



UKZN CIVIL ENGINEERING BUILDS BRIDGES WITH INDUSTRY



Knucs Attendees (from left): Dr Rudi Kimmie; Dr Albert van Jaarsveld; Professor Cristina Trois, Dean of Engineering; Mr Kevan Rocher and Mr Rudi von Fintel, Royal Haskoningdhv.

The Hub for the African City of the Future (AfriHub) recently hosted a cocktail evening to boost the value of public-private sector collaboration through highlighting the KwaZulu-Natal University Civil Support (KNUCS) fund initiative. Held in the brand new fluid dynamics laboratory at Howard College's Centenary Building, alumni and company representatives from civil engineering, construction and consulting sectors, reminisced on the past, forged new friendships and were updated on innovative and exciting developments at UKZN.

'Over the years UKZN's Civil Engineering has blazed a trail of innovation, design and business successes across the globe,' said AfriHub manager, Dr Rudi Kimmie. To assure progression of this legacy, visionary thinkers within the Civil Engineering discipline started the KNUCS Fund in 1989. 'Budget reprioritisation in higher education, difficulties attracting young, innovative staff to academia and limited resources for innovative research, pose serious challenges to the growth and impact of UKZN's Civil Engineering programme,' said Kimmie. 'Providing financial support to the KNUCS Fund will benefit the full value chain of Civil Engineering at UKZN by sustaining excellence in graduates and enabling value-adding research.'

The aim of the KNUCS Fund is to grow teaching and research excellence by supporting scholarship and academic skills at the University. The fund ensures the sustainability of UKZN's Civil Engineering programme by attracting funding and in-kind support from corporates and individuals within the Civil Engineering, Construction and Consulting sectors.

In attendance at the function were guests of honour, namely: UKZN Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Albert van Jaarsveld; Dean of Engineering Professor Cristina Trois; Discipline Leader Professor Derek Stretch; and Managing Director of Raubex KZN and Chairman of the KNUCS Fund, Mr Kevan Rocher.

The event was sponsored by Raubex, a heavy construction sector company with a focus on infrastructure development that operates across Africa.

'Supporting KNUCS benefits the University and the Civil Engineering industry,' said van Jaarsveld. 'When channelled through the UKZN Foundation, all donations to the KNUCS Fund qualify for Section 18A Tax Exemption status and earn BBBEE scorecard points.'

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