

INSPIRING UFS STAFF

# dumela

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA  
FREISTATA



VISION **130**  
*Renew and Reimagine  
for 2034*

MAY 2023 - ISSUE ONE

*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives through quality, impact, and care.*

# IMAGINE RENEW

## FROM THE EDITOR

### *Vision...*

Colleagues, it is an exciting time to be part of the university as we journey together to realise Vision 130. Looking ahead to 2034 – when the university commemorates 130 years of existence – there is much to celebrate and be proud of. Whether it is pioneering research, enhanced teaching and learning approaches, new infrastructure projects, or staff members helping students to navigate university life, things are happening at the UFS.

To help bring this vision to life, we are featuring stories about some of our staff members who work tirelessly to support our students, advance our research, and engage with our communities.

Read on page 6 how colleagues on our three campuses plan to implement the values of Vision 130 in their everyday work. Our new Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities gives a glimpse of his life outside academia, and we celebrate those staff members who received qualifications during the April graduation ceremonies.

**Hope you will be inspired by these  
and other stories as you continue to  
make a difference in your space.**

**Amanda Tongha**  
EDITOR

## VAN DIE REDAKTEUR

### *Visie...*

Kollegas, dit is 'n opwindende tyd om deel van die universiteit te wees terwyl ons saam reis om Visie 130 te verwesenlik. As ons vorentoe kyk na 2034 – wanneer die universiteit 130 jaar van bestaan herdenk – is daar baie om te vier en op trots te wees. Of dit nou baanbrekersnavorsing, verbeterde onderrig- en leerbenaderings, nuwe infrastruktuurprojekte, of personeellede is wat studente help om die universiteitslewe te navigeer, dinge is aan die gebeur by die UV.

Die kern van Visie 130 is 'n verbintenis tot akademiese uitnemendheid, gehalte en impak, maksimum maatskaplike impak met volhoubare verhoudings en om 'n diverse, inklusiewe en billike universiteit te wees.

Om te help om lewe te gee aan hierdie visie, bied ons stories oor sommige van ons personeellede wat onvermoeid werk om ons studente te ondersteun, ons navorsing te bevorder en by ons gemeenskappe betrokke te raak.

Lees op bladsy 6 hoe kollegas op ons drie kampusse beplan om die waardes van Visie 130 in hul alledaagse werk in werking te stel. Ons nuwe Dekaan van die Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe gee 'n kykie in sy lewe buite die akademie, en ons vier daardie personeellede wat kwalifikasies ontvang het tydens die April-graduateplegtighede.

**Hoop jy sal geïnspireer word deur  
hierdie en ander stories, terwyl  
jy voortgaan om 'n verskil in jou  
spasie te maak.**

**Amanda Tongha**  
REDAKTEUR



# HO TSWA HO MOQOLOTSI

## Pono...

Basebetsimmoho, ena ke nako e thabisang haholo ho ba karolo ya yunivesithi, ha e le mona hammoho re le leetong la ho lemoha Vision 130. Ha re tadimela pele selemong sa 2034 – ha yunivesithi e ikgopotsa dilemo tse 130 tsa ho thehwa ha yona – ho na le tse ngata tseo re ka di ketekang le ho ba motlotlo ka tsona. Ekaba mekgwa e ntlafetseng ya ho ruta le ho ithuta, mesebetsi e metjha ya maranrang a disebediswa, kapa basebetsi ba thusang baithuti ho tseba le ho tlwaela bophelo ba yunivesithi, dintho di fela di etsahala mona UFS.

Ho thusa ho tliša tjhebelopele ena bophelong, re kenyeletsa dipale mabapi le ba bang ba basebetsi ba rona ba sebetsang ka matla ho tshehetsa baithuti ba rona, ho ntshetsa pele diphuputso tsa rona, le ho kenyeletsa setjhaba sa heso.

Bala leqepheng la 6 kamoo basebetsimmoho dikhempaseng tsa rona tse tharo ba rerang ho sebedisa makgabane a Vision 130 mosebetsing wa bona ka letsatsi le letsatsi. Dini wa Fakhalathi ya tsa Botho o pheta hakgutshwanyane ka tsa bophelo ba hae bo ka thoko ho tsa thuto, ebile re keteka hammoho le basebetsi ba fumaneng mangolo a thuto nakong ya mekete ya kabo ya dikgau tsa thuto ka kgwedi ya Mmesa.

**Re tshepa hore le tla kgothatswa haholo ke tsena esita le dipale tse ding ha re ntse re tswela pele ho baka diphetoho tsa bohlokwa sebakeng sena sa lona.**

**Amanda Tongha  
MOHLOPHISI**



# OKUVELA kuMhleli

## Umbono...

Bozakwethu, isikhathi esimnandi lesi sokuba ingxenyane yale nyuvesi njengoba siphokophele ekwenzeni uhlelo lwe-Vision 130 lube yimpumelelo. Njengoba unyaka wezi-2034 siwubheke ngabomvu – nokulapho inyuvesi izobe igubha khona iminyaka eyi-130 yasungulwa – kuningi okuzobungazwa nesizoziqhenya ngakho. Kungase kube sibungaza ukudlondlobala kwezocwaningo, ukuthuthuka eminxeni yokufunda nokufundisa, izakhiwo ezintsha ezakhiwe ngezandla, noma kokunye kube usizo lwabasebenzi belekelela abafundi ukuthi baqondisise ukuthi iyini impilo yasenyuvesi, ziningi-nje izinto ezenzekayo kule Nyuvesi yaseFree State.

Ekujuleni kwalolu hlelo lwe-Vision 130, okuyizona zibophezelo eziseqhulwini yilezi, ubuyoninco emfundweni ephakeme, ukukhiqiza okusezingeni eliphezulu nokuba nomthelela omuhle, ukudlondlobalisa iqhaza lomphakathi ngokwenza ubudlelwano bethu nawo (umphakathi) ume njalo, siphinde futhi sibe inyuvesi ehlonipha wonke amasiko, inyuvesi engenamidanti futhi enamandla okufukulana.

Ukwenza lolu hlelo lube olunesasasa, siqhuba uhlelo lokubhala izindatshana ezichaza kabanzi ngabanye babasebenzi bethu abasebenza ngokuzikhandla ekulekeleleni abafundi bethu, abasebenza ngokuzikhandla ukuthuthukisa ucwaningo, nabaphinde bazinikele ekusebenzisane nemiphakathi esizungezile.

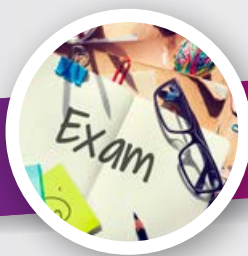
Funda ikhasi lesi-6 ukuthola ukuthi abanye bozakwethu emakhempasini ale nyuvesi bahlele ukuyiqhuba kanjani iminyombo yohlelo lwe-Vision 130 emisebenzini yabo yansuku-zonke. Umphathi wethu omusha weKolishi lezoLuntu naye usika kwelijikayo lapho esivezela khona impilo yakhe mesuke engekho ehhovisi, uzophinde ubone lapho sibungaza khona abanye bozakwethu abathweswe iziqu zabo ngenkathi kunemicimbi yokutshweswa kweziqu ngenyanga kaMbasa (April).

**Sithemba lezi zindatshana nezinye ezizolandela zizokugqugqezela ngesikhathi uqhubeka wenza ushintsho emsebenzini, noma lapho ukhona.**

**KUBEKA UMHLELI  
U-Amanda Tongha**



# NOTICE BOARD



**5 JUNE 2023**

Main mid-year examinations commence

**3 JULY 2023**

UFS Holiday break for students



**17 JULY 2023**

Third quarter commence

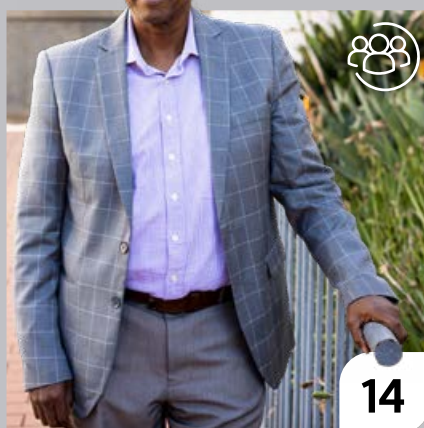


**1 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Rector's Concert



**12**



**14**



**18**



**22**



**25**



**28**

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#### The Dumela Editorial team

consists of staff from the Department of Communication and Marketing as well as representatives from faculties, departments, and campuses of the UFS.

#### Dumela online

<http://www.ufs.ac.za/media/general/publications>



Make your mark in the space you're in:

# A CALL TO THE UFS COMMUNITY



Colleagues, there has never been a more important time in modern history for great universities to make a full contribution to society.


This year marks the starting point of Vision 130, a bold undertaking as we strive to renew, re-imagine, and reposition our university in 2034.

By 2034, the UFS aspires to be recognised and acknowledged by peers and society as a top-tier university in South Africa. Our goal is to be ranked among the top five universities in South Africa and among the top 600 globally by appropriately chosen global ranking systems.

As we work to bring this vision to life, I am asking for renewed commitment from each of us as the UFS community in owning the spaces we all operate in.

Let us aspire to the very high standards of education, research, and engagement in a way that continues to respect knowledge as being at the core of all that we do but is also focused on the needs of our young people and of society at large in these challenging times.

Articulating a vision and setting direction is not sufficient in itself. We must enable ourselves to deliver it.

Each space within the UFS is connected to Vision 130. As we pivot the journey to 2034, I challenge you to cumulatively create a culture of delivery towards the realisation of Vision 130. Let's keep our eyes firmly set on 2034 and beyond to ensure that we bestow an institution onto the next generation that is different from the past. This exceptional institution can make a distinctive contribution to our society. Partner with me as we chart the University of the Free State towards its envisioned future in 2034. 



**Colleagues, 2023 is the year  
of starting our new future.**

**Prof Francis Petersen**  
Rector and Vice-Chancellor



# 2023 and beyond. *Embracing* Vision 130



## Prof Aliza le Roux

*Assistant Dean: Natural and Agricultural Sciences,  
Qwaqwa Campus*

*Associate Professor: Zoology and Entomology*

“I believe we must always be open to **innovation**, whether it is a new way of reaching students in the classroom, an unusual approach to an experiment, or speaking to someone outside your normal academic circles. Looking at challenges from multiple angles keeps me excited about my work, and deliberately talking to experts in other fields has broadened my research and my impact, to the point where I am now part of a science advisory group to the government. By stepping outside my own comfort zone, I have become a better academic and, I think, a better person.”



## Muneera Mansoor

*Office Manager: Research Development*

“**Accountability** is more than merely accepting responsibility for actions performed in my workplace. Accountability is a tree with many branches that grow together. It is taking ownership of duties, following through on promises, being transparent to the team, and building relationships. I believe the success of the team and the department lies in all the team members having the same mindset and steering towards the same clearly defined goal. We must take extra care of all things entrusted to us.”

Together with the **Vision 130** strategy, staff are guided by the values that the UFS subscribes to – Excellence, Innovation and Impact, Sustainability, Care, Social Justice, and Accountability – in shaping the UFS culture and providing a framework for actions and decisions.

This set of values guides the repositioning the university, ensuring it stays relevant and that we continue to grow and expand our influence and impact at local, regional, and global levels.

Five colleagues have shared with *Dumela* their insights into the practical implementation and impact of **Vision 130** in their everyday work.

By **Leonie Bolleurs**



### Dr Cobus van Breda

Programme Director: Science-for-the-Future  
Manager: Sci-Ed Science Education Centre

“At Science-for-the-Future we are driven by finding relevant solutions for real-life challenges regarding mathematics and science teaching and learning. As an extra-academic entity at the Faculty of Education, we have the privilege of connecting and partnering with a wide variety of stakeholders, including representatives from education, industry, and society. The latter enables us to develop teacher professional development programmes, initiatives, and facilities directed at societal impact and **sustainable** relationships.”



### Noxolo Phungula

Officer: Afromontane Research Unit

“I am fortunate enough to be in a research unit as well as under a flagship programme that support research champions in their mission to find innovative, relevant, and sustainable solutions for Africa, by Africans. Valuing and supporting the researchers and the university in its endeavour of becoming a research-led university is on its own advocating for care in order to reach a desired state in our communities, Africa, and the globe at large. It’s the nature of **care** that pushes us to take a step further and commit that much more to improve the livelihood of our communities.”



### Lutendo Mabata

Communication and Marketing Officer:  
Office of the Dean: Humanities

“I strive to incorporate the UFS’s **Vision 130** into my work by addressing **social justice** within the university through various initiatives and programmes, promoting diversity and inclusion, and fostering full and equal participation of all groups in the society. Furthermore, I support and get involved in projects that work towards social justice goals and address issues related to poverty, discrimination, and inequality.”



# *Ilse de Beer and her* **LIFE-LONG BOND WITH THE UFS**

**N**ot many people can say they were born and raised at and employed by one institution, but this is the unique tale of one UFS staff member.


Born on the Bloemfontein Campus in 1967, Ilse de Beer – an Officer in ICT Services – has lived through and witnessed five decades of changing faces at the University of the Free State. The daughter of the late Martin Schwella, a former Assistant Director of Properties, Equipment and Supplies, De Beer grew up in Abraham Fischer Hostel.

Recounting her journey with the UFS, De Beer said that five families stayed on the Bloemfontein Campus while she was growing up, including caretakers and security personnel.

Looking back at her life as a child growing up on the Bloemfontein Campus, memories of student life at the time and an encounter with a young Ewie Cronjé, father of the late South African cricketer, Hansie Cronjé, come to mind.

De Beer recalls passing by the swimming pool and tennis courts on one of her 'excursions' and seeing people playing cricket – one of them Cronjé.

She also remembers how the university would be quiet after closing for the day at 17:00. "Students would go to their hostels to put on their jackets and ties before going to the dining halls."

At the UFS 2022 Recognition of Service Awards, De Beer was honoured for 35 years of service, and is proud to be a 'chip off the old block' – the people who used to live on ampus.

**By Lunga Luthuli**

*Ilse De Beer reflects on five decades of memories and association with the UFS.*





# Mothusi wa Molaodi wa Basebetsi Jack Vezi o hlahisa maikutlo ka Khempase ya Qwaqwa

**K**hempase ya Qwaqwa e keteka dilemo tse 20 e hokahane le Yunivesithi ya Freistata, esita le dilemo tse fetang 40 tsa ho ba teng ha yona ka selemo sena sa 2023. Ka nalane e telele e tletseng mekolokotwane ya bohlokwa, pale ya Qwaqwa e tswakane le dipale tse ngata tse ka phetwang. E mong wa ditho tsa basebetsi ya tsebang pale ya leeto leo le ka nnang la hopolwa ke Jack Vezi, Hlooho ya Lefapha la Basebetsi hona moo khempaseng.



**Jack Vezi o kgutlisetsa melemo khempaseng e ileng ya mo fa tse ngata.**

**MOLAETSA WA BOHLOKWA: UFS ha e a nehelana feela ka tsa bohlokwa ho nna jwaloka mosebeletsi empa esita le ho ba lelapa la ka; mme ka hona, ke a leboha.**

“Ho tloha ha ke qala tsohle ka bofokodi – ho kgothalla ho tswela pele ka mosebetsi wa ka ho Tsa Basebetsi – esita le tshehetso eo ke e fumaneng mona ho batho ba institjushene ena; tseo di nkentse hore ke dule ke le Khempaseng ena ya Qwaqwa. Mosadi wa ka le bana ba ka ba babedi ba ithutile le ho qeta dithuto tsa bona hona mona UFS. “UFS ha e a nehelana feela ka tsa bohlokwa ho nna jwaloka mosebeletsi empa esita le ho ba lelapa la ka; mme ka hona, ke a leboha.”

Vezi o ile a amohelwa institjusheneng – ka nako eo e ne e tsejwa e le *University of the North (UNIN) Qwaqwa Campus* – e le molebedi ditshebeletsong tsa tshireletso ka kgwedi ya Hlakubele 1990. Esale ho tloha ka nako eo a fetoha le ho tswela pele hammoho le yona khempase ena, maamong a mosebetsi le maamong a botho.

Erekaha Vezi a qadile mosebetsi wa hae a se na lengolo la materiki, o utlwisisa hore ho fumana ha hae ha lengolo la materiki le lengolo la thuto la kgau ya *Bachelor of Administration* leo a le fumaneng ka selemo sa 2004 di lokela ho amanywa le tikoloho ya yunivesithi e “kgothaletsang motho ka mong ho etsa moralo wa ntshetsopele ya hae ya botho esita le ntshetsopele ya mosebetsi”.

O ile a qala mosebetsi wa laeaborari e le moithuti ka selemo sa 1997 mme a kena Lefapheng la Ditaba tsa Baithuti e le Mohlanka wa Ntshetsopele ya Baithuti kamora kgokahano, pele e ba Mothusi wa Molaodi wa Basebetsi ka selemo sa 2007 – e leng mosebetsi oo a ntseng a o etsa esita le jwale. O ile a re: “Ke rata ho phomola mosebetsing ona ke se ke le mophethahatsi wa tsa basebetsi”.

## Khempase e hodile le atoloha haholo

Ha a tadima mekolokotwane ya mahopotsane le tswelopele, Vezi o ile a re ho atleha le ho tswela pele ha Ditshebeletso tsa Tshireletso, ho hlahiswa ha ditshebeletso tsa tleliniki, ho ata ha dibaka tsa bodulo ba baithuti, esita le ho atoloha ha khempase ena ka kakaretso, ebile taba ya bohlokwa e pakang tsena tsohle ho o e tadimile.

“Ke thabela tsohle tse entsweng ho ntshetsa pele Ditshebeletso tsa Tshireletso mona Khempaseng ya Qwaqwa. E na le tsohle tse hlokehang tsa theknoloji bakeng sa ho sebetsana le ho thusa tshireletso ya basebetsi, baithuti le thepa ya yunivesithi ha ho bapiswa le nako ya matsatsi a rona a fetileng a ho ba molebedi wa tsa tshireletso ka ho ba le heke e kgolo ya tshepe e thata e tsheheditsweng ka mabota a thata a samente. Helele, Ditshebeletso tsa Tshireletso! 📌

**Ka Nonsindiso Qwabe**

Scan for English version.





# The Legacy of **FOUR GENERATIONS**

A group of first-year male students stands huddled together. Excited. Slightly apprehensive. Each of them is about to walk the plank and become a full-fledged 'Vishuis' man. Two of these young men are destined to become roommates and best friends. Their names are Benedictus Kok and Coenraad Pretorius. The year – 1924.


But this story is not about Prof Kock or Coenraad Pretorius. Rather, this is a story about the perseverance of four generations of women.

Just finished with matric, Ouma Alice – as she is now fondly known – married Coenraad, who had become a minister. The couple was blessed with seven children over the years but fell on hard times. Ouma Alice knew there was only one way out: to get a degree herself. At 42 years of age, Ouma Alice started attending night classes for a BA degree in education at Kowsies. While studying, she became pregnant – twice! Undeterred, she kept going. Ten days after giving birth to her youngest, she returned to campus to sit for the final exam. Her eldest son, Jannie, was sitting in the same exam room writing his honours in History. The family remembers when Ouma Alice had her degree conferred. The tradition at the time was to perform the

'snake' for graduates who passed with distinction. In unison, the students started stomping their feet on the wooden floor while hissing ssshhh-ah, ssshhh-ah as Ouma Alice made her way across the stage in the H van der Merwe Scholtz Hall in 1961.

As it turns out, most of the Pretorius women would return to the UFS as mature students, proudly following their matriarch's example. Ouma Alice's namesake, Alice Stander, now works in the UFS Department of Philosophy and Classics. "To study while working full time and being a mother comes with immense sacrifice – both from yourself and your family. Ouma Alice did it. My mom, Johanna, did it. And so did I." Alice obtained a BA Honours with specialisation in Philosophy in 2013, the same day her eldest daughter, Joannie, matriculated. At the end of last year, Joannie obtained a BSc Physiotherapy as a fourth-generation Kowsie.

"We have a deeply emotional and proud connection with Kowsies," says Alice. She believes the value of such a history with the university is twofold. Firstly, it entrenches the importance of education within a family. Secondly, through first-hand experience, each generation is able to understand the challenges their children face and prepare and guide them accordingly.

Alice's wish for our first-generation students? To be able to look four generations into the future. And be proud. 

**By Michelle Nöthling**



*The UFS legacy is ingrained in the Stander family from generation to generation.*





# Karen Minnaar – leaving a legacy of dedication and professionalism

**K**aren Minnaar, Office Manager for the Department of Communication and Marketing, retired after a career of 45 years at the university.

Minnaar was instrumental in the smooth running of the office where she worked. Moreover, she was the friendly face greeting visitors and colleagues, always ready with a kind word.

Her professionalism, dedication, and commitment to her team were evident throughout her time at the university. Her attention to detail has been a true asset and her hard work contributed to the successful outputs of the departments in which she worked.

## UFS first and only employer

Minnaar spent her entire 45-year career at the UFS, which was known as the UOFS when she started working at the institution. “The university has been my daily commute since I drove my 1970s Mini,” says Minnaar, who has experienced the leadership of six rectors (Profs Wynand Mouton, François Retief, Stef Coetzee, Frederick Fourie, Jonathan Jansen, and Francis Petersen).

The most important lesson she learned while working at the university, is the importance of teamwork. “It enables your team to share ideas and responsibilities, which helps reduce stress for everyone, allowing them to be meticulous and thorough when completing tasks,” states Minnaar.

She provided invaluable support to the teams where she worked. Prof PC Minnaar from the Department of Biophysics (later called Medical Physics) in the Faculty of Health Sciences was Minnaar’s first line manager at the institution for six and a half years before she moved to the UFS on 3 September 1983.

After her time in the Faculty of Health Sciences, she worked in the Bureau of Development and Public Relations alongside the late Jerry Brynard, before moving to the Department of Strategic Communication (the name of the department changed to Communication and Marketing in 2018) as secretary to Anton Fisher. For the past decade, she served as office manager in the office of Lacea Loader, Senior Director: Communication and Marketing.

“My role was generally linked to the same position, but in varying departments across campus. This has given me a very broad knowledge base and learning new things was exciting,” says Minnaar.

## Memorable moments

Besides learning new things, Minnaar also experienced several unforgettable moments. With her position in the communication and marketing environment, she had the opportunity to meet some celebrities, including Nelson Mandela, Leanne Manas, Pieter-Dirk Uys, Desmond Tutu, and Chad le Clos. She was also part of some memorable events in the university’s history, including the 100-year celebration of the UFS in 2004, and Dr Oprah Winfrey’s visit in 2011 when she was awarded an honorary degree from the university.

As Minnaar prepares to leave the university, she is looking forward to spending more time with her family, especially her five grandchildren. She is also excited about the possibility to travel more. “I plan to travel through my own country first and then the United Kingdom,” she says.

Regardless of where she will find herself after retirement, Minnaar says she will dearly miss her friends and colleagues who were part of her journey at the UFS. 📌

By Leonie Bolleurs



*Karen Minnaar bids  
farewell after 45 years  
of dedication and  
commitment to the UFS.*



# The power of *In-person connections*

In-person engagements with the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Francis Petersen, brought plenty of cheer for staff on the Bloem and Qwaqwa Campuses earlier this year. Colleagues got to mingle and pose for the camera at the UFS Official Opening and Rector's Engagement with Staff events held on both campuses. At the events, Prof Petersen thanked the staff for their hard work and dedication to advancing the UFS vision and encouraged us all to be intentional about creating a sense of belonging for everyone in the UFS community.

*By Nonsindiso Qwabe*









# VALUES

## maketh the varsity

By Valentino Ndaba

The University of the Free State (UFS) holds itself to the highest standards in terms of excellence, innovation and impact, accountability, compassion, social justice, and sustainability. These six values serve as the firm foundation on which the institution is built, as articulated in Vision 130, which is the university's 12-year strategic plan to reposition the institution for 2034, when we will celebrate our 130th anniversary.



**EXCELLENCE:** We are committed to pursuing excellence in every aspect of university life. We look at excellence as an idea that is more than a benchmark, more than a goal, more than a distant destination. In the context of the Academic Project, excellence is the foundation of rigour in our scholarship, including the advancement, imparting, and the application of knowledge. It informs our learning and teaching, wider engagement, as well as our management and governance processes.



**INNOVATION AND IMPACT:** The university's ultimate goal is to be a university that impactfully supports societal development. We value and encourage creativity and strive to identify, question, and challenge the status quo. Our knowledge will continue to contribute to the development of the Free State, South Africa, and the African continent and to advance global knowledge and understanding.



**ACCOUNTABILITY:** We recognise our obligation towards our students, staff, stakeholders, society in general, and the global knowledge community. To this end, we will be stewards of good governance who are accountable, responsible, and dutiful in our actions. We will be conscientious in our utilisation of the financial and physical resources of the university, as well as concerning our impact on the wider environment.



**CARE:** We are committed to creating circumstances that are not only conducive to high-quality teaching, learning, and scholarship, but doing this in ways that emphasise the well-being and happiness of the university community. We are therefore committed to caring for ourselves, our fellow humans, and the natural environment. We seek a new citizenship and new ways of belonging to the UFS that are premised on respect, inclusivity, listening, and empathy.



**SOCIAL JUSTICE:** In the pursuit of social justice, we seek to advance the values of human dignity through ethical and transparent institutional responsiveness. We interpret social justice within the South African historical context to entail an emphasis on inclusiveness, the reduction of inequality, and the creation of opportunities and pathways out of poverty and dispossession. Our commitment to social justice is our call to everyone to build on the productive foundations laid by all, and to build new structures in the pursuit of truths and practices that will grant human dignity to everybody.



**SUSTAINABILITY:** We commit to ethical and responsible stewardship of all institutional resources, processes, and practices to ensure operational, financial, environmental, and societal sustainability. Further, we aspire to live in harmony with our environment, and this will influence all our choices and decisions.





# NEWLY APPOINTED DEAN OF THE HUMANITIES

*finds passion in engaged research*

**A** love of research – especially ‘engaged research’ – is what drives the newly appointed Dean of the UFS Faculty of the Humanities. “That is what I am passionate about,” said Professor Mogomme Masoga, who started working at the university on 1 March.

“Engaged research [research that encourages relationships with local communities] is what makes me feel content,” added Prof Masoga, who is an NRF-rated scholar in indigenous knowledge system studies known for his impressive national and international research standing. He has published widely in the areas of oral history, Africanism, and indigenous knowledge system studies.

## Visionary leader empowering women

Prof Masoga is no stranger to the UFS: He obtained his PhD in Philosophy here, after completing a Bachelor of Arts as well as two honours and a master’s degree at the former University of Natal. He also holds a Master of Arts in Musicology (passed with distinction) from the University of South Africa.

Besides his academic achievements Prof Masoga, who was the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zululand before joining the UFS, is also known for his visionary leadership.

One of his proudest moments was spearheading important demographic changes needed in the faculty he managed. “Previously, there was only one female Head of Department. When I left, I had managed to bring all that on par, and even pushed two of my deputy deans as competent female academics. We went further to establish the Women Researchers in Humanities and Social Sciences, a powerful body that strives to empower women doing research in the faculty.”

## Active in social sciences and theology

Prof Masoga is actively engaged in the humanities, not only through his deanship but also through his role as Chairperson of the South African Centre for Digital Resources (a national centre supported by the Department of Science and Innovation) and as one of the Book Award judges for the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (in the Fiction category).

He’s a man of varied talents – as an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, he also works in theological fields. “I started with theology and later branched into social science studies. In essence I am moving between humanities and social sciences.”

He embraces creative avenues to keep himself motivated and engaged in his work, and to prevent burnout. “I am an artist. I enjoy composing and writing,” he said.

The new Dean also enjoys cooking (and watching cooking channels) to balance his work responsibilities with his personal life. 🍳

*By Leonie Bolleurs*

*Prof Mogomme Masoga, new Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities, embraces creative avenues such as art, writing, and cooking to keep himself motivated and engaged in his work – and prevent burnout.*



Vuyo Booysen

# 'ORDINARY AND HUMBLE'

*legal mind takes charge in legal and compliance*

**T**he compatibility of the extensive experience and academic credentials of Adv Vuyo Booysen and the objectives of position of Deputy Registrar: Legal Services and Compliance make him the perfect fit to lead this portfolio at the University.

He said that being responsible for Legal Services and Compliance exposes him to range of different areas. "What I like about my role is that I get to understand what the internal client is looking for- and therefore try to put in a very simplistic legal manner so that the parties involved are protected." His extensive experience places him in the unique position to oversee the legal and compliance portfolio at the UFS. "Law puts you in a unique position because you sort of understand all the business processes across the organisation," he says.

I am humble to have been given this responsibility," says Adv Booysen who joined the UFS in towards the end of 2022. He regards himself as an ordinary person who is a keen action movie fanatic and self-proclaimed 'foodie', who is dedicated to job and who is passionate about he does.

It was a family member who inspired him to pursue a legal career and that inspiration served as motivation to become a 'legal guru' with impressive credentials. He holds an LL and a B. Juris, from the University of Transkei (now Nelson Mandela University). He was admitted as an Advocate in 1995 and thereafter pursued a Master of Law from George Town university and not one but two LLM's qualifications.

Over the years he has held numerous positions at national and international organisations including amongst others the National Treasury and a five-year lecturing stint at the University of Fort Hare where he also held the position of HOD in the department of Mercantile Law.

As Deputy Registrar: Legal Services and Compliance at the UFS he provides legal advice to the university, vets and act as custodian of contracts, handle student discipline and mediation. [K](#)

**By Rulanzen Martin**

*Adv Vuyo Booysen says his passion and knowledge for law and the legal profession earned him the title of being a 'Legal Guru'*





# Ubuliminingi njengesikompilo hhayi njengomsebenzi

Nyuvesi yase-Free State izibophezele ekugququzeleni amasu okuxhumana nokusebenza anhlolobonhlobo kanye neminye iminxa elekelela lokho, kanti-ke ubuliminingi yiwona munxa owenza ukuthi omunye-nomunye abuke umhlaba ngeso elihlukile nokenza ebe esemukela futhi ahloniphe izilimi ekungesizo ezomdabu wakhe. NgokukaDkt. Tholani Hlongwa osanda kuqokelwa esikhundleni sokuba iPhini likaMqondisi-Jikelele kwiSikhungo seZobuliminingi (Multilingual Academy) esizinze eQwaqwa, ubuliminingi buzohlinzeka ngezimfanelo zenhlalo ezizokwenza sikwazi ukuphila siphinde siqhubeke nokwakha indawo esiqoqelene kuyo sonke.

UDkt. uHlongwa ujoyine iNyuvesi yase-Free State ekuqaleni konyaka, ujoyina nje uza namava amnkantshubomvu endimeni yokuqhuba umhlahlandlela wobuliminingi. ISikhungo soBuliminingi sasungulwa ngowezi-2021, singasho ukuthi lesi sikhungo sizalwa iNqubomgomo yoLimi yayo le nyuvesi neqhakambisa ukuzibophezela kwale nyuvesi kubuliminingi ngokugxila kakhulu olimini lwesiSuthu, olwesiBhunu, kanye nolwesiZulu.

Umsebenzi wakhe usehlale kuwo iminyaka eyeqile kwengama-20, intshisekelo nothando emsebenzini wakhe kusezingqinambeni zolimi eMfundweni ePhakeme. Umsebenzi wakhe waqala eNyuvesi yase-Illinois kwelaseMelika, nokulapho ayeqhuba khona futhi ethuthukisa amava akhe endimeni yesayensi yolimi kanye nobuliminingi. Ngonyaka wezi-2001 wabe esethola umsebenzi wokusebenza njengoMsizi Kathisha kuyo belu iNyuvesi yase-Illinois, waze wagogoda nezifundo ze- Post Graduate Teaching Diploma ngonyaka wezi-2002.

Akugcinanga lapho, wabe esepothula nezobuNgcweti (Master's Degree) nezabe zigxile kwiSayensi yeZilimi zoMdabu kuyo njalo iNyuvesi yase-Illinois, nazo uziphothula nje umatasa futhi uhola izinhlelo eziningi njengomeluleki wezilimi ezingadabuki eMelika.

Ngokwakhe, uthando lobuliminingi lwavukuzwa amava awathola ohlelweni oluqondene neZilimi Zangaphandle kwelaseMelika. "Lokhu kwaphenjwa ukuba mningi kwami ekusebenzeni nasekuhlanyeleni nezigungu zezilimi ezehlukahlukene zabaluleki bezilimi zangaphandle kwelaseMelika kanye nabafundi abasuka kuzo zonke izinkalo zomhlaba. Ubuliminingi buyimina; sengangena khaxa kulo mkhakha", kusho uDkt. Hlongwa ngawakhe.

Ube-ke esebuyela kuleli laseNingizimu Afrika ngonyaka wezi-2013 wabe esejoyina iNyuvesi yaKwaZulu Natali njengothisha wemfundo ephakeme wesiZulu. Ngowezi-2018, wagogoda izifundo zobuDokotela emkhakheni wezeMfundo yoLimi lwesiZulu njengoLimi lokwengeza. Ngawo lowo nyaka, wabe eseqokelwa esikhundleni sokuba uKhomishani wolimi lwesiZulu yiSikhungo soLimi saseAfrikha (African Academy of Language) nokuyisikhundla asasisabenzela namanje.

Esikhathini esimhlalele eNyuvesi yase-Free State, uDkt. Hlongwa uthi angakuthokozela ukubona iNyuvesi yase-Free State izidlondlobalisa ekuqondeni nasekuvamiseni ubuliminingi kanye nezingqinamba zolimi ekuthuthukiseni/ekuphuculeni umthamo wocwaningo, owokufundisa kanye nowokufunda. "Ngiyafisa, ngokusebenzisa lesi sikhungo sobuliminingi, ukuzibandakanya ezinhlelweni ezizobona inyuvusi iqhakambisa ubuliminingi njengoba ubuliminingi bumiselwe ukuzuzisa isikhungo ngobukhulu baso." ❖

**Umbhalo ohlelwe wu-Nonsindiso Qwabe**

Scan for English version.



**Ukuvamisa ukusebenza  
kobuliminingi kuholela  
enhlelweni enhle, kubeka  
uDkt. Tholani Hlongwa.**



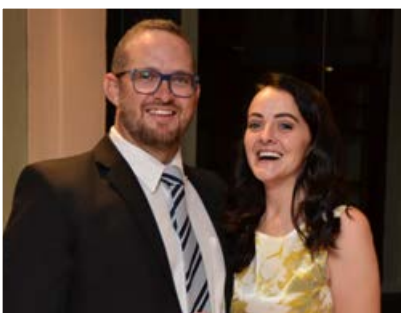
# UFS APPLAUDS

## *its academic and support staff*

The University of the Free State rolled out the red carpet and celebrated exceptional staff at the Academic and Support Promotions events held on 7 and 23 March 2023 on the Bloemfontein Campus. The UFS prioritises its staff and commits itself to further developing all staff members, affirming that upward staff mobility in the workplace is crucial for a university that strives to compete at national and international levels. Sixty-three academic staff and 60 support staff members were promoted in their various roles in 2022. The promotion functions serve as flagship events for the UFS to recognise and celebrate its staff members' continued achievements.







At the Academic Promotions function on 7 March 2023, the Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the UFS, Prof Francis Petersen, congratulated the academic staff members for their hard work. "These exceptionally accomplished academic staff members are leaders in their fields, our classrooms, the university, and our community. The university is proud of their efforts to advance their disciplines as they prepare our students to be tomorrow's innovators and leaders in their respective fields," he said.

Likewise, the Vice-Rector: Operations at the University of the Free State (UFS), Prof Prakash Naidoo, recognised outstanding staff members at the celebratory event for support staff held on 23 March 2023.


"Support staff serve our campus community with a dedication to excellence, providing exceptional service to students, communities, faculties, and other

staff. The staff members who have been promoted have excelled in the performance of their duties. Their attention to the goals of Vision 130, strengthening and supporting the infrastructure necessary to fulfil the university's mission and vision, is unmatched," Prof Naidoo said.

Colleagues who attended the events thanked the UFS for recognising their positive contributions to the institution.

Dr Martin Clark, promoted to Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geology, said: "It is an absolute honour to have my contributions recognised at the UFS, and I hope I may continue to positively impact students, staff, and the broader communities in which I work."

Rethabile Motseki, who was promoted to Senior Assistant Officer in the Department of Student Affairs: Student Governance, said, "It feels good to have been recognised and honoured as a young black woman in the space; it was also encouraging and reaffirming to hear Prof Naidoo speak about the importance of everyone's role at the university, no matter the title or position, as we all work towards realising Vision 130."

The UFS thanks its staff members for their crucial contribution to achieving strategic institutional objectives, particularly the university's Vision 130, which includes student success, broadening staff diversity, and systemic sustainability. 

*By Samkelo Fetile*







# STORY CIRCLES:

## Advancing an inclusive university community

*Welcome! This seat has been kept  
just for you. Comfortable?  
Let's start our story circle...*

The term 'story circle' may seem somewhat unfamiliar – especially in academic spaces. But the idea has been growing in popularity in recent years, with circles taking place at UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), at universities across the globe... and now at the UFS as well.

The story circle methodology was first introduced to staff on the Qwaqwa Campus in the aftermath of last year's violent student protests. Through a sensitively facilitated process, staff members could share their personal experiences in an emotionally and mutually supportive space. As the process of sharing and listening deepened, participants found themselves able to verbalise aspects of their experience for the first time. They also discovered that their co-workers shared emotional effects that had stayed hidden up until then. Staff members reported feeling validated and experiencing a sense of release after developing deeper empathy for team members and being able to reflect on the events through a broader social lens.

Story circles are by no means restricted to areas of emotional support, though. This innovative adaptation of the universal tradition of storytelling offers a contextually flexible method of engagement. Also, since the methodology is not generated from Western paradigms, it promotes a decolonised, human-centred, and interconnected approach. Essentially, the methodology rests on two presuppositions: that we are

all interconnected, and that each of us has inherent dignity and worth. Through the practice of story circles, we are able to connect across difference, affirm the restorative power of connection, validate the complexity and intersectionality of our lived experiences, and rekindle hope to reinvent a better future.

These outcomes are not mere theoretical ambitions. They have been experienced first-hand by both staff and students of our university. Through the UFS Department of Student Life (Division: Student Affairs), the methodology has been applied in a variety of settings with tremendous success. These include bringing staff and students together to foster a greater understanding of each other's lived experiences, engaging in conducive conversations on student protests, and promoting emotional well-being between members of minority groups.

Being flexible on the one hand, and inclusive in nature on the other, story circles offer tremendous potential for connection and mutual learning. Ultimately, story circles offer an innovative way to promote the UFS's commitment to developing our students into global citizens who can play active roles in building more peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive societies. ✖

*By Michelle Nöthling*





# UFS leads discussions on *climate change*

Climate change and biodiversity, alternative energy solutions, agriculture in a changing climate, and the role of ocean monitoring in climate control were just some of the discussion highlights at the fifth national Global Change Conference (GCC5), hosted by the University of the Free State earlier this year on its Bloemfontein Campus. The conference focused on climate change solutions and responses emanating from expert knowledge.


Under the theme 'Research and Innovation Accelerating Transformations to Global Sustainability', the four-day conference was a platform for knowledge-sharing among global change stakeholders in various sectors.

The UFS was the fourth South African university to host the conference, which was organised in partnership with the Department of Science and Innovation and the National Research Foundation. The 2023 GCC5 received stellar feedback on its success.

The programme comprised a range of presentations – one keynote address, one scientific address, three additional plenary presentations, 12 guest speakers, and over 200 oral and poster presentations from academics, researchers, and postgraduate students.

Speaking at the opening plenary session, UFS Rector and Vice-Chancellor Professor Francis Petersen asked, "What is the role of universities in society?"

He went on to say that universities are a space to bring about positive change through knowledge-generation. "The knowledge we generate should equip the government and our responses to challenges such as climate change. While there is much to do in response to climate change over the coming years, we can look to the future with cautious optimism."

Experts including Prof Vincent Ralph Clark, Director of the Afromontane Research Unit (ARU) on the UFS Qwaqwa Campus and Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa, addressed pertinent issues relating to sustainability and strategic responses to climate change. "While we can't solve all our problems directly, we can adapt and innovate. We are looking at solution-oriented programmes that can provide societal value and impact," Prof Clark said. 

*By Kekeletso Takang*

## Leading the conversation on sustainability and innovation:

**Front from left:** Prof Tshilidzi Marwala (University of Johannesburg (UJ) Vice-Chancellor and Principal), Prof Francis Petersen (UFS Rector and Vice-Chancellor), MEC Thembeni Nxangisa (MEC Agriculture and Rural Development), Dr Phil Mjwara (Director General: Department of Science and Innovation), Prof Fulufhelo Nelwamondo (CEO of the National Research Foundation (NRF)).

**Back from left:** Dr Aldo Stroebe (Executive Director for Strategic Partnerships at the National Research Foundation at the NRF), Mr Imraan Patel (Head of Customer Experience at VMLY&R South Africa), and Mr Shonisani Munzhendzi (CEO of South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)).





# Dr Natasha Cronjé's recycled office furniture is a **SUSTAINABLE HIT**

**V**isit Dr Natasha Cronjé's office in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences on the Bloemfontein Campus. You'll get more than a lecture on Sustainable Food Systems and Development – you'll get to try out her chatter-generating office furniture, most of which is made from recycled materials.

Dr Cronjé, whose classes include a focus on sustainability and the impact our consumption has on the Earth and its valuable resources, said her teachings fuelled her desire to promote recycling and "practice what she preaches". Most of the furniture – a table, two ottomans, chairs, and a shelf – in her office are made from recycled material. "I use eco-bricks to build the furniture, and some additions will come soon," she said. "They are strong and sturdy to build with. And they are not going anywhere soon."

Eco-bricks are made from plastic bottles stuffed tightly with non-recyclable items such as sweet wrappers, empty milk sachets, and film wrappers used for medicines and toothbrushes.

Dr Cronjé was introduced to the concept of eco-bricking in 2020 when some of the faculty offices were renovated. She decided to take the topic to her class and never looked back. "Students submitted eco-brick bottles, and I used some of those and my own to build the

furniture. There is specifically no other seating in my office available for guests except on the eco-brick seating. In this way, everyone gets to experience and see first-hand what is possible with these."

She likes to remind colleagues that it is never too late to "go a bit greener". "Recycling and upcycling [altering old or used items or combining them to make a 'new' product] these days should be such an important aspect of our lives. The choice each one of us makes today has the potential to affect future generations. We need to reduce our consumption, and what we use needs to be recycled or upcycled for additional purposes to limit our impact on the environment."

Dr Cronjé and her team are currently collecting eco-bricks for community projects to build furniture and classrooms for township schools and crèches. "Building eco-brick furniture is also an opportunity to generate income, in addition to creating awareness for sustainability and waste generation."

Dr Cronjé uses eco-brick furniture at home, too – and she has a worm farm, which boosts sustainability. "Every small choice you make today will have an immense impact. Start with something small, like sorting your garbage into separate bins. If all of us make one small change and recycle at least one item per day, just imagine what the cumulative effect of this would be from approximately eight billion people worldwide."

She said recycling is becoming ever more important for food sustainability and development. "The reality is that the global food system needs to increase its production by 70% to ensure there is enough food for everyone on Earth by 2050. If this goal is to be reached, every resource needs to be used sympathetically and, in a manner, to preserve it for future generations." 🍌

*Lunga Luthuli*



*Living sustainably is not just a choice for Dr Natasha Cronjé, it's a way of life.*



Prof Janse van Rensburg completes fellowship at

## Belgian Laboratory for Thrombosis Research

**P**rofessor Walter (Wattie) Janse van Rensburg, Associate Professor in the Human Molecular Biology Unit of the School of Biomedical Sciences, hopes to contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the causes of thrombotic complications commonly encountered in people with HIV, after recently completing a six-week training fellowship in Belgium.



### Benefits for local studies

Prof Janse van Rensburg said he hopes to contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the aetiology of thrombotic complications commonly encountered in people with HIV by implementing the knowledge gained in specific research projects, and eventually as part of routine diagnostics.

"We believe that making a meaningful contribution in this field will ultimately result in better management of people living with HIV, leading to improved healthcare for all affected by this devastating disease. We are excited by the prospects of future collaborations between the University of the Free State and the Laboratory for Thrombosis Research."

The fellowship saw Prof Janse van Rensburg travelling to the Laboratory for Thrombosis Research at Belgium's Katholieke Universiteit Leuven associatie Kortrijk (Kulak/ Catholic University of Leuven Campus Kortrijk). It was sponsored by the Reach-the-World Fellowship programme of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis and was completed during December and January.

The training was supervised by three experts in the laboratories, Professors Karen Vanhoorelbeke, Simon De Meyer, and Claudia Tersteeg.

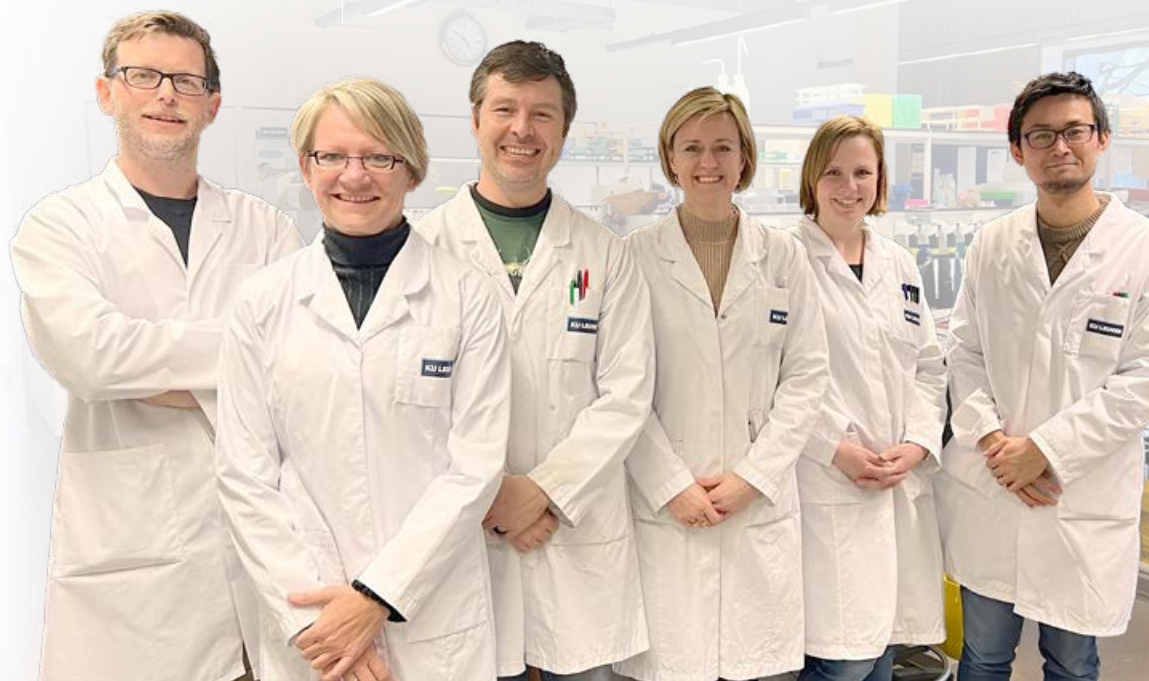
"The training programme was subdivided into three main disease/disorder categories, namely thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (TTP, Prof Vanhoorelbeke's speciality), thrombotic stroke (Prof De Meyer), and disorders associated with procoagulant platelets (Prof Tersteeg)," Prof Janse van Rensburg said. "The fellowship covered a variety of techniques used in laboratory diagnosis and basic research of these diseases or disorders. HIV-associated thrombosis remains a massive challenge in South Africa."

### Fundamental and translational research

The Laboratory for Thrombosis Research performs fundamental and translational research in the field of thrombosis and haemostasis. It aims to understand the role of von Willebrand factor (VWF), the VWF cleaving protease ADAMTS13, and platelets in stroke, the rare thrombotic disorder thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (TTP), and in the bleeding disorder von Willebrand disease (VWD). Fundamental insights into the working mechanism of VWF, ADAMTS13, and platelets lead to a better understanding of the pathophysiology of stroke, TTP and VWD, and to the development of diagnostic assays and novel therapeutic agents. ✨

By Andre Damons

Prof Simon De Meyer, Prof Karen Vanhoorelbeke, Prof Wattie Janse van Rensburg, Mrs Inge Pareyn, Prof Claudia Tersteeg, and Prof Kazuya Sakai.





## Dr Nthabeleng Rammile –

*Building a strong career foundation at the UFS*

**D**r Nthabeleng Rammile, a former student and lecturer at the UFS, has rejoined the institution as part of the Career Services Office.


Dr Rammile is also the former Vice-Chairperson of the UFS Council; she was the first woman to become Vice-Chairperson, a position she held for seven years. “It was a great responsibility to be part of a team that ensures proper governance in part, and holding top management accountable when implementing Council decisions,” she explained.

Her latest journey with the UFS kicked off in November 2022. She serves as Senior Officer in the Career Services Office responsible for company relations. “I am privileged to come back as an employee to an institution that has grown and developed positively,” she said.

### Building networks to secure more jobs

Dr Rammile says the Career Services Office’s core duties include providing guidance and support to UFS students to ensure their readiness for the world of work, as well as working with companies to ensure that students are successfully placed for employment. As such, to guarantee that the above duties are fulfilled, some of her roles include “the building of relationships with companies, and ensuring that they have access to UFS talent with ease”.

She has several goals she would like to achieve during her tenure, especially aimed at the development of the Career Services Office and the UFS at large. “I’d like to bring more companies from the private sector on board. Currently we don’t have any government departments involved, and my intention is to have them on board as well.”

Dr Rammile would also like to host more corporate events, which would bring employers from both the local and international community together with faculty academics to engage on UFS talent. 

By Anthony Mthembu



*Dr Nthabeleng Rammile has joined the UFS Career Services Office as Senior Officer responsible for company relations.*


# mamela!

## A.I. tog!

**W**hile scrolling through social media, ‘Mela’ has spotted mentions of AI (Artificial Intelligence) countless times. Polls that ask us how we feel about AI, articles that talk about AI replacing the hard work and skills of many people, and even pictures on Instagram as good as if a professional photographer took them. E a tshosa! Very scary!

While it’s a daunting thought that AI can already do the work of someone that had to study for at least two to three years, ‘Mela’ is excited about how it can enrich and enhance the work of artists, academics, authors, and even students (but o gona! Let’s not tell everybody about ChatGPT yet!). AI is ruffling more than just ‘Mela’s feathers – there’s a lot of debate around intellectual property, plagiarism, and plain old laziness where AI is concerned, but maybe these issues were also raised during the OG (original) Industrial Revolution. ‘Mela’ wasn’t there when machine replaced ‘man’, but history is repeating itself... and it’s revolutionary (mind the pun!).

Nahana! Imagine what is possible in the higher education sector with this ‘new tool’ that is fast infiltrating our lives. ‘Mela’ is watching with excited eyes to see how universities and schools will implement the use of AI. Then again, with the way people on campus are walking – with their heads almost inside their phones and earphones on 100% – ‘Mela’ wonders if AI hasn’t already taken on human form! Haibo!

Artists and authors are finding creative ways to use AI as a tool rather than a shortcut. ‘Mela’ only hopes that everyone can find a way to use this innovation in a way that supplements work, as opposed to replacing it entirely. ‘Mela’ is keeping a watchful eye on the progress of AI, and looks forward to seeing what people do with it. 

Love,  
**‘Mela’**

PHOTO | created with Midjourney image AI.





# SWAT AMBASSADORS

*love helping UFS colleagues improve wellness*

The modern workplace can be a stressful environment, and many employees experience physical and mental health issues as a result. This is why the Division of Organisational Development and Employee Well-being introduced the Staff Well-being Ambassadors Programme in 2019 – to promote wellness and provide guidance, support, and resources to staff.

The Ambassadors, known as the Staff Well-being Ambassador Team (SWAT), act as a bridge between the division and employees, providing feedback, ideas, and suggestions on well-being initiatives.

SWAT comprises employees who prioritise health and well-being, have a genuine interest in supporting their colleagues, and promote a grassroots approach to well-being initiatives.


“The Ambassadors help foster a supportive work environment that encourages positive well-being habits among employees,” explained Burneline Kaars, Head of the Division of Organisational Development and Employee Well-Being. “They work to create a culture of well-being where employees feel supported and empowered to take an active role in their well-being.”

Kaars said having well-being Ambassadors on all three campuses allows the programme to impact the organisation significantly. “It also provides support for employees in different locations.”

To get support, staff members can contact the Division of Organisational Development and Employee Well-Being Ambassadors directly via email or other communication channels. The Ambassadors are available to provide information and support on wellness-related initiatives and services offered by the division.

Well-being Ambassador Arnelle Mostert, who's been with the UFS for 14 years, said, “I joined the programme because I wanted to give back to the lives of others. These initiatives are aimed at helping you to unlock your full potential as an employee of the UFS. You do not have to be super fit to attend physical health initiatives such as the workout-at-work. Employees can also be referred for counselling if needed.”

She added that the programme's online workouts helped her and her family keep fit during the lockdown. “It has helped me realise the importance of all aspects of well-being – physical, psychological, social, financial, and occupational.”

To find out more about the SWAT Programme, please get in touch with Burneline Kaars, Head: Division of Organisational Development and Employee Well-being, at [KaarsB@ufs.ac.za](mailto:KaarsB@ufs.ac.za). 

*By Lunga Luthuli*



**From right to left:**

Front row: Burneline Kaars and Liesl Wessels

Middle row: Jennie Masalla, Tracy Dateling, and Carmine Nieman

Back row: Arina Engelbrecht, Bianca Victor, and Lizet Holtzhausen



# CONGRATULATIONS

*A celebration of hard work and dedication*

This year, our university witnessed one of the largest graduations ever, with a total of 19 ceremonies taking place across two campuses. From 14 to 15 April 2023, the Qwaqwa Campus hosted four ceremonies and the celebrations continued from 18 to 22 April 2023 on the Bloemfontein Campus.

A grand total of 8 628 graduates walked across the stage over the seven days, with a fraction of our staff members forming part of those receiving qualifications. Congratulations to all members of staff who obtained their qualifications this autumn. It is a privilege and honour to play a part in your academic and professional journey.

By Valentino Ndaba



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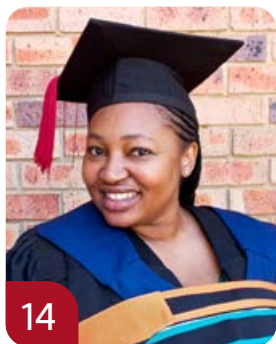
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18

### 1. **Reba Phuthi**

Department: Department of Computer Science and Informatics  
Qualification: Bachelor of Computer Information Systems Honours degree

### 2. **Corlé van der Walt**

Department: Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics  
Qualification: Honours degree in Mathematics and Applied Mathematics (with distinction)

### 3. **Dr Jarlen Keet**

Department: Department of Geology  
Qualification: PhD in Geology

### 4. **Portia Khate**

Department: Centre for Gender and Africa Studies  
Qualification: Master's degree in Gender Studies

### 5. **Dr Anthea-Lee September-Van Huffel**

Department: Department of Private Law  
Qualification: PhD in Private Law

### 6. **Dr Kudzai Mpofu**

Department: Department of Mercantile Law  
Qualification: PhD in Law

### 7. **Dr Martie Bloem**

Department: Department of Private Law  
Qualification: PhD in Constitutional Law and Legal Philosophy

### 8. **Motshedisi Sitole**

Department: Centre for Teaching and Learning Qwaqwa Campus  
Qualification: PGDip in Higher Education

### 9. **Ninette Aucamp**

Department: Centre for Teaching and Learning  
Qualification: MA Degree in Industrial Psychology

### 10. **Dipuo Mosea**

Department: Department of Plant Sciences Qwaqwa Campus  
Qualification: MSc majoring in Botany

### 11. **Dr Katlego Mashiane**

Department: Department of Geography Qwaqwa Campus  
Qualification: PhD in Geography

### 12. **Shani Smith**

Department: Centre for Teaching and Learning  
Qualification: MA in Education

### 13. **Stefan Scheepers**

Department: Centre for Teaching and Learning  
Qualification: BEd Honours in Management and Governance

### 14. **Sebina Seapi**

Department: Centre for Teaching and Learning  
Qualification: BEd Honours in Curriculum Studies

### 15. **Naledi Mogotsi**

Department: Department of Financial Aid Qwaqwa Campus  
Qualification: Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree

### 16. **Jacobus Kotze**

Department: Information and Communications Technology  
Qualification: Master of Business Administration (MBA)

### 17. **Enna Moroeroe**

Department: Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP)  
Qualification: Master of Education with specialisation in Higher Education Studies

### 18. **Dr Ronel Kleynhans**

Department: Industrial Psychology  
Qualification: PhD in Industrial Psychology





# GESONDHEID IS BELANGRIK: 50% MINDER SOUT, 100% MEER BILTONG

**B**aie Suid-Afrikaners (en, in onlangse jare, mense regoor die wêreld) geniet biltong as 'n versnapering. Maar die hoë soutinhoud beteken dat dit nie noodwendig die gesondste peuselhappy is nie – wat gelei het tot 'n UV PhD-studie wat daarop gemik is om die soutinhoud in biltong met 50% te verminder.

Hoë natriumverbruik as gevolg van biltong se hoë soutinhoud kan lei tot gesondheidsprobleme soos hipertensie, beroerte en kardiiovaskulêre siektes. Boonop word hoë soutvlakke verbind met die ontwikkeling van niersiekte en maagkanker.

“Daarom is die vermindering van die sout- en natriuminhoud van ons kos so belangrik vir ons gesondheid,” het prof Arno Hugo van die Departement Veekunde, wat toesig hou oor 'n studie oor hierdie onderwerp deur PhD-student Rita Myburgh, gesê.

## Nakoming van regulasies

Dr Lize van Wyngaard, prof Celia Hugo en dr Donald Cluf is mede-promotors van hierdie studie, wat net betyds plaasvind, aangesien Suid-Afrika onlangs regulasies ingestel het om soutinhoud in verskeie voedselsoorte te verminder – die internasionale norm is 'n daaglikse verbruik van 5 g sout en 2 000 mg natrium per individu per dag.

Alhoewel biltong tans nie by dienuwesoutverminderingsregulasies ingesluit is nie – omdat hoë soutvlakke nodig is vir die vervaardiging van mikrobiologies veilige biltong – het 'n opname deur hierdie navorsers bevind dat 'n 100 g-porsie biltong een individu se totale aanbevole daaglikse sout- en natriuminhoud

bevat. “Dit is dus belangrik dat hierdie tradisionele Suid-Afrikaanse lekkerny moet voldoen aan die gesondheids- en voedingsvereistes van die moderne verbruiker,” het prof Hugo gesê.

## Soutverlaagde biltong: Geen effek op smaak nie

Die studie se soutverlaagde biltong is volgens konvensionele vervaardigingsprosedures verwerk en gedroog. “Behandelings wat kaliumchloried, organiese kaliumsoute en kaliumlaktat as vervangingsmiddels bevat het, was suksesvol om die sensoriese eienskappe van biltong te behou,” het prof Hugo gesê, en bygevoeg dat verbruikers geen verskille in enige sensoriese eienskappe (soos aroma, soutigheid, tekstuur, nasmaak en algehele smaak) kon agterkom in die biltongmonsters wat vervangers bevat het teenoor biltong met normale soutvlakke nie.

Die studie het bevind dat 'n 50%-vermindering in die natriumchloried-inhoud van biltong moontlik was sonder om 'n noemenswaardig nadelige uitwerking op die chemiese, sensoriese of mikrobiologiese kwaliteit van die produk te hê.

Volgens prof Hugo is die uitdaging nou om 'n vleisverwerkingsmaatskappy in hierdie navorsing te laat belangstel, sodat verbruikers binnekort hierdie gesonder alternatief van die Suid-Afrikaanse stapelvoedsel kan koop.

“Deur die sout- en natriuminhoud in biltong te verminder, kan ons almal hierdie heerlike versnapering geniet sonder om bekommerd te wees oor die negatiewe impak wat dit op ons gesondheid kan hê,” het hy gesê. <

**Deur Leonie Bolleurs**

**Navorsing oor die verlaging van sout en natrium in vleisprodukte pas perfek in by prof Arno Hugo se navorsing oor die ontwikkeling van gesonder vleisprodukte vir die moderne verbruiker. Hy was die promotor van PhD-student Rita Myburgh se studie oor die verlaging van soutinhoud in biltong.**



Scan for English version.







# WORM FARMING:

## Turning kitchen waste into 'black gold'

If you've not yet heard of worm farming, or have wondered what it's about, here's your chance to learn more about the eco-friendly trend that went from hobby to entrepreneurial venture for UFS's Karen Venter.

It all started when Venter, who is Head of Service Learning in the Community Engagement Directorate, attended worm-farming training presented by the Central University of Technology's Enactus team earlier this year. The training included a worm farm starter pack, certificate, and mentorship.

Venter learned how to create a worm bed, care for and maintain a worm farm, how to feed the worms, and eventually how to harvest vermicompost.

### Caring for the environment

"It is a hobby that brings me joy, and I am now becoming an entrepreneur, using a vermicomposting system as an eco-friendly way to recycle kitchen waste and food scraps into 'black gold'," she said. "I can use the vermicompost in my own food garden and sell it as one of the best-quality garden fertilisers. Moreover, I am contributing to reaching the sustainable development goals by stopping food waste. I care for the environment, instead of adding to food waste that is burned at a dumping site, which in turn increases global warming."

Venter said it's easy to maintain a worm farm, takes very little time and effort, and it occupies a small space, because a small container is used. In fact, it's such an enjoyable and manageable project that everyone can do it.

*Here are Venter's five steps explaining how you too can join in the fun (and perhaps make your own little fortune) by starting your worm farm:*

**STEP 1**

Get a 25-litre black container with a lid, and drill two rows of small ventilation holes (0,64 cm) all around the top of the bin, 4 cm apart. Add 20 holes at the bottom.

**STEP 2**

Line the bin with torn newspaper, about 5 cm deep. Alternatively use wet cardboard.

**STEP 3**

Add a +- 5 cm layer of soil and about 2 cm layer of vermicompost, topped up with a 5 cm layer of dry leaves. Now add a little water, just to dampen the leaves.

**STEP 4**

Add 0,2 kg of red wiggler earthworms to the worm bed. They will immediately dive into the soil because they don't like bright light.

**STEP 5**

Feed the worms (they can eat up to half their body weight every day) by adding food scraps like eggshells, pre-moisture toilet rolls, fruit, and vegetable peels. It's important to break the food scraps into small chunks – remember, they don't have teeth.

Then... After about three months of being fed, the worms should have created enough compost for you to harvest.

Venter added a few helpful tips, such as: to ensure you don't run out of food, you can keep leftover food scraps in a bag in the deep freeze; she also learned that worms love watermelon, avocado pear, and mango food waste. However, it is important to not feed them leftover meat, animal waste, oily food, leftover dairy products, citrus peels, or onion scraps.

"I wish you all a happy worm-farming experience!" she said. 🌱

**By Leonie Bolleurs**



*Dr Karen Venter found a new passion with her worm farming.*

**To learn more, watch this video on YouTube:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AF-jzWKMdwE&ab\\_channel=HomesteadandChill](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AF-jzWKMdwE&ab_channel=HomesteadandChill), or join a worm-farming group on **Facebook:** [https://web.facebook.com/dora.d.plessis/?\\_rdc=1&\\_rdr](https://web.facebook.com/dora.d.plessis/?_rdc=1&_rdr)

# 'ACCIDENTAL THEOLOGIAN':

*Lecturer Thabiso Khoeli's journey from sport to theology*

**H**e may have stumbled into theological studies 'by accident', but Thabiso Khoeli, a young theologian and lecturer in the UFS Faculty of Theology and Religion, is now a passionate advocate for young people to pursue studies in the field.

"Theology presents a distinct chance to investigate inquiries regarding the essence of humanity, the divine, and the world we reside in," Khoeli said. Unlike stereotypes of the subject he's encountered – including that it is dull and only pertains to religious studies – he has found that it covers an extensive range of topics, including philosophy, ethics, history, and culture, "which makes it an enthralling and dynamic field of study that can be implemented in various aspects of life".

Khoeli says theology wasn't his first choice when he was considering his post-school options. "At that time, I was actively involved in sports and had intended to pursue a related subject. However, due to receiving an unsatisfactory APS [Admission Points Score], I was redirected towards theology to open up the possibility of exploring other disciplines [later]." But as time went on, he found himself developing an interest in the subject, particularly in how it enabled him to have an impact on the lives of communities. "After performing well in my initial year, I decided to continue studying theology."

Although critical thinking and analysis are essential in this field of study, one of the most significant challenges facing theologians today is the conflict between personal beliefs and academic study. "It is natural to feel defensive or protective of one's beliefs, but important to remember that critical engagement and inquiry are at the heart of theological scholarship," he said. "By approaching one's personal beliefs with curiosity and openness and engaging in rigorous and respectful dialogue with peers and mentors, theology students can develop a more nuanced and reflective approach to their faith and spirituality."

Khoeli says young people should consider embarking on a career in theology because of its interconnection with different facets of life which hold significant roles in society and human development. "With its broad range of perspectives and interdisciplinary methodology, theology has the potential to be a fulfilling field of study." 📖

**By Edzani Nephelala**

# Theology

**Unleashing his passion for theology, UFS Lecturer Thabiso Khoeli encourages young people to join the field.**

