



2023

Newsletter Vol.1

NASDEV Dashboard

Welcome Message:

The President Speaks



The National Executive Committee of the National Association of Student Development Professionals (NASDEV) wishes to welcome all member institutions to the year 2023. It is yet another year in Higher Education where the challenges of access and resettlement of students on campuses are marked by a series of macro systemic issues. The challenges of access, student funding and accommodation are at the centre of instability within Higher Education. Having noted these challenges, our work as Student Affairs professionals requires agility and analytics for the enactment of sustainable humane solutions that forge new pathways for collective and student learning centric approaches.

This newsletter positions the association towards the year ahead in redefining our commitment in being a supportive ecosystem that enables student access and success within the context of institutional sustainability. The newsletter is a culmination of critical forecasting from the NEC's strategic plan to accelerate a journey of professionalisation within the Higher Education value chain system. From the outset, the below issues are drawn for the attention of member institutions in the year ahead of us.

Establishing Safe Campuses

The association notes with concerns on the recent attack on the administration at the University of Fort Hare (UFH), which recently claimed the life of Mr Mboneli Vesele. These attacks are condemned as an anti-thesis of the ten (10) years of the renewal of the historic institution. As the association, we pledge strength to Prof Zakhela Buhlungu and the UFH community and the broader higher education sector, including our condolences to the Vesele family and friends. The association notes with contempt to the recent killings of the Tshwane University of Technology students, Rodney Sekgobela and Ntokozo Xaba as isolated signals of threats to safe campuses and human lives. These challenges ought to be confronted and must challenge all of us to inculcate and cultivate human conscious in our intervention strategies across our profession as we interface with students. Building responsible citizens requires that as the association, we redefine our value proposition to the sector in cultivating youth that is catalyst for social change. The NEC in its strategic planning session, reprioritised a strategic response to ensure that the issue of cultivating safe campus communities must be directing all of us to respond.

Assessment of Networks and International Relations

NASDEV wishes to reflect that building a practice that is recognised for the good work is doing require strategic networks for such purposes. This was viewed through the lenses of balance of forces in assessing our strategic objectives both regionally, nationally and internationally. The NEC agreed to strengthen further the relations with the South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Professionals (SAASSAP) and maintain the gains of shared vision dated from the beginning of the current term of office. The need to be deliberate on forging relationships with Association of College and University Housing Officers- International (ACUHO-I) remains on the strategic agenda of strengthening ranks for common objectives. Additionally, the NEC has also noted the work done in forging relations with University Sports South Africa (USSA), and Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) as strategic move towards strengthening the capacity towards impact in the context of transforming pathways for common purpose in shaping capabilities of students. In this context, the international front towards participating in the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) activities still lacks behind and requires an accelerated footprint. It is in this regard that the work in this front pave a picture of the association gravitation towards all efforts to professionalise with maximum impact.

NASDEV Programme Interventions

As we are entering the year 2023, the association resolved on the issues relating to affiliating for the year; Best Practice Summit, Women in Leadership Conference, Regional Dialogues, and many other exciting programmes that will be communicated timeously. These programmes are intending to deliver the work of the association as part of the national platforms for best practice exchange, discourse and reimagining the future.

Devolution Strategy and Revival of Regional Structures

The association realised that the national centre would hold if the regional structures are shaped as an embodiment of the association. The national agenda succeeds when regions are active, and this strategy suggests that constitutional structures such as regions must be revived. In this context, the NEC resolved to support regional activities that would serve as the mobilisation strategy for the national targeted programmes. It is therefore that on behalf of the NEC, I encourage all member institutions to support their regional activities and keep in contact with their Regional Coordinators. Our commitment to ensure maximum impact is still on course and we are committed to shape our capabilities to arrest all elements that confront our programme of action and together with member institutions, our victory is certain.

Regards

Dr Bernard Sebake
NASDEV President (2021-2024)