

# EVENT REPORT

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

LENNAH CLIO DE NOBREGA

**August 2014**

[www.kas.de/suedafrika/en/](http://www.kas.de/suedafrika/en/)

## Preparation for the Future

KAS-SAIIA ANNUAL CAREERS EVENING 2014, UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERS-RAND

**The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in partnership with its partner the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), hosted a Careers evening to engage with students and explore on what path a Humanities Degree can lead you.**

On the evening of 20 August 2014, the Jan Smuts Hall, home to SAIIA, on the University of the Witwatersrand campus was inundated with throngs of intrigued students about the careers event. This annual Careers evening event serves purpose to make students, particularly those studying in the Humanities, aware of what career opportunities are available once they have completed their studies. The co-hosted event has repeatedly proven to be a great success with a new record attendance of 327 students. This year a total of 14 exhibitors took part, namely: SAIIA, the South African Department of International Relations and Co-operation, the Canadian High Commission, the Embassy of France, the Embassy of the United States of America, The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), the United Nations Information Centre, the Japanese Exchange Teaching Programme, NEPAD, GIZ, MSF - Doctors Without Borders, the British High Commission, and the World Bank Group. An interactive hour from 17:00 - 18:00, with the different exhibitors was followed by an insightful panel discussion on the success stories of the speakers.

As a student freshly graduating with a Humanities degree, one is often posed the bothersome question, "and what can you do with that?" More often than not, students themselves are not entirely sure what the

future holds in store from them. This seems a dire situation to be in - and it is. However, all is not lost. This opportunity for students to engage with exhibitors to see what the world has to offer them advertises internships, scholarships and various job opportunities for students studying a Humanities degree. It is also an important educational step for students to see if what they have in mind is reflected in the real-life setting. The aim is to empower students with opportunities and knowledge of something that they can look forward to.

### A Little about the Speakers

After an 'information overload' from the exhibitors it was time for some more intellectual stimulation by a panel of speakers leading a discussion on what opportunities a humanities degree has opened for them. The first speaker, Nicole Fritz, is the Executive Director at Southern African Litigation Centre, and spoke about how her admiration for South African lawyers who fought against apartheid led her into a career in human rights. She advised students to be flexible and to change with the world; this is what a Humanities degree teaches you. The second speaker, Panashe Chigumundi is a columnist at Forbs Africa and a Project Executive at CNBC. Panashe explained how she is inspired by the Black Consciousness Movement's use of media to change perceptions in South Africa. Panashe advises students that passion is the key for success. Passion will encourage harder work and promote an honest way to live. Khaya Dlanga, the third speaker, is the Senior Communications Manager at Coca-Cola South Africa, a blogger, a writer and a

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

LENNAH CLIO DE NOBREGA

**August 2014**

[www.kas.de/suedafrika/en/](http://www.kas.de/suedafrika/en/)

"thought leader". Mr Dlanga is renowned for his story telling and entertained the audience with heartfelt yet hilarious recollections of how he made it to his position today. He suggests that the main aim of a graduate should be to stand out and highlight qualities about yourself that will let you be remembered. He noted that he embarked on his journey without any degree, which stretched him to make use of his skills and imagination. Ending off the discussion is Lucy Balimba who is the Media Campaign Manager at Massmart. She reported that a Humanities degree gives one the freedom to define who you are and what values are important to you. Her council to students is to use their degree as a 'shaping tool' to define the essence of who they are.

The points made by the speakers are very prominent in the South African context and deserve much thought by both students and graduates. An event like this is a wonderful opportunity for students to expand their knowledge and for them to establish connections - an activity less common in South Africa.

### **The KAS Experience of the Evening**

KAS plays an active role in aiding students. Events such as this, as well as, sponsoring authors, hosting discussions and debates, and presenting platforms for think-tanks in order to broaden knowledge are a few activities that KAS engages in. At the KAS stand an array of publications were presented and handed out to interested students. These publications ranged in subject matter from addressing environmental issues, to law, economics and politics. The main aim this year was to promote the KAS-SAIIA bursary program for Masters Students. The program offers financial aid with University fees, as well as some living expenses. When able, both KAS and SAIIA respectively, have openings for internships which also expose students to the vast political world.

### **Closing Remarks**

All in all the evening was a huge success. All exhibitors reported back satisfied with the

turnout and interest shown at their stands. It is sure to be another success next year. And remember that if anyone asks what you can do with a Humanities degree and you do not have an answer, you are formally invited to our next careers evening. See you there - the KAS Team.