

## BUA LENNA PROGRAMME RUNNING AT TWO UKZN RESIDENCES



**Dr Langa Khumalo, Director, University Language Planning and Development Office (ULPDO) and some of the participants of the Bua Lenna Programme.**

The Bua Lenna Programme, initiated as part of the broader vision of the University Language Board to promote and strengthen the use of South African indigenous languages within UKZN, has been launched at two residences at the University.

A large number of participating students attended the launch from all internal residences even though the programme is currently only running at two residences.

Dean of the School of Arts, Professor Donald McCracken; Senior Lecturer in the School of African Languages Professor Nogwaja Zulu, Cluster Leader, School of African Languages, Professor Sihawu Ngubane; Director of the University Language Planning and Development Office (ULPDO), Dr Langa Khumalo, and Mr Kgotlaetsela Marumola of Student Governance attended and shared the podium in congratulating the ULPDO for the ground-breaking initiative.

Said Khumalo: 'One of the foremost aims of the UKZN language policy (revised in 2014) is to "preserve and promote respect for, and proficiency in, the languages referred to in the Constitution, and other languages, including the heritage languages, that facilitate potentially valuable cultural, scientific and economic ties...".

'Multilingualism is thus the hallmark of the UKZN language policy. This is vitally important for the University since its remit is to embrace and foster social cohesion within the University community,' he said.

'It is in this light that in 2014, ULPDO initiated as one of its running projects, the Bua Lenna (Let's Talk) Programme.

'The programme is implemented in conjunction with the office of the Executive Director of Student Services through language champions and the ULPDO staff. The programme is aimed at teaching conversational Sesotho to non-Sesotho speaking students at UKZN student residences. The programme is currently being piloted at Ansel May and John Bews residences.

McCracken said: 'I am so delighted to learn about this initiative as it came at an opportune time when African languages are at threat of extinction. It is vitally important that we keep these African languages alive, develop them, speak them and embrace them at all times.'

Zulu shared the historical background of both SeSotho and isiZulu to the delight of the crowd. He explained how these languages could be protected for posterity and heritage.

Marumola said he was thrilled and surprised that there was such a great initiative at UKZN. He shared his experience, saying when he was still a student he felt isolated linguistically and culturally. He never thought that such an initiative would ever be instituted at university level.

Marumola said his office supported the initiative 100% and he wished it could be rolled out in all residences at the University.

Khumbulani Mngadi