

**Inwyding van die amaMaties Kluster Hub-gebou,
Universiteit Stellenbosch, 14 Mei 2012**

Opmerkings deur prof H Russel Botman, rektor en visekanselier van die US

Goeie middag, almal. Molweni. *Good afternoon. I am glad to be here at this special occasion, and I am happy to see all of you here. Why do I say it is a special occasion? Isn't this just the type of thing that bureaucrats get excited about – the opening of yet another building? No, this facility is actually not about bricks and mortar. It is about flesh and blood – about the welfare and success of the students who will be using this facility.*

Hoe bevorder hierdie gebou studentesukses? Om dit te kan verstaan, moet 'n mens vra watter gebou is dit hierdie? Dis 'n unieke ruimte – daar is nie nog iets in SA nie, en min plekke oorsee waar jy so iets sal aantref. Met hierdie fasiliteit doen Maties weereens baanbrekerswerk – hierdie keer ten opsigte van hoe 'n universiteit sy studente akkommodeer; en ek bedoel meer as “huisves”.

Dis belangrik, want studente moet voel die Universiteit is 'n plek waar hulle welkom is, waar daar na hul behoeftes omgesien word, en waar hulle hul volle potensiaal kan ontgin met so min as moontlik struikelblokke in hul pad.

Hierdie gebou is 'n tuiste vir die studente van die amaMaties-kluster, wat bestaan uit die dameskoshuise Erica, Nemesia en Serruria; die manskoshuis Helderberg; asook twee Privaatstudente-organisasies (PSO's) [of daghuise], Equité en Libertas.

Die vermenging van koshuis- en dagstudente is baie interessant. Studente-huisvesting behels mos tradisioneel net koshuise. Kom ons kyk dus bietjie na koshuise:

'n Koshuis is meer as net 'n dak oor 'n student se kop. Dis die plek waar jy vriende maak, en ondersteun en begelei word deur jou studentejare. Met die US se unieke Res-Ed program is dit ook die plek waar jy mentorskap kry.

Die mense wat navorsing oor hierdie goed doen, sê dis hoekom koshuisstudente beter doen op universiteit as dagstudente. Hulle staan minder tyd af aan reis, hulle is naby aan die klaskamer en biblioteek, hulle kan bekostigbaar gesond eet, hulle het 'n plek waar hulle kan studeer, hulle het 'n akademiese ondersteuningsnetwerk, en hulle het 'n sosiale netwerk.

Ons studenteslaagsyfers bevestig dit. Dit blyk dat 4 uit 5 van ons eerstejaars wat in KOSHUISE woon, dring deur na hul tweede jaar. Maar as dit kom by ons DAGSTUDENTE, kry net 3 uit 5 dít reg.

In hierdie geval is die verskil tussen 3 en 4 'n volle 400. Dis 400 studente per jaar wat uitsak, wat dit nie maak nie. As ons dagstudente se deursetkoers kan opstoot, sal 'n klomp mense daarby baat -- nie net die studente en hul families nie, maar die res van die samelewing ook.

Dís wat ons met hierdie fasiliteit wil regkry – om vir dagstudente die voordele van koshuislewe te gee, en om koshuisstudente se ervaring nog verder te verryk.

You may wonder why we don't just build residences for all our students. One very important reason is that it is simply too expensive. In line with the University's Campus Master Plan for Facilities and Mobility we will be building extensions to existing residences, and we will be building new residences, but we can't accommodate ALL our students in res.

Stanford University in the US chose to go that route – precisely because research shows that on average, residential students do better academically than day students. But Stanford has resources

that we cannot match ... yet. At R240 000 per student to provide residential space, it would cost us R3,5 billion to build residences for everyone. That's unrealistic.

Instead, we have built this facility – our first cluster hub building – at a cost of R10 million. Our 28 residences and 11 Private Student Organisations (PSOs) for day students are organised into seven clusters. So for R70 million we will be providing all our day students with an experience as near as possible to the experience of our other students who are currently accommodated in residences.

Let's see how this facility will work in practice.

If you are a day student, you will come in to campus in the morning – preferably with public transport or a lift club. Your first port of call will be your hub building – amaMaties in this case.

Here you can stash your stuff in a locker, which is designed such that you can charge your laptop or cellphone inside it.

You can go next doors to the dining hall and grab breakfast. This cluster's dining hall already serves three residences, and now day students can also book their meals here.

With your tummy full, you can dash off to class, swing by the library for books and come back here to study or work on your assignments.

You can form a study group and use a conference room or a booth upstairs. And you are bound to have classmates in the cluster, because we are encouraging faculties and departments to organise their tutorial groups along cluster lines.

Because you have a second home here, you can stay after class and work late into the night. The new cafeteria will take over when the dining hall closes, so you don't have to go into town for coffee and chocolates to keep you going. And there are even a few bunk beds where you can crash for the night for a small fee.

Now, isn't that the life? I almost wish I were a student again!

Dames en here, die amaMaties kluster hub-gebou – en die volgendes wat kom – maak deel uit van die HOOP Projek, want studentesukses is een van ons kerndoelwitte. Met die HOOP Projek dien die Universiteit die samelewing en om dit te kan doen, het ons goeie fasiliteite nodig.

’n Maand gelede het ons aangekondig dat ons tot dusver groot sukses behaal met die HOOP Projek as befondsingsveldtog. En daarvoor is ons dankbaar teenoor die vennote en ondersteuners van die Universiteit. Wat ons ook sê, is dat ’n nuwe kwantum-uitdaging nou voorlê. En daarvoor gaan ons weereens op skenkers moet staatmaak.

Hierdie gebou het bv. nog nie ’n naam nie; potensiële skenkers kan gerus met ons kom praat as hulle vereenselwig wil word met ’n suksesverhaal soos min.

Kyk na hierdie saamgestelde foto teen die muur. Dis nie modelle daai nie; dis studente van hierdie kluster. Dis Maties in al hul diversiteit. Daar is wit studente en swart studente, arm studente en ryk studente, jong mans en jong dames. Dis ’n foto van die Universiteit Stellenbosch vanjaar, en teen 2016 wil ons nog meer divers wees, aldus ons Institusionele Plan.

Congratulations to everyone involved in making dreams reality. And to all the amaMaties, well done with breaking new ground and with being the pioneers of our new, trendsetting approach.