



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 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

1 December 2023

Newly elected UCT SRC president prioritises student mental health



Newly elected SRC president for 2023/2024, Hlamulo Khorommbi.

Photo: Robin Thuynsma

The newly elected president of the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Students' Representative Council (SRC), Hlamulo Khorommbi has reaffirmed his commitment to serving UCT's diverse student community – the university's largest constituency. Prioritising their mental health and well-being, ensuring improved support for international students, and leading from the front are high priorities.

Khorommbi's term officially started on 1 November and he understands the enormity of the task that rests squarely on his shoulders. But he's not alone. With a strong, committed, and

supportive team, he is ready to give the job his all, make meaningful change, and leave a legacy that will serve as a foundation for those who will come after him.

“Being elected as president of the UCT SRC is a great honour and an enormous responsibility. It indicates that my fellow students trust me enough to represent and lead them, and to advocate in their best interest. I see this as an opportunity to drive positive change and to contribute towards creating a more inclusive education system,” he said.

Khorommbi is a third-year physiotherapy student in the Faculty of Health Sciences. He was born and raised in the vibrant village of Tshidzini in Limpopo by his grandmother. “My upbringing in this community has instilled in me my passion for community development and respect for my roots,” he said.

He added: “I consider myself very easy-going. I love meeting new people from diverse backgrounds and, getting their perspectives on various local and global matters and learning from them. I’m a curious being and satisfy that curiosity by constantly asking questions.

“Beyond this, I’m also an avid reader and find great solace and enlightenment in the pages of a good book. I love sport because I believe that physical activity is important for the well-being of the human mind and body, and it also teaches us so much about teamwork.”

Khorommbi is an inclusive and disciplined leader. He believes everyone on the team has something meaningful to contribute and should be given the platform. “I lead from the front, but I also don’t mind being in the background to allow the team to take the lead; that is necessary to build trust and cohesion,” he said.

With his team, Khorommbi is looking forward to effecting positive change within the institution that his fellow students will benefit from – not only now, but also in the long term.

When asked about some of the priorities he’d like to address during his tenure, he said: “There are a few things on the list. To start, student mental health is a huge problem. As students, we have so much to contend with: a heavy academic load, challenges at home, and so much more. We need more support. We need to ensure that the Student Wellness Service is adequately equipped to support the needs of all students. This is very important.

“Similarly, international students face endless hassles. To alleviate their burdens, we need to ensure they are granted extended registration periods to get all their documents together. Currently, the time frames they are provided are too short, and it causes unnecessary stress and anxiety, and in many cases, students are prevented from registering. So, we need to streamline this process.

“It’s also important that we work with the university leadership to ensure that all academically eligible students are not excluded based on their financial circumstances. There’s a lot of work to do around this issue, and it’s one thing I am very passionate about changing – it’s necessary for transformation.”

Khorommbi shared that the issue of housing has been and continues to be a challenge for students, and it will be no different at the start of 2024. “We need to work towards making more provisions for students who need to live on campus – the supply should exceed the demand, or we will always sit with this problem,” he said.

He added: "I also suspect that the issues around fee blocks and financial exclusion will crop up again next year. So, finding amicable solutions that will suit all parties is necessary to avoid any hindrances come the new year."

According to Khorommbi, advocacy, strategic planning, and collaboration are key criticalvital to achieving the goals set out. "We plan to work closely with our stakeholders so that they can help us fulfil our mandate and achieve our goals. Great power lies in collaboration and mobilisation, and we'll use it to help us reach our objectives, but not before we get students to acknowledge that these goals will benefit them. They must get behind our goals first."

He said that fundraising is a neglected area that they plan to focus on in 2023/2024. "It will help to generate much-needed funds and drive important initiatives. We shouldn't underestimate its value and what it can bring."

Story by Niémah Davids, UCT News

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Sisi Qavane

Media Liaison & Monitoring Graduate Intern
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Cell: (060) 565 6017
Email: Sisi.Qavane@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za