

NEWS RELEASE

UP Giving Month raises more than R620 000 to help students in need



From left to right: UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Francis Petersen, and Deidré Adams, Deputy Director: Fundraising and Alumni Relations.

PRETORIA - The University of Pretoria's (UP) inaugural [UP Giving Month](#) campaign brought a surge of generosity and volunteerism to UP campuses and beyond during July, culminating in a R620 000 fundraising milestone after a month of community mobilisation.

The campaign, which received support from the Pretoria-based Vodacom Bulls and Isuzu Bulls Daisies rugby teams, also received donations of more than 2 600 non-perishable food items to help students facing food insecurity.

UP Giving Month, which ran from 1 to 31 July, called on UP students, staff, leaders, alumni, partners and the broader public to stand in solidarity with students facing hunger and financial hardship.

This flagship fundraising initiative supports two student-focused causes: UP's [Student Nutrition and Progress Programme](#) (SNAPP), which tackles hunger on campus through food support and nourishment, and the [Vice-](#)

[Chancellor and Principal's Scholarship Fund](#), which provides essential funding to students who are ineligible for NSFAS but cannot afford university studies.

"The saying 'it takes a village' rings especially true for University of Pretoria students – it takes an entire community to help a student complete their studies," says [Deidré Adams, Deputy Director: Fundraising and Alumni Relations](#) at UP. "We are thankful to the UP community and beyond who came together so enthusiastically during UP Giving Month in support of SNAPP and students in financial need."

Key campaign moments

Across July, UP registered hundreds of volunteers and partners – along with hundreds of thousands of rands – in response to its two key campaign requests: donations of non-perishable food to help feed hungry students, and cash donations to help students pay their fees.

A **Mandela Day Drive-by Drop-off**, held on Friday 18 July in conjunction with the commemoration of Nelson Mandela International Day, invited staff, students, alumni and members of the public to easily donate non-perishable food by driving through a specially erected drive-by drop-off point at UP's Hatfield Campus.

UP Giving Month culminated in a **Food Pack-a-Thon** on the Hatfield Campus on Wednesday 30 July, where hundreds of volunteers donated, sorted, and packed food parcels for distribution to students in need. The event was lent an extra air of excitement through the support and attendance of Isuzu Bulls Daisies players Patience Mokone, Camelitha Malone and Owethu Sityata, and Vodacom Bulls (Juniors) players Kurt Coetzee, Viaan Mentoer and Ruan Enslin. The Vodacom Bulls mascot, Bulletjie, also attended and was a favourite with volunteers seeking a selfie.

The Vodacom Bulls also donated 500 tickets to the Vodacom Bulls vs Sharks game in Pretoria on 2 August 2025.

Collective action against student hunger and financial crises

UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal [Professor Francis Petersen](#) opened the Food Pack-a-Thon by emphasising the significance of collective action.

"Today, we come together not for performance, but for purpose," he said. "The Food Pack-a-Thon is a direct and meaningful response to a crisis that is too often invisible: student hunger."

He noted that food insecurity among students often manifests in subtle but devastating ways: "It's the first-year student skipping meals to make tuition stretch, the postgraduate student showing up to class on an empty stomach. These are not abstract scenarios – they are the quiet struggles of students within our very own university."

Throughout his remarks, he emphasised that giving is not defined by the size of a donation but by the intention behind it.

"If you donated R50, you helped. If you brought lentils or canned food, you helped. If you encouraged a colleague to attend today's Food Pack-a-Thon or reposted something online, you helped. Every act creates ripple effects," he said.

Impact by the numbers

According to [Dagmar Kahn, Senior Development Specialist](#) and one of the campaign's organisers, "UP Giving

Month brought the UP community together in new and uplifting ways to help more students. The month was themed 'Let's create infinite impact, together' – and we are confident that the outpouring of goodwill we saw and felt during UP Giving Month will indeed lead to infinite impact in the lives of countless students as these acts of kindness are paid forward by the next generation of students."

Kahn provided a summary of the donations received in various forms during the month. "These are the quantifiable figures and statistics, but behind them lies the 'infinite impact' that is created through acts of giving – these figures tell only the first part of a story of infinite impact."

- More than **R620 000** was raised via cash donations received.
- More than **350 volunteers** (UP staff, students, alumni and other organisations) registered to participate in the Food Pack-a-Thon.
- **16 different organisations** (including UP) were represented at the Food Pack-a-Thon.
- **2 604 non-perishable food items** were collected at the Mandela Day Drive-by Drop-off and the Food Pack-a-Thon.
- Volunteers packed **224 food parcels** at the Food Pack-a-Thon.
- Donations received equate to **13 000 meals** for students in need.

As UP Giving Month drew to a close at the Food Pack-a-Thon, the Vice-Chancellor urged the community to carry its momentum forward by continuing to give in whatever ways they can, throughout the year, thereby helping to embed a culture of care and generosity throughout the institution.

"Let us build a university where food relief is no longer necessary," he said. "Until then, let us never look away."

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>> While UP Giving Month may be over for 2025, the spirit it nurtured lives on. Those who want to contribute can donate throughout the year via UP's [Giving portal](#) or email giving@up.ac.za to discuss other ways to get involved.

Watch highlights of the Food Pack-a-Thon [here](#).

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa. Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the [Gordon Institute of Business Science](#) (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a [Faculty of Veterinary Science](#), which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The [2025 Times Higher Education \(THE\) Impact Rankings](#) placed UP 7th globally for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17: Partnerships for the Goals, recognising the University's leadership in building impactful global collaborations. UP also ranked 41st in the world and 1st in Africa and South Africa for SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and maintained its position as the second-highest ranked university overall in both Africa and South Africa.

The 2025 Times Higher Education subject rankings placed UP first in South Africa in the fields of [Accounting and Finance](#); [Architecture](#); [Electrical and Electronic Engineering](#); Law; Sport Science; and Veterinary Science. UP's Faculty of Law has been ranked as the top law school in Africa for a remarkable eighth consecutive year.

In the [2025 QS World University Subject Rankings](#), UP is ranked in the top 100 in the world in Mineral & Mining Engineering (41), Veterinary Science (51–60), and Development Studies (51–100). Six UP subjects are ranked No. 1 in South Africa: Mechanical Engineering, Veterinary Science, Mathematics, Accounting & Finance, Business & Management Studies, and Economics & Econometrics.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za