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25 exceptional young leaders to participate in UCT leadership programme

A group of 25 exceptional young Africans from six countries are participating in the second Leading in Public Life Young African Leaders programme at the University of Cape Town, which will take place over two weeks.

Media practitioners, social justice activists and civil society advocates are among the participants from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe who were selected following a competitive nomination process.

"We are enormously excited to have leading civic activists from around the continent join us in Cape Town. Their commitment to public leadership as a form of service to promote development within their spheres of influence, is inspiring. We look forward to the learning and networking that characterises the Building Bridge programme," said Programme Director, Dr Marianne Camerer.

"Our theme for 2016/2017 is Governance Activism for Inclusive Democratic Development where we will look both at ways in which social and rights-based movements can promote development through collective action advocating for governance reforms, and ways in which authorities responsible for the delivery of public services can respond and engage more constructively with citizens," said Dr Camerer.

The intense, two-week residential short course, hosted by the Building Bridges programme at the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice (GSDPP) in the Faculty of Commerce at UCT, runs from 6-18 March 2016. Early- to mid-career participants will be exposed to a range of topics, experiential learning outings and engagements with influential African speakers, including GSDPP Senior Fellow John Githongo, former Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel and City Press editor Ferial Haffajee.

The development of young African leaders is a core focus of the Building Bridges programme cycle, which includes a number of meetings and events and is this year focused on the theme of 'Governance Activism for Inclusive Democratic Development'.

Dr Camerer said: "The programme provides a unique 'time-out' opportunity to connect like-minded peers across sectors across the continent and nudges the impressive career paths and impacts of these young leaders to the next level."

"It is inspiring to interact with the next generation of leadership," said GSDPP director, Professor Alan Hirsch.

"Our School's focus on strategic leadership for Africa's public sector recognises the convening power that universities such as UCT have in bringing people together for an intensive and high-level leadership training experience. We are building a strong network of progressive African public leaders around our School and around UCT."

Participants will work with an executive coach for a number of months following the fellowship, with the intention of creating an ongoing relationship with UCT and an alumni network amongst participants.

Background: Promoting Strategic Leadership for the Public Sector

The GSDPP works to promote strategic public leadership in Africa by providing professional and academic training to senior public officials and those engaged in the public policy arena.

Each theme of the programme is designed around a few topics using practical tools and group exercises to ensure a highly interactive and rewarding experience where the "knowledge in the room" will allow participants to learn from each other and also to be stretched as leaders who are prepared to excel even more within their areas of influence. Participants will also undertake practical skills development such as training on social media and presentation skills as well as a writing workshop facilitated by award-winning author and Leading in Public Life facilitator, Dr. Maria Phalime (author of Postmortem: The doctor who walked away).

Leading in Public Life is a leadership development intervention of the Building Bridges programme at the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice (GSDPP). The goal is to build a strong cohort of innovative and courageous African leaders committed to public service, with vision, ethics and the necessary skills to bring about needed change within their sphere of influence. The fully-funded two-week residential short course combines quality inputs from African thought leaders on key issues, the development of core leadership skills and the practical application of concepts and tools to real-life situations.

The public leadership model of Leading in Public Life is built on:

1. Agency: Capacity to be an effective and courageous ethical agent
2. Innovation: Capacity to drive change and innovation
3. Collaboration: Capacity to leverage networks and alliances for collaborative actions
4. Integration: Fostering African solutions for African and global problems

For more information on the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice, please visit: www.gsdpp.uct.ac.za or email Dr Marianne Camerer, Building Bridges Programme Director, on marianne.camerer@uct.ac.za.

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