Race is on to fill top post at UKZN

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Contributing Writer

THE race to fill the position of University of KwaZulu-Natal vice-chancellor is due to heat up in the next few weeks as three short-listed candidates make their presentations to staff, student representatives and management.

Prof Malegapuru Makgoba is to retire in December after 10 years at the helm.

Formed in 2004 after the merger of the University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville, the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) has five campuses in KwaZulu-Natal.

The three contenders are Albert van Jaarsveld, CEO of the National Research Foundation; Ugandan-born John Mubangizi, who is deputy vice-chancellor: college of law and management studies; and Renuka Vithal, deputy vice-chancellor: teaching and learning. The three are due to make their presentations on Monday and a week later will be interviewed by a panel.

IN THE RUNNING: Renuka Vithal and Albert van Jaarsveld are two of the three candidates.

and formerly white-run University of Natal, so racial issues have always been part and parcel of this institution. Progress had been made under Makgoba but we don’t know whether this would be advanced under the new administration,” said the academic.

The provincial chairman of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, Thobile Nkosi, said the union would use its clout to protect the gains of the past 10 years.

“In this time and age of our democracy we will not accept a candidate who will not take transformation forward. We have therefore instructed our shop stewards to engage the process leading to the appointment of the new vice-chancellor,” he said.

UKZN spokesman Indumathie Moodley expressed surprise at the level of interest being shown in the succession process. He said the successful candidate would face a multifaceted task that would demand strong interpersonal skills and a broad understanding of the university’s disciplines.