

LESSONS LEARNT FROM FUNDISA AND SANSA SYMPOSIUM

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The Forum for University Deans in South Africa (FUNDISA) and the South African Nursing Students' Association (SANSa) hosted a three-day annual symposium at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) from 29 June to 1 July 2016. The theme of the symposium was extracted from SANSa: **S** (Sensitivity and Sensing), **A** (Attitude), **N** (Nursing), **S** (Solutions) and **A** (Assurance). The aim of the symposium was to empower young student nurses to achieve excellence in leadership as well as developing positive minds and perspectives about the prestigious nursing profession. The symposium was attended by 40 nursing students from 13 South African universities. The symposium was officially opened by the NMMU Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, Prof. Andrew Leitch. 'Fundamental laws remain, but the application (decolonisation) is what matters. Have fun and link with all other stakeholders,' he said.

The symposium featured numerous expert speakers in the nursing profession such as Prof. Klopper, Prof. Jordan, Prof. Pretorius, Dr Baboo, Dr Mokoka, Prof. Ricks, Dr



Williams. Different nursing careers and admissions requirements were presented at the symposium. They include primary health care (PHC) and community health, critical care, advanced midwifery, nephrology, theatre, advanced psychiatric nursing, academic field and research. Furthermore, all 13 universities had nursing students who prepared a five-minute presentation about their respective nursing departments, the structure of learning and how nurses engage with the communities around them. The University of the Witwatersrand won the first position, leading the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University with one point, as they became second on the rank. Prizes were given to both universities. Interestingly, the presenter for the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University was a first-year student, Ms Matumelo Motaung. On the third day of the symposium, topics such as the legacy of Florence Nightingale, informed consent, blood and organ donation and racism in hospitals were debated by the nursing students.

As nursing students of the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University, we learnt a lot from the symposium. We believe that SANSA is the right platform for all the nursing students of the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University to display personal excellence, creativity and well-built professional nursing capacity through different learning and acting activities. We have nothing to lose but everything to gain.

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