, the committee’s Chairperson, Ms Nompandolo Mkhathswa; welcomed Minister Blade Nzimande’s intervention of dissolving the NSFAS Board and placing the scheme under administration.

“Under this Board, NSFAS has been unable to effectively and efficiently discharge its mandate of disbursing funds to students and has also failed to timeously table in Parliament annual reports for two financial years, 2021/22 and 2022/23, respectively,” Ms Mkhathswa said.

Adding to this, the committee has also noted the challenges around the student accommodation pilot project, the instability in some of the intuitions due to



Portfolio Committee on Higher Education Chairperson: Ms Nompandolo Mkhathswa

unpaid allowances, and most importantly; that it is not the first time that NSFAS is being placed under administration.

“The Auditor-General has raised concerns regarding NSFAS’ over-reliance on consultants, which indicates that the staff is not skilled enough to perform the work or there are

serious capacity challenges within the organisation” the Chairperson added.

The committee has therefore since called on the minister to consider conducting a skills audit of the NSFAS staff, and that performance management be implemented without fear or favour.

Another call to the minister was that he ensures that all investigations into allegations of corruption currently underway should continue, and that all those implicated in alleged corruption be investigated; even when they are no longer employed by NSFAS.

The committee concluded by requesting for the implementation of the Werkmans Investigative Report recommendations.

I’m a NSFAS TINTSWALO...and this is my story:



Whilst pondering on what to write about my story of being funded by the National Students Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS the walk down memory lane evoked some mixed emotions about the encounters of the past. My mother died whilst giving birth to my younger brother. Years later, my only beacon of hope, my father, greeting this world during a fatal accident where their employer's boat capsized in the Indian Ocean declaring me an orphan.

I am one of those children who worked as a taxi guard on the roads of Mdantsane during weekends and holidays to ensure I could meet the minimum needs of the schooling week. This was not without emotional harm as people have mistaken me for anything that fits their idea of this kind of work or hustle. For me, it was a step closer to influencing the direction of my future.

After completing my matric, I took a leap of faith and hitchhiked on a taxi to Cape Town, the city with the seventh wonder of the world, Table Mountain. For me, it was not about sumitting on this beautiful mountain. It was seeing myself at the precipice of a more complex mountain called life which only education could guarantee.

The realisation that there was an instrument in the form of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) not only asserted the prospects of my future but also inspired in me a commitment to serve others in the like manner that I have received support from this noble institution of our state. I am more than convinced that had it not been for the progressive nature of our policies, I too wouldn't be so privileged to share this happy ending.

Today, I am a father to both my son and my brothers, and most importantly, a proud public servant under the name of this very organisation that paid for my dreams. Every time my peers complain about those abrupt calls that would end a weekend on a Friday as I am called for duty by my line managers, I respond without complaining knowing that I am playing my part in creating access to dreams through education. Today should not be about celebrating figures and milestones, it should be about stories like mine, for which every one of you, is responsible for.

In a nutshell, I am proud to say that NSFAS changed my life, I now have 3 degrees Ed Further Education and Training Specialisation that was funded by NSFAS at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, BA Honours also funded by NSFAS through contractual studies at the University of the Western Cape and lastly a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Administration at the University of South Africa, funded by NSFAS through contractual studies.

- Athenkosi Nyangiwe

Frequently Asked Questions
#SA Elections 2024

GET READY TO VOTE
#SAelections24

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MAY

Can I vote if I can't get to my voting station on Election Day because I'm heavily pregnant?

If you can't get to your voting station on Election Day for National and Provincial elections because you're heavily pregnant, you can apply for a special vote.

Can I vote if I'm registered but am now in prison?

Yes, you can vote in national and provincial elections as long as you have your valid, green, bar-coded ID and you are registered to vote. Check your voter registration status online to confirm that your name appears on the voters' roll.

Can I vote if I'm registered but have lost my ID with the sticker in it?

Yes, just get a Temporary Identity Certificate (TIC) that will be valid on election day. You can apply for your TIC at the Department of Home Affairs. Please also check your registration details and confirm that your name appears on the voters' roll (check your voter registration status online). You can re-register if necessary, as you must be on the voters' roll to vote

Can I vote if I will be in another town or province on election day?

National and Provincial Elections:

You need to vote at the voting station where you're registered to vote. However, if you're outside of your voting district on Election Day you may vote at another voting station in South Africa. If you're outside the province where you registered, you'll only be able to vote in the national election and not the provincial election, and you'll be asked to complete a VEC 4 form at the voting station.

Municipal Elections and By-Elections:

You need to vote at the voting station at which you're registered.

Can I vote if I'm in hospital?

If you're bedridden or in hospital and can't get to your voting station on Election Day for National and Provincial elections, you can apply for a special vote.

Please see special votes for details.

Librarians pave a clear career path for Learners in Khayelitsha

Written by
Anele Ntswayi

On Thursday, 18 April 2024, librarians in Khayelitsha made a significant impact on high school learners by guiding them on their career paths.

The community librarians led by the ward councillor Mr Ayanda Nteta has come together to support and empower learners through this initiative. With the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) serving as the educational backbone for many learners in disadvantaged communities, the involvement of librarians adds an extra layer of support and mentorship to the young and fresh minds who were present at the event.

A grade 11 learner led the South African (SA) National Anthem which was a beautiful display of patriotism and that was followed by a beautiful performance of Theatre by one of the library staff members who also highlighted the importance of voting in his performance. The whole group of school learners was captivated by these powerful displays of talent and passion. The atmosphere was filled with a sense of unity and pride as everyone came together to celebrate our country and the value of civic participation.

This event served as a reminder of the importance of our democratic rights "right to education" as highlighted in Section 29 of the SA Constitution and responsibilities. Librarians played a crucial role in facilitating access to resources and information, which is essential for students' academic success. By providing guidance and assistance in navigating the vast sea of knowledge, librarians empower students to become critical thinkers and independent learners. Moreover, librarians also serve as mentors, offering guidance and



Hungry for knowledge: Learners from various schools listening attentively to NSFAS officials.

support to students facing various challenges in their educational journey.

NSFAS is available to alleviate the financial burdens of learner from the disadvantaged communities. The scheme understands the importance of providing support through funding to

students who are pursuing their education. NSFAS aims to ensure that no eligible student is prevented from furthering their studies due to a lack of funds and information.

By offering loans and bursaries, NSFAS enables students to pay for their tuition

The right Career path is about GOD's plan for your life, and funding

Written by
Anele Ntswayi

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) attended the event organised by the Grace Bible Church on Saturday, 20 April 2024.

The purpose of the event was to educate high school learners from Gugulethu about the significance of balancing life skills to guide them towards the right career paths.

This initiative aimed to provide them with valuable insights and knowledge to make informed decisions about their future.

The organisers had put in great efforts to ensure a well-structured program that catered to the diverse interests and aspirations of the learners.

"It is worth balancing spiritual gifts and natural talents when considering one's goals and aspirations in life. While spiritual gifts are often seen as innate abilities bestowed upon an individual by a higher power, natural talents are skills and abilities that are developed through practice and experience," said the Pastor of the Grace Bible Church.

He added that both spiritual gifts and natural talents can play a significant role in shaping a person's path and

contributing to their overall success and fulfilment.

The Pastor said by recognising and embracing these gifts and talents, individuals can harness their unique strengths and use them to make a positive impact on their chosen career path.

The NSFAS provides money to citizens who want to enhance their education by enrolling in programs offered by public institutions of higher learning. The goal is to strengthen the economy of this country.

To achieve the best results, it is recommended to choose a vocation that one enjoys and is capable of excelling in.

