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UCT aid helping students to change their future

“Thanks to Financial Aid, the anxiety about paying my fees was lifted,” says UCT student

With only a week left until applications for university admission close, the challenge has just begun for most students, as they contemplate ways to finance their studies. The financial difficulty of attaining education is an issue that the University of Cape Town is aware of. With over R440 million distributed annually, UCT together with donors, corporate companies and government partners, provides substantial assistance to financially disadvantaged students and families across South Africa.

Today, thanks to UCT’s Financial Aid, Eastern Cape-born Noluyolo Ngomani is on her way to graduating with a degree in Film and Media Production. Noluyolo grew up in a single-parent household. When she passed matric, she was anxious about being granted admission to university, but even more worried about financing her studies.

“My mom is a single parent and I wasn’t sure she could afford my university fees. So when I heard about UCT Financial Aid, I immediately applied. Because of UCT Financial Aid, the anxiety of financing her studies was lifted and Noluyolo is able to focus on acquiring the knowledge and skills she needs to help others tell their stories. “Now in my final year, I wouldn’t have got this far without UCT Financial Aid.”

But, financing university study is not only about being able to pay for tuition and books; there are other incidental costs that students must contend with, including health and wellness. Students on UCT Financial Aid receive free consultation at the campus’s Student Wellness Centre.

Dr Max Price, the Vice-Chancellor of UCT, says: “We know many of the best students can come from families that will find it difficult or impossible to pay for a university education. These are students who can become the next generation of engineers, health practitioners, actuarial scientists, astronomers, lawyers, political scientists, opera stars, musicians, writers, teachers, mathematicians, researchers and university professors – the people who will help

South Africa to grow and prosper. If you have been accepted to study at UCT, finances should not stop you from changing your future.”

Through the Financial Aid “Change your future” marketing campaign, the university is making efforts to spread the message about available funding as well as to assist students with the application process. The national campaign will run across various media platforms including social media via a Facebook Application as well as on Twitter.

Learners and potential students can also download UCT Financial Aid application forms at www.uct.ac.za, or telephone 021 650 3545. Applications for 2014 undergraduate studies at UCT close on 30 September 2013, while UCT Financial Aid applications for 2014 close on 31 October 2013. Late applications will not be accepted.

About UCT Financial Aid

Launched in December 2012, UCT’s enhanced Financial Aid policy will make more funds available to a larger number of students to cover more needs. For most programmes at UCT, the total cost of study – including tuition, books, food allowance, housing, local travel and other necessities – comes to about R80,000 a year. But with UCT Financial Aid, the family might be required to make a family contribution of as little as R1,000 a year, provided that the family income is less than R50,000 a year.

A student whose family income is between R50,000 and R230,000 a year would need to provide a family contribution that is higher, but UCT Financial Aid would still provide most of the total cost of study. A student in this income bracket might need to pay just R10,000 a year. If the total cost of study adds up to R80,000, then in this case, UCT Financial Aid would provide the remaining R70,000. It all depends on the expected family contribution.

UCT Financial Aid can also help students whose family incomes are too high for government assistance – family incomes of between R230,000 and R480,000. These students can apply for a UCT bursary to help cover part of their course fee costs. These bursaries could cover up to 50% of the tuition fee for a family with an income below R330,000, 40% of the tuition fee for a family with an income between R330,000 and R430,000, and 30% of the tuition fee for families with an income between R430,000 and R480,000. These students are also eligible to apply for loans for a further R25,000, subject to meeting the requirements.

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