

18 Aug 2016

**Bottle project** ~ We need NTEU members' assistance with a project to assist a needy primary school. The idea is to construct a small hothouse from using 2l plastic cool drink bottles. The school's veggie garden is continuously being raided by goats, as fencing erected has been stolen twice, as has the shade cloth....

Plastic bottles have minimal R value, so the hope is that this will be a more effective construction material.

And yes, its been done by NGO's worldwide in developing countries, and one in SA that we know of....

Veg gardens at school receives much media attention, however, little is said about the poor long term success rate due to social challenges in PDA schools.

Ben Sinuka has committed teachers and tots, last year the kids were carrying their spinach plants in plant bags to and fro the classroom for night lockup, and open space outside DAILY to grow their veg! That's commitment...

Please rinse the bottles before dropping such off at the NTEU office on the South Campus or at Horticulture nursery on South Campus during office hours.

We need about 2000 bottles. Please help



## **Intimidation, hate speech and threats in the workplace**

A number of our staff members have been threatened by students. Such threats constitute intimidation, hate speech and criminal conduct (in the form of threats of violence).

Section 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, provides for an Employer to take such steps as are reasonably necessary to protect and ensure, inter alia, the safety of its Employees at the workplace.

We reminded NMMU Management of this obligation at a Quarterly meeting with the Acting VC on 15 August. NTEU will continue to protect the interests of its membership at NMMU. We will not be silenced. Even though we are frustrated by NMMU regarding the provision of information we believe we're entitled to, we will not rest.

## **Advertising in our What's up!**

Home crafters or small business owners can advertise their services or products in our weekly editions. We reach more than 900 readers every week. Interested? Contact us on nteu@nmmu.ac.za for more information.

## **NMMU Emergency Action Plan**

The NTEU BEC has been engaging NMMU management regarding staff safety since February this year. It culminated in a meeting with the Acting VC and members of the NMMU Management Team regarding staff safety on Monday.

We raised several concerns and frustrations with NMMU, highlighting the importance of having an emergency action plan. Staff members need to know what is expected from them during staff protests. NMMU needs to communicate directly and clearly to staff and students alike during periods of unrest and uncertainty. Line-management needs to be empowered to make decisions during such times and should be trusted to guide their staff until the situation is stable again. It is an on-going process. We are going to need everyone's support to make this work.

A meeting with the Acting DVC: IS will follow shortly to address these issues and to obtain more information.

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**Open your heart for the need of others**

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## Occupational Health Centre @ NMMU

The Occupational Health Centre which include the OH Practitioners and Occupational Health Doctor on the whole are neutral in all cases and would provide occupational health related recommendations to line management and Human Resource department on request. The aforementioned parties are professionally qualified and highly skilled and experienced.

They are the link between the employee, his/her work environment and the medical fraternity outside the work environment.

They are practicing in accordance with the OHS Act Section 8(1) which state that “Every employer shall provide and maintain, as far as is reasonable practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health of his employees” (b) “the employer will take steps as may be reasonably practicable to eliminate or mitigate any hazards or potential hazards to the safety or health of the employee”.

Should any line-manager at NMMU feel that they need to involve the Occupational Health Centre to assess one of their subordinates regarding absenteeism due to illness (excluding IOD's) which could impact on their work, it is recommended that line managers liaise with HR who in turn will call upon the Occupational Health Centre for assistance and input. These assistance might include the Occupational Health Doctor. The Occupational Health Centre will also be in a position to advise on referral procedures.

The two Occupational Health Practitioners at NMMU are Kobus Magielies and Valencia Benjamin. They are situated on the NMMU North Campus.

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## 2017 Academic Calendar

NTEU raised the fact that the University calendar is not synchronized with school holidays. This impacts staff on a personal, professional and operational level. The Acting VC was sympathetic. The Registrar will be approached in this regard.

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# Think before your speak, before your act