



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674/4846 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 3780

www.uct.ac.za

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UCT launches Financial Aid campaign to help youngsters realise their dreams

High school learners and potential students have a month and a half left to apply for the 2014 undergraduate student intake at the University of Cape Town. Applicants who also want to make use of UCT's expanded Financial Aid system can submit their applications until 31 October 2013. This generous system makes it possible for more students who qualify for admission to enroll at one of Africa's top universities and change their future.

Starting its Financial Aid "Change your future" marketing campaign on 13 August 2013, UCT encourages qualifying students to also apply for financial assistance. The national campaign will run across various media platforms which will be announced as it unfolds over the next month.

Every year UCT receives over 20,000 applications for its approximately 4,000 available spaces for undergraduate students. It is therefore important that learners and other potential students apply in time for the 2014 intake.

By distributing over R440 million a year, UCT together with donors, corporate companies and government partners, has been rendering substantial assistance to financially disadvantaged students and families across South Africa. The university's financial aid also makes special concessions for students with siblings at UCT. With the support of donors and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, the government loan system, the university strives to provide the best financial assistance programmes possible to students from various geographical areas and backgrounds.

The UCT campaign features profiles of some students who are realising their own dreams:

Born in Thohoyandou in the Limpopo Province, Mpho Gegana became the first member of his family to graduate from university - thanks to UCT Financial Aid. Today he holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental & Geographical Sciences and Ocean & Atmosphere Sciences from UCT, and is currently registered for an honours degree in Geographic Information Systems. "UCT Financial Aid covered all my university fees throughout my degree and helped me to pay for rent, food, tuition and books; plus, I've been able to save some of the money for vacation periods. Being the eldest in my family, I come from a place with limited role models; so, I hope to inspire my siblings with what I've achieved. Without UCT Financial Aid I wouldn't be where I am today."

Growing up in Ottery, Cape Town, Zayaan Farouk was encouraged by her father to pursue her passion and become an animator. Because of UCT Financial Aid she is currently a third-year Ikey studying towards a BA degree in Fine Arts and hopes to become a graphic designer and animator. "Without UCT Financial Aid I wouldn't have been able to pursue this degree. I receive a grant, and a travel allowance that enables me to get to and from the campus, in addition to access to the Wellness Centre. Also with a book allowance, UCT Financial Aid has helped me so much on my way to achieving my dream." She hopes to be able to give back someday and teach at her old art school.

Gegana and Farouk are just two examples of numerous students who have been able to realise their dreams, as a result of UCT Financial Aid. For 2013, 3,361 students are receiving financial assistance from UCT.

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. Through our expanded Financial Aid offering, we want to make it possible for these students to come to UCT at very little cost to their families. If you have been accepted to study at UCT, finances should not stop you from changing your future."

Learners and potential students can download UCT Financial Aid application forms at www.uct.ac.za, or telephone 021 650 3545. When applying, students should keep in mind that:

- Financial Aid applications for 2014 close on 31 October 2013. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Applicants must be either citizens or permanent residents of South Africa.
- Applicants must hold no other tertiary qualification.
- Applicants must also be applying for an approved full-time undergraduate degree.

EDITOR'S NOTE

About UCT Financial Aid

UCT's enhanced Financial Aid policy, launched in December 2012, has been improved significantly to make more funds available to a larger number of students to cover more needs. UCT Financial Aid makes it possible for these students to come to UCT at very little cost to their families. 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.

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Riana Geldenhuys

Head: Media Liaison
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town

Tel: (021) 650 4846 Fax: (021) 650 3780
Cell: (082) 460 5554
Email: riana.geldenhuys@uct.ac.za Website: www.uct.ac.za