

## HNU Alumni- and Campus Club in Cape Town

### South African CSR initiatives: some impressions by Prof. Dr. Ulrike Reisach, Alumni Commissioner

From September 20<sup>th</sup> to September 26<sup>th</sup>, 15 alumni and supporters of Neu-Ulm University of Applied Science travelled to South Africa to learn how universities and companies in South Africa deal with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The group was accompanied by HNU's president Prof. Dr. Uta Feser and the Information Management Faculty Dean, Prof. Dr. Olaf Jacob, who had made the contact to our new partner university, University of the Western Cape. Alumni Commissioner Prof. Dr. Ulrike Reisach developed the program and managed the political, company and CSR contacts in South Africa. The delegation visited universities and CSR projects of companies and Non Government Organizations to learn about their setup, objectives, challenges and successes.

In a pre-departure briefing on Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>, two former students, Ms. Laura Lopez-Penelas and Ms. Katharina Kaufeldt, gave an introduction on South Africa and Cape Town and shared their personal experiences during their study semesters and field studies for their bachelor theses in South Africa. Their theses researched the ICT training needs of Non Government Organizations and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises as well as CSR Communication via Social Media in South Africa and are a sample for further research to be conducted in and with South Africa. To get the alumni acquainted with the topic, Prof. Reisach explained the economic and societal situation in South Africa and the requirements for Corporate Social Investment and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment, an initiative of the South African government to overcome the former inequalities.

After a quiet night flight, the group reached Cape Town in the early afternoon of Wednesday Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> and joined with Prof. Feser who had just arrived from Tanzania. All together they hurried to get to the top of Cape Town's famous attraction, the Table Mountain, which strives to be recognized as one of the new World Wonders. We were lucky to find the flat tabletop relatively free of cloud. All enjoyed a marvellous sight, but it was cold and windy. The evening dinner took place at Quay 4 in Cape Town's Victoria & Albert Waterfront centre where Prof. Reisach explained the next day's program and dress code (from formal to smart casual). It started with a political briefing through the German Consul General in Cape Town, Mr. Hans-Werner Bussmann.



Photo: Alumnus Frank Stefan Renner hands over Alfred Bradl's "renn SAPRI" to Consul General Hans-Werner Bussmann (Photo UR)



(Photo UR)

Then the group was taken by bus to the **University of the Western Cape** (UWC) Campus east of the Cape Town centre. As they entered the huge campus, the guests were able to understand the university's claim that it is "an oasis of learning, a place of quality, a place to grow from hope to action through knowledge". It really is a 30 ha oasis in the Cape Flats Nature Reserve (a provincial Heritage site) with lots of modern buildings and research facilities including well-equipped computer rooms and plazas surrounded by palm trees, fountains and flowers. The University of the Western Cape is proud of its 50 year old tradition as a university committed to 'making sense' in South Africa's transition process. Desmond Tutu, iconic figure of the South African liberation struggle, was the Chancellor (the representative figurehead) of UWC in 1987.



Photo: The HNU delegation group with our President, Prof. Dr. Uta Feser and Prof. Dr. Louis Fourie, Head of the Information Systems Department at UWC (photo UR)

The delegation group was warmly welcomed by Prof. Louis Fourie, head of UWC's Information Systems Faculty, Dr. Ramesh Bharuthram, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Ms Patricia Lawrence, Pro Vice Chancellor and head of UWC's Institutional Advancement Department. After a guided tour through the campus, Prof. Brian O'Connell, Rector and Vice Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), and Prof. Uta M. Feser, President of Neu-Ulm University of Applied Sciences (HNU) presented their university's history, objectives, faculties and achievements. Then they signed a partnership agreement which officially confirms the existing cooperation between the Information Systems Faculty of UWC and the Information Management Faculty of HNU. It is the framework for further student, lecturer and research exchange and includes joint seminars and publications. The signing ceremony took place in the presidential meeting room and was witnessed by the German Consul General, UWC representatives and the HNU delegation.



Photo: Signing ceremony of the partnership agreement between University of the Western Cape and Neu-Ulm University of Applied Science (photos TP,UK)





(Photo KK)

During the lunch, professors and alumni had lots of interesting talks with the UWC representatives. New ideas for further research were discussed. UWC was very keen to learn from our tradition of maintaining close contacts with regional companies to facilitate applied research and university-industry cooperation. Then one of the leading experts on CSR in South Africa, Prof. Ralph Hamann from **University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business**, explained objectives and constraints of Broad Based Black Empowerment (BBBE) and CSR concepts in South Africa and advocated for a more sustainable approach. He was followed by Sithembile Mokaeanane, Head of Corporate Affairs for **Siemens South Africa**, who came from Johannesburg to deliver a very convincing presentation of Siemens' CSR initiatives and her approach to adapting the company's CSR activities to the societal needs in South Africa.

The group then left the UWC campus and drove to **T-Systems** in Belville. In their modern office building, Ms Ronell Stutzer, Head of Marketing & Communications, and Mr Gert Schoonbee, VP Sales & Strategy, together with two trainees, presented T-Systems' CSR and education projects in South Africa. It was already late when the group arrived at Codfather's sustainable seafood restaurant in Camps Bay. During the excellent dinner, Dr. Werner Boehler, chief representative of the **Konrad Adenauer Foundation** in South Africa, shared his experiences and views on the country's political and societal transformation process.



Photo: Dr. Boehler from Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the HNU delegation (photo UR)

The next morning, after a short night, the alumni group set out at 7:15 am to visit three school projects sponsored by **BMW** in the township of Khayelitsha. Despite the fact that he has lived in Cape Town for 24 years, bus driver and guide had never been in Khayelitsha, a township with 1.2 million inhabitants – the size of Munich. So we were glad that BMW Manager Corporate Affairs, Ms. Esther Langa, the science coordinator, Prof. Sadha Moodley, Peter Golding and Mr. Wayne Blauw from the **Western Cape Education Foundation** were with us to show us the way. The schools directors and teachers all welcomed us warmly and were obviously proud to have guests and prominent sponsors. At **Luhlaza High School** we were surprised that schools, especially computer equipment, are protected through fences and security. The school kids (with a medal "Best achiever 2011") demonstrated chemistry and physics experiments in the schools laboratory.



Photo: Student's presentations in Luhlaza High School's laboratory (photo UR)



A similar performance with younger kids awaited us at **Intshayebelelo Primary School**. It was impressive to see how well those pupils whose families speak only Xhosa and have often no schooling in reading and writing, presented excellently in English in front of the guests. A highlight was the very new **COSAT Center for Science and Technology** where students had won scientific awards with their research on the environmental situation in the townships and on chemical research on paraffin oil lamps and safety issues in township households. We admired the equipment and performance of the school children. Those students are keen to learn since they often come from poor families and know that good education is essential for their future careers.



Photo: Class room in the COSAT Centre for Science and Technology (photo UR)

It was hard to leave the schools since both children and teachers alike had been so kind to us. But Ms Renate Reichardt from the **German Consulate General** was already waiting for us at the Khayelitsha Township and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading Program (VPUU Project of KfW). The project leader, Chris Giles, presented us the VPUU methodology of crime prevention and community participation. The HNU alumni also met volunteers from their partnering university UWC who offer legal information to people who otherwise would not be able to afford it. A guided tour through the new Harare library with Ms. Lulama Langeni demonstrated the importance of books, videos and education software to improve literacy and knowledge in the township.



Photo: The HNU delegation in front of Harare Library in Khayelitsha (photo UR)





(Photo KK)

After leaving the township of Khayelitsha, the HNU delegation continued to the town of Stellenbosch, where they had a brief walk and lunch in the lovely city centre before visiting **Stellenbosch University's** Lückhoff School. Stellenbosch University's Dr. Jerome Slamet, Senior Director Community Interaction, presented Stellenbosch University's CSR and HOPE projects. Then Reverend Stefan Hippler, Chair of **HOPE Cape Town Trust**, and Dr. Sadeeka Williams, medical advisor of HOPE Cape Town, presented the Hope Cape Town project which aims at treatment and increasing knowledge about the prevalent HIV / Aids problem in the townships. Prof. Bernd Rosenkranz, Stellenbosch University, Division of Pharmacology, showed us the e-learning program for township clinics and community health care workers.



Photo: Presentation of Hope Project by Reverend Stefan Hippler (photo UR)

Rev. Hippler and Prof. Rosenkranz accompanied the HNU group to **Solms Delta Farm & Wine Estate** in Franschhoek where Hilko Hegewisch explained the history of the Western Cape in the Solms Delta Museum. During the wonderful dinner, Craig MacGillivray, CEO of Solms Delta, explained how the owners found 2000 year old relics of farming in this area when renovating the buildings. They invested lots of money and paid special attention to detail to make the farm a

unique jewel. They have succeeded in integrating the farm's history and its people (owners and workers) into the new concept of hospitality present in its current restaurant and winery. During the dinner, participants shared their impressions with Consul General Hans-Werner Bussmann and his wife and made plans for cooperation with Rev. Stefan Hippler and Prof. Rosenkranz. Two additional guests, Eric Du Plessis, CEO of the **Headway Group** and Kai von Pannier from the **Mineseeker Foundation**, told the group about their development projects on coconut plantations in Mozambique where they are aiming to establish self-sustaining business (so called "aid-free" zones).



Photo: Ebrahim Noor, former resident of Cape Town's demolished District 6 shows the Alumni the Museum (photo UR)

The next day, Saturday, started with a Hotel CSR presentation by Desmond O'Connor, General Manager of **Mandela Rhodes Place Hotel**. He showed a film on the history of the struggle for liberation and explained how Mandela Rhodes and Amy Biehl Foundations cooperate with the Hotel. The HNU alumni then experienced District 6 Museum which wants to preserve the memory of Cape Town's ancient mixed district, where black, coloured and white, Christian, Jewish and Muslim people used to live together in peace. This district was completely destroyed by the Apartheid regime in the early 70s, leaving only a vast and empty area near the port, the people's memories, a church and a mosque. One of the district's former inhabitants, Ebrahim Noor, showed the alumni the ancient streets with their mixed German, Dutch and English street names as well as photos, furniture and souvenirs of the formerly beautiful and vivid district.

The next historic place was the Slave Lodge Museum, one of the oldest buildings in Cape Town. It exhibits the old slave trade routes around the Cape of Good Hope and the origin and destiny of the slaves and their traders and owners. The delegation then visited the Spin congregation hall and Africa Library where they had lunch at the Spin Restaurant.

On Saturday afternoon, participants decided to see the Cape of Good Hope - a splendid idea. They enjoyed lovely weather, saw some wild baboons and ostriches with their babies and made wonderful photos of the wild coastal scenery.



Photo: The HNU alumni delegation at the Cape of Good Hope (photo JD)

The final evening dinner took place in the historic Junker's Hues of Groot Constantia in the scenic Constantia valley. On their way home to the hotel, some participants decided to leave the bus to experience night life on Cape Town's famous Long Street. Although advised to stay in the hotel or be extremely careful with their belongings, they headed to the Dubliner's bar and had a good time there – except that two cell phones and one camera were missing afterwards. So there were a few sad faces next morning although most were cheerful enough.

The program ended calmly with a sightseeing tour with the tour guide: They walked through the park and took photos of the Presidential Palace, the Parliament, the Castle of Good Hope and the colourful houses in the Malay Quarter around Waal Street. The group then had either a final shopping trip at the Waterfront or visited Camps Bay which offered a lovely early summer experience in Cape Town: a wonderful, sunny and broad sandy beach but terribly cold water.

All participants agreed that the whole trip was an extraordinary experience with lots of new insights and inspirations. They were unanimous in their appreciation of the professional planning and guidance, the high ranking speakers, the possibility to get off-the-record information through knowledgeable experts, the beauty of the city and nature and – quite important as well - the friendly nature of the group.

In 2013 the Alumni and Campus Club plans to organize a similar trip to China, with a special focus on sustainability. If you want to participate, you will need to become a member of HNU's Alumni and Campus Club or contact Thomas Patzwald or support the university through sponsoring or your membership in the Supporter's Circle.



(Photo KK)

**For further information:**

1. HNU Alumni and Campus Club  
see [www.hs-neu-ulm.de/d/alumni/index.php](http://www.hs-neu-ulm.de/d/alumni/index.php)  
or contact [Thomas.patzwaldt@hs-neu-ulm.de](mailto:Thomas.patzwaldt@hs-neu-ulm.de)
2. Förderverein der HNU  
see [www.hs-neu-ulm.de/d/hochschule/foerderverein\\_der\\_fh/indexW3Dnavancho.rW264710268.php](http://www.hs-neu-ulm.de/d/hochschule/foerderverein_der_fh/indexW3Dnavancho.rW264710268.php).

**Publications, websites and further information on South Africa and its CSR initiatives:**

1. University of the Western Cape  
<http://www.uwc.ac.za/>
2. Deutsches Generalkonsulat Kapstadt  
[http://www.kapstadt.diplo.de/Vertretung/suedafrika/de/\\_\\_\\_pr/Kapstadt/10\\_\\_Uni\\_\\_Ulm.html](http://www.kapstadt.diplo.de/Vertretung/suedafrika/de/___pr/Kapstadt/10__Uni__Ulm.html)
3. Dr. Boehler, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung  
<http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.23323/> Auf dem Weg in ein Zweiparteiensystem  
- Ergebnisse und Folgen der Kommunalwahlen in Südafrika  
<http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.22144/> Wirtschaftspolitik in Südafrika -  
Wachstumspläne und Wachstumshemmnisse  
<http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.17137/> Südafrika nach den Wahlen (Eine  
Analyse der Wahlen vom 22. April 2009)
4. Prof. Dr. Ralph Hamann, University of Cape Town  
Bio and publications see <http://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/s.asp?p=330>

**5. German Companies' CSR initiatives in South Africa**

Auslandshandelskammer (AHK) + Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Summary:

[http://suedafrika.ahk.de/fileadmin/ahk\\_suedafrika/Dokumente/CSRprinttoRES.pdf](http://suedafrika.ahk.de/fileadmin/ahk_suedafrika/Dokumente/CSRprinttoRES.pdf)

Bertelsmann CSR worldwide: <http://www.csr-weltweit.de/en/laenderprofile/profil/suedafrika/index.nc.html>

Siemens [http://www.siemens.co.za/en/corporate\\_responsibility/index.htm](http://www.siemens.co.za/en/corporate_responsibility/index.htm)

T-Systems <http://www.itweb.co.za/office/t-systems/PressRelease.php?StoryID=215839>

BMW [http://www.bmwplant.co.za/Content/frame\\_content.jsp@content=http-3a-2f-2haf0gau02-8.htm](http://www.bmwplant.co.za/Content/frame_content.jsp@content=http-3a-2f-2haf0gau02-8.htm)

**6. Schools in Khayelitsha**

COSAT donations: <http://www.khayelitsha.net/page.php?id=1>

**7. VPUU Project Khayelitsha and Harare Library**

<http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/Pages/Khayelitshaurbanupgradeprogrammelunched.aspx>

<http://westcapenews.com/?p=1456>

<https://www.ed.org.za/index.php/latest-news/96>

**8. Stellenbosch University's HOPE project**

[http://www.sun.ac.za/university/Management/rektor/docs/HOPE\\_Project.pdf](http://www.sun.ac.za/university/Management/rektor/docs/HOPE_Project.pdf)

**9. HOPE Capetown Foundation and Rev. Stefan Hippler**

<http://www.hopecapetown.com/>

[http://www.stefanhippler.com/hope\\_g.html](http://www.stefanhippler.com/hope_g.html)

**10. Minesekers Foundation and its aid free zones project**

<http://www.mineseekeer.com/news/mineseekeer-progresses-land-negotiations-through-aid-free-zone-in-mozambique>

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