

built

news magazine 2023



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

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

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





Watch

Exploring vulnerable African alpine ecosystems for continued conservation

African alpine ecosystems are found in small, isolated patches, mainly in the eastern and southern regions of the continent, covering a total area of 16 500 km². Prof Peter Taylor, Professor-in-Residence of the Afromontane Research Unit in the Department of Zoology and Entomology on the Qwaqwa Campus, along with a group of plant and animal specialists, is conducting research to uncover the biological richness of one of these at-risk Afrotropical alpine hotspots. In the region bordering Lesotho, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Witsieshoek Community Conservation Area, they documented 930 plant and animal species across 15 taxon groups through a combination of ecotourism-driven citizen science, biodiversity specialist knowledge, and BioBlitz surveys. This inventory spans an elevation range from the mountain foothills at 1 760 m to the summit at 3 100 m. Additionally, they conducted comparative tests between alpine and subalpine ecosystems in 10 of the taxon groups. The data serves as the basis for continuous conservation assessments and future monitoring efforts.



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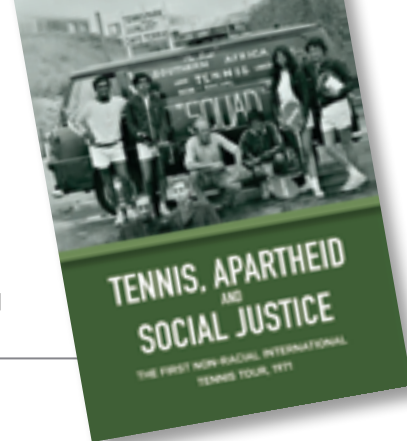
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Editorial

A year ago, we launched our *Vision 130*. An industrious vision that will see us changed and improved in 2034 when the University of the Free State will celebrate 130 years of existence. One year in, and the effects of this vision are visible on, in, and around our campuses.

This edition of *Bult* is packed with stories about excellence, care, social justice, innovation and impact, accountability, and a feature on many of our sustainability activities and research. In the next decade, we will continue to dedicate a section of this publication to one of our *Vision 130* values in particular.

All accomplishments by our staff, students, and alumni are celebrated and respected. This year has been particularly lush in terms of awards and events – you can catch up on the sections dedicated to these topics. Please reach out to our editorial team if you feel called to inspire our community with your story – especially our alumni locally and abroad.

Thank you all for your continued support and interest in our activities.

Warm regards
The Editorial Team

Die universiteit het 'n jaar gelede *Visie 130* bekendgestel. 'n Visie vol ywer wat verandering en verbetering sal bewerkstellig in aanloop tot die Universiteit van die Vrystaat se 130^{ste} bestaansvieringe in 2034. Een jaar verder, en die uitwerking van hierdie visie is reeds sigbaar op, in en rondom ons kampusse.

Hierdie uitgawe van *Bult* is propvol stories oor uitnemendheid, omgee, sosiale geregtigheid, innovasie en impak, aanspreeklikheid, en 'n glansartikel oor talle van ons volhoubaarheids-aktiwiteite en navorsing. In die volgende dekade sal ons voortgaan om 'n gedeelte van hierdie publikasie aan veral een van ons *Visie 130*-waardes te wy.

Alle prestasies deur ons personeel, studente en alumni word gevier en gerespekteer. Hierdie jaar was besonder geil wat

toekennings en geleenthede betref – jy kan op hoogte kom in die afdelings wat aan hierdie onderwerpe gewy is. Praat asseblief met ons redaksiespan as jy geroepe voel om ons gemeenskap met jou storie te inspireer – veral ons alumni plaaslik en in die buiteland.

Dankie almal vir julle volgehoue ondersteuning en belangstelling in ons bedrywighede.

Hartlike groete
Die Redaksiespan

E sikhathini esingangonyaka esiqeda kwedlula kuso sethule uhlelonqubo olwaziwa ngele-*Vision 130*. Yilona hlelonqubo oluhlabahlosile oluzosenza sibonakale sishintshile futhi saphinde sakhula ngonyaka wezi-2034 mhlazane iNyuvesi yase-Free State iyobungaza khona iminyaka engama-130 ikhona. Akukapheli nonyaka kodwa izithelo zalolu hlelonqubo seziyaqhakaza emagcekeni nasezindaweni ezizungeze wonke amakhempasi ethu.

Le ngosi ye-*Bult* ididiyelwe ngezindaba eziqondene nempumelelo, ukunakekela, inhlalanhle, impuncuzeko nedumela, ukuzibambela mathupha, kanye neminye iminxa emningi eqondene nemisebenzi yempilo engcono kanye nocwaningo. Eshumini leminyaka ezayo, sizohubeka sibe nesiqeshana kule ngosi esiqondene ngqo nezimiso zohlelonqubo i-*Vision-130*.

Zonke izithelo ezithelwe abasebenzayo, abafundi, nabake baba yingxeny yenyuvesi phamabilini ziyabungazwa futhi ziyatuswa. Lo nyaka ube yingqayizivele ikakhulukazi mubheka imicimbi ebe khona kanye naleyo yezindondo – ungakwazi futhi ukubuyekeza lokhu ezigabeni eziqondene nakho lapha ephepheni. Siyacela uthinte ithimba labadidiyeli uma ngabe uzizwa sengathi unobizo ekutakuleni umphakathi ngodaba lwakho – ikakhulukazi labo asebekwezinye izindawo ezisemphakathini nasekudeni.

Siyabonga kini nonke ngentakazi nokulekeleleka okuqhubekayo maqondana nemisebenzi yethu.

Abazithobayo.
Ithimba labadidiyeli

N gwahola, re kgakotse *Ponelopele 130*; pono e kgothetseng e tla re bonang re fetohile re bile re ntlafetse lemong sa 2034, ha Unibesithi ya Freistata e tla be e keteka lemo tse 130 e thehilwe. Kamora selemo se le seng feela, ditlamorao tsa pono ena di se di bonahala kahare ho ditsha tsa rona tsa thuto hammoho le dibaka tse re potapotileng.

Tlhahiso ena ya *Bult* e tletse ka pale tsa bokgabane, tlhokomelo, toka setjhabeng, boqapi le tshusumetso, boikarabello le diathikele ka mesebetsi ya rona e mengata ya botsitso le dipatlisiso. Lemong tse leshome tse tlang, re tla tswelapela ho nehela karolo ya phatlalatsao ena ho engwe ya mehopolo ya *Ponelopele 130* ka ho kgetheha.

Diphihlello tsohle tsa basebetsi, baithuti le baithuti ba mehleng e ya ketekwa ebile e ya hlontjhoa. Lemo sena ke se atlehehleng haholo hlakoreng la dikgau le mekete – o ka kgutlela morao ho tsona karolong e ikgethileng ya dihlooho tsena. Re kopa o ikopanye le sehlopha sa bohlophisi ha o ikutlwa o na le tjheseho ya ho kgothatsa setjhaba ka pale ya hao – haholo ha o le karolo ya baithuti ba rona ba mehleng, o le kahara naha kapa mose ho mawatle.

Re leboha haholo ka tshehetso ya kamehla le thahasello ya hao mesebetsing ya rona.

Tumeduso e mofuthu
ke Editorial Team



Jan van der Merwe, Diagnosis, 2013, Rusted metal, 154 x 154 x 136 cm. From the UFS Art Collection.

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A flight towards *Vision 130*

Celebrations can release endorphins, dopamine, serotonin, and other chemicals of joy. It is an investment in your physical and mental health! This year, the UFS community enjoyed many celebrations after all the restrictions and reservations on gatherings ended. During the annual 2023 Women's Breakfast, women staff members were treated to a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The event simulated a flight towards *Vision 130* that will conclude in 2034. For a couple of hours, attendees laughed, cried, and were inspired beyond measure.



Photo: Stephen Collett

WELCOME TO
FLIGHT 2034



Vice-Chancellor's Concert 2023: A Night of Musical Brilliance and Inspiration

The theme for this year's marvel in early September was, 'We can all make this world brighter'. It was enjoyed both on and off stage, as the energy in the venue lifted spirits and inspired magnificence. This event should definitely be on your 2024 calendar.



Photos: Sonia Small



Photo: Supplied

Fostering collaboration in language education

Earlier this year, a group of language departments from the Faculty of The Humanities hosted a symposium that brought together educators, scholars, and experts in the field of language teaching and language acquisition. Collaborative structures are being piloted to ensure that the momentum created by this symposium is kept.



Photo: Sonia Small



Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Sebatso Tsaoane, and Prof Bonang Mohale, UFS Chancellor.

Alumni Awards

During our 38th Chancellor's Distinguished Alumni Awards dinner, the university honoured 10 outstanding alumni for their achievements in both their personal and professional capacities.

They are:

- Chancellor's Distinguished Alumna of the Year: Gerda Steyn
- Young Alumna of the Year: Sebatso Tsaoane (pictured here)
- Executive Management Award: Prof Francois Strydom | Prof Abdon Atangana
- Cum Laude Award: Dr Solomon Werta | Dr Maryam Amra Jordaan (also read the profile of Dr Jordaan on p. 35) | Prof Andries Stulting
- Kowsie Ambassador Award: Rehan Greeff | Uyleta Nel-Marais | Elizabeth Mokgosi

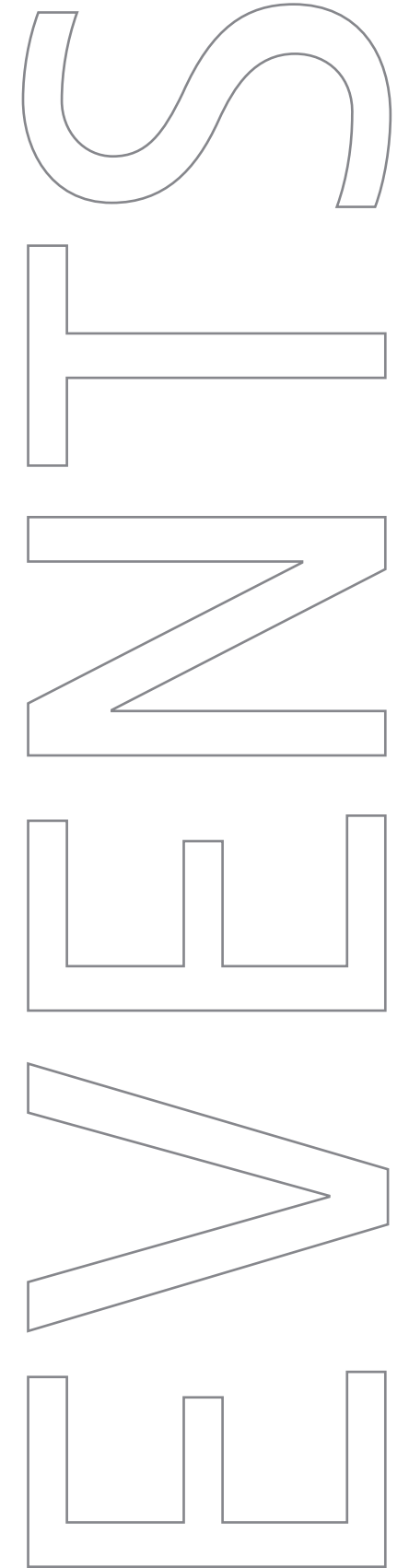




Photo: Stephen Collett

We honour 1 610 years of service

At our Recognition of Service Awards ceremony, we celebrated 21 retiring and 23 long-serving employees who have dedicated 25 years or more to the university. Together, these celebrated individuals contributed 1 610 years of service to the UFS.

Women's Month: Turning victims into victors

In August, the UFS Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Office (GEADO), in conjunction with Organisational Development and Employee Well-Being, hosted the Victim to Victor Dignity Kit Handover. Dignity kits are specially curated packages designed to cater for the needs of gender-based violence victims and to help them maintain their dignity during crisis situations. Grizelda Grootboom and Alison Botha were guest speakers.

Photos: Stephen Collett



Watch



Photo: Stephen Collett

Thought-Leader Series: A culture of acceptance – is this South Africa's greatest threat?

During a chilly winter, some of our brightest minds heated up the thought waves on campus and online. At one of our several sessions in the Thought-Leader series, Profs Francis Petersen, Bonang Mohale, Piet Croucamp, and Drs Sipho Pityana and Lindie Koorts addressed a critical question we all have: Which battle do you pick?

School of Accountancy hosts the sixth annual Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu lecture

The Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA), in partnership with the Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority (FASSET), presented the sixth annual Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu lecture in the Equitas Auditorium on the Bloemfontein Campus in the form of a hybrid event. Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu was the first black chartered accountant in South Africa.



Photo: Stephen Collett



Watch

UFS hosts national Global Change Conference

In early 2023, the university hosted researchers, members of industry and government, business-people, funders, and foreign diplomatic missions for the fifth National Global Change Conference. The purpose of the conference is to share and debate current local research and development initiatives that form part of the Global Change Grand Challenge (GCC5) – one of the focus areas developed under the Department of Science and Innovation's Ten-Year Innovation Plan.

Photo: Henco Myburg



African Society for Business, Law, and Economics first annual conference

The Department of Mercantile Law hosted the first Annual African Conference on Business, Law, and Economics (ACBLE) in conjunction with the Department of Mercantile Law at the University of Western Cape (UWC) during September 2023. This was the first revolving conference to be hosted under the activities of the African Society for Business, Law, and Economics.



BBetter BSafe

The 'BBetter, BSafe' Campus Safety Awareness Campaign prioritised safety and well-being among students and staff at the university. This collaborative effort between Protection Services, Organisational Development and Employee Well-Being, and University Estates aimed to raise awareness, provide practical demonstrations, and engage with experts and authorities to ensure a comprehensive approach to safety. Yusuf Abramjee was the guest speaker.

Photo: Stephen Collett

Experts from 16 countries discuss the Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever virus

In partnership with Sweden's Karolinska Institute, the university hosted the first Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus (CCHFV) Africa Conference in Cape Town during May 2023. Prof Felicity Burt of the UFS and Prof Ali Mirazimi of Sweden's Karolinska Institute, who have collaborated on the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus for many years, conceived the idea of hosting the conference to allow participants from low-resource countries in Africa to attend. Experts from 16 countries – including 12 African countries – discussed the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus.



Photo: Supplied



Photo: Supplied

Publication fair sheds light on the world of theological scholarship

The Faculty of Theology and Religion's Research Committee hosted a publication fair. This event brought together scholars, students, and academics to share and discuss the culmination of their research efforts. Attendees also explored an array of academic journals and engaged with publishers and researchers, providing a comprehensive overview of developments in the theological academic world.



Watch

Life and legacy of Bram Fischer

The second annual Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture was delivered by Prof Stephen Clingman from the University of Massachusetts, a renowned biographer of Bram Fischer. The lecture, titled 'Bram Fischer, or what happens when the world becomes inhospitable,' examined the enduring relevance of the anti-apartheid icon in both South African and global contexts. The event celebrated Fischer's commitment to justice and to making the world more hospitable. Prof Clingman explored Fischer's life and the ethical dilemmas he faced as a lawyer challenging oppressive laws. Also attending the event was Ilse Fischer Wilson – Bram Fischer's daughter – and her husband, Dr Tim Wilson. Justice Albie Sachs, a UFS honorary doctorate recipient, his daughter, and Fischer's other daughter, Ruth Rice, joined virtually. Pictured are, from the left, front: Prof Serges Kamga, Dean of the Faculty of Law; Prof Clingman; Fischer Wilson; renowned author and advocate, Tembeka Ngcukaitobi, who provided a thoughtful response; back: Prof Danie Brand, Director of the Free State Centre for Human Rights at the UFS.

Photo: Stephen Collett

Book discussion

Three authors, **Prof Saleem Badat** (UFS), Premesh Lalu (UWC), and Wahbie Long (UCT) explored the lasting legacy of apartheid during a discussion titled 'Apartheid's Legacy: Ghosts, Psyche and Trauma'. In his book, *Tennis, Apartheid and Social Justice*, Prof Badat details the first non-racial tour of Europe by black tennis players. You can order the book here: UKZN Press – email Edwin Ramthew at ramthew@ukzn.ac.za, or phone 033 260 5802.

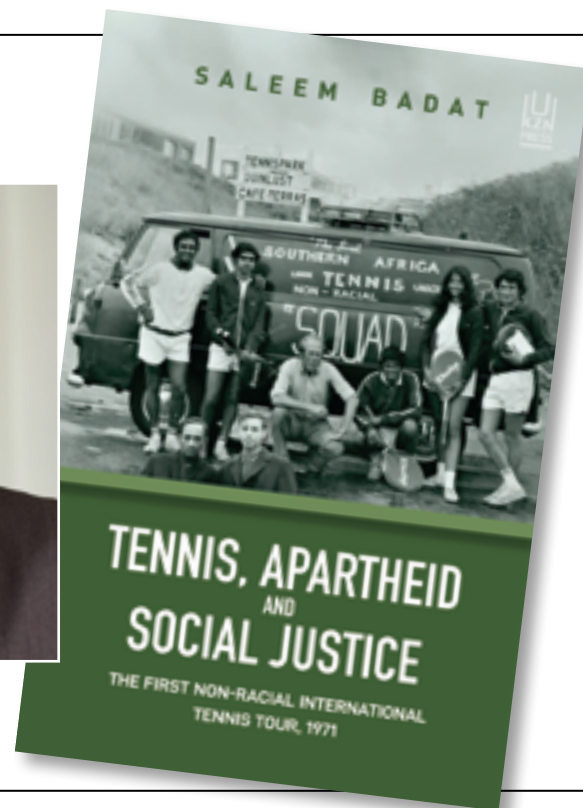


Photo and cover design: Supplied

The future of teaching and learning

During our Teaching and Learning Conference, educators, students, and thought leaders across the educational spectrum focused on reshaping the future of education. Discussions revolved around creating adaptable, career-ready graduates capable of navigating an ever-evolving job market. Fifty-three papers were delivered in seven different categories over the three conference days.



Photo: Supplied

Matriculant of the Year

Towards the end of 2023, the top 25 entrants received bursaries from the UFS before the top 14 finalists progressed to the announcement event of the 42nd Matriculant of the Year Competition. The competition serves not only as a celebration of academic achievement, but also as a platform for the holistic development of young minds, moulding them into leaders, athletes, artists, and compassionate community members. **Michael de Bruyn**, the head boy of Futurum Akademie in Tadcaster near Jan Kempdorp in the Northern Cape, was the winner.



Photo: Supplied

Top performer breakfast abroad


Scholars from nine schools in Namibia gathered at two separate locations – Swakopmund and Windhoek – for a UFS breakfast event, accompanied by their parents and headmasters. Participating schools included Walvis Bay Private School, Pro-Ed Academy, St Paul's College, Windhoek Gymnasium, and Duneside, Namib, Windhoek, and St George's High Schools. To realise our strategic objective and Vision 130, the UFS will continue to broaden and deepen our global footprint. Pictured is Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, with a group of Walvis Bay Private School learners. 



Photo: Supplied



Celebrating twenty years of one university, three campuses

On 29 September 2023, the university celebrated its 20th Multicampus Anniversary on our Qwaqwa Campus in the Eastern Free State. Attendees were welcomed by Dr Martin Mandew, Campus Principal: Qwaqwa Campus before Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, delivered a congratulatory message and presented certificates of acknowledgement to employees. The Dr TK Mopeli Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr Elias Maletle, Senior Lecturer and Academic Head of the Department of African Languages in the Faculty of The Humanities at the university. The lecture, titled 'The Legacy of Dr TK Mopeli: His Bloodline Leadership Traits', reflected on the legacy of Dr Mopeli, one of the leading champions in the founding of the Qwaqwa Campus.

Photos: Sonia Small, Ian van Straaten





Photo: Supplied

Facilitating inclusivity for all campus life programmes and infrastructure

Maso Moerane received a South African Association for Senior Student Affairs Professionals Award (SAASSAP) in the category: Universal Access and Inclusion. Moerane is a Liaison, Advocacy and Awareness Officer in the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS) and was commended for the use of innovative strategies in increasing participation. She appreciates the support for universally accessible practices, infrastructure, and services to ensure the equitable participation of all students.



Photo: Sonia Small

Prof Francis Petersen recognised nationally and internationally

Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, was recognised as one of the individuals making an impact on Africa's development when he received the RUFORUM Recognition Award for his outstanding leadership, foresight, and contribution to the promotion of excellence in higher education on the continent. Through his visibility internationally and the promotion of the impact of the UFS and South Africa abroad, but specifically in the United Kingdom (UK), he was appointed to the Board of the South African Chamber of Commerce UK. He was also recently appointed as the Chairperson of the Board of Universities South Africa (USAf).

International Award for Department of Nuclear Medicine

A research paper by a Senior Lecturer and Medical Specialist in the Department of Nuclear Medicine, **Dr Osayande Evbuomwan**, has won the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) International Best Abstract Award for South Africa. The abstract was about evaluating the efficacy of a new nuclear medicine radiopharmaceutical in the identification of active disease in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. It was selected for this award by a special committee at the recently concluded SNMMI 2023 Annual Meeting, which took place between 24 and 27 June in Chicago, USA.



Photo: Supplied

Nthabiseng Jafta receives a feather in her literary cap

Nthabiseng (JahRose) Jafta, Publishing Coordinator at African Languages Press in Library and Information Services, recently received the Silver Medal Award and other accolades at the Eurasian Literary Festival held in Egypt. Jafta, an MA scholar (Creative Writing) at Rhodes University, describes herself as an international performing poet, artpreneur, teacher, festival curator, content developer, and creative strategist born in the Free State. She says writing is a way of life for her and she writes anywhere and anytime.



Two academics ranked top 50 in Social Sciences and Humanities in SA

Prof Melanie Walker from the Higher Education and Human Development research group and SARCHI Chair: Higher Education and Human Development, and **Prof Ivan Turok** from the South African National Research Foundation, who holds the Research Chair in Strengthening Urban Economies: People, Place, Production and Policy, are ranked 41st (ranked 5 286 in the world) and 20th (2 825) in South Africa, respectively. According to the Research.com website, the best scientists ranking is a credible list of leading scientists in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities, established by means of a meticulous analysis of 166 880 scholars determined from multiple bibliometric data sources.



Photo: Supplied

Photos: Supplied





Photo: Supplied

Prof Stephen Brown.

Prof Stephen Brown honoured with the Council Medal for outstanding service

Prof Stephen Brown, recipient of the UFS Council Medal for outstanding service at this year's autumn graduation ceremonies, was nominated by his peers. He is the Principal Specialist and Head of the Division of Paediatric Cardiology in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Prof Brown and his team of paediatric heart specialists have initiated an outreach programme back in 2016, allowing them to travel to rural areas in the Free State to diagnose heart defects in babies early.



Photo: Sonia Small

Prof Adipala Ekwamu.

Prof Adipala Ekwamu receives an Honorary Doctorate

Prof Adipala Ekwamu began his academic career with a BSc degree in Agriculture at the Makerere University in Uganda. Four years later – in 1980 – he received an MSc in Agriculture from the same institution and completed a PhD in Plant Pathology at the Ohio State University in the USA in 1992. In addition to mentoring hundreds of students, starting several journals, and serving in many capacities, one of his biggest accomplishments was mobilising close to one billion US dollars for higher education in Africa as Executive Secretary: Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM).



Photo: Supplied

Dr Dave Pepler.

Honorary Doctorate conferred on Dave Pepler, illustrious ecologist and naturalist

In April 2023, the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences conferred an Honorary Doctorate in Zoology upon Dr Dave Pepler – nature enthusiast and conservation philosopher – for his significant contribution to society as ecologist, naturalist, and environmentalist. Dr Pepler has published many peer-reviewed articles and contributed chapters in academic literature. Some of his recent work has been published in *Violence against Nature* and *Morality of Ecology*.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE and honouring outstanding achievements

Prof Peter Vale receives an Honorary Doctorate in Humanities

Prof Vale is a leading scholar in the field of international relations and has been widely published in academia, as well as in the popular media. Most recently, he has written about race and the making of international relations, the Johannesburg roots of the discipline, and the role of cartoons in the making of Afrikaner nationalism. He has won numerous awards and delivered the EH Carr memorial lecture in 2014, which is considered the most prestigious event on the international relations calendar.



Photo: Supplied

Prof Peter Vale.



Photo: Stephen Collett

Dr Maye Musk.

Honorary doctorate best thing to happen to her, says Dr Maye Musk

▶ Watch

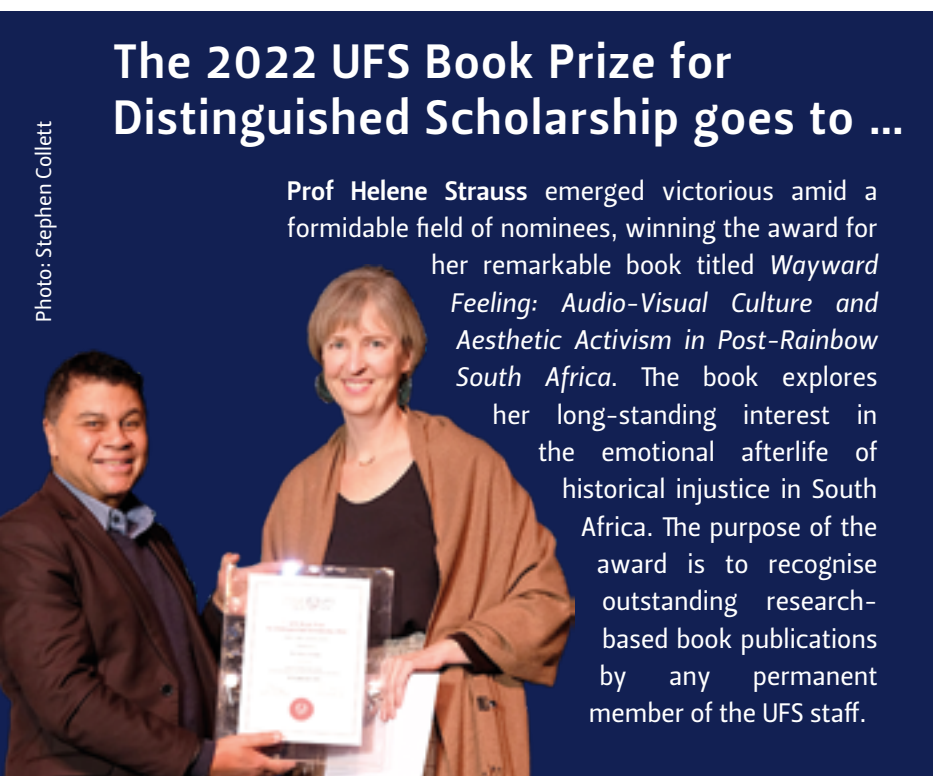
Dr Maye Musk received an honorary doctorate for her contribution to the field of Dietetics during a special graduation ceremony. In addition to her work as a dietitian, she was the first Representative of the Consulting Dietitians of South Africa, President of the Consulting Dietitians of Canada, and Chair of the Nutrition Entrepreneurs, Academy of Dietetics and Nutrition. After the ceremony, the 40th anniversary of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics was celebrated with a luncheon attended by staff and students of the department, alumni, and professionals.



Photo: Reuben Maeko

Dr William Mhundwa first UFS graduate to receive prestigious Suzman Medal

Dr William Mhundwa, Senior Registrar in the Department of Internal Medicine, has become the first candidate from the institution to be awarded the prestigious Suzman Medal as the top student in the 2022 examinations of the Fellowship of the College of Physicians (FCP). Candidates from all medical schools in the country, as well as other African countries, wrote this examination in January and July 2022. Dr Mhundwa came out on top and was awarded the medal by the Senate of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA), which oversees the examinations. Pictured with Dr Mhundwa are Prof Thabiso Mofokeng (left), Head of Department: Internal Medicine, and Dr Busiswa Bisiwe, Head of the Unit: Nephrology.



The 2022 UFS Book Prize for Distinguished Scholarship goes to ...

Prof Helene Strauss emerged victorious amid a formidable field of nominees, winning the award for her remarkable book titled *Wayward Feeling: Audio-Visual Culture and Aesthetic Activism in Post-Rainbow South Africa*. The book explores her long-standing interest in the emotional afterlife of historical injustice in South Africa. The purpose of the award is to recognise outstanding research-based book publications by any permanent member of the UFS staff.



Photo: Sonia Small

Another international award for Prof Abdon Atangana

Prof Abdon Atangana, Professor of Applied Mathematics in the Institute for Groundwater Studies (IGS), was one of five young scientists who were awarded the first UNESCO-AI Fozan International Prize for the Promotion of Young Scientists in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). He received this award for his contribution to mathematics and applications, fractional differential and integral calculus with non-singular and nonlocal kernel, fractal-fractional differential and integral calculus.



EXTERNAL AWARDS



Photo: Supplied

Prof Rodney Moffett receives prestigious award from SA Association of Botanists

Prof Rodney Moffett, Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Plant Sciences and Top Research Fellow in the Afromontane Research Unit (2018-2019) on the Qwaqwa Campus, has been awarded a Silver Medal from the South African Association of Botanists (SAAB) for his outstanding research that contributed to the advancement of botany and plant sciences in South Africa, during their 48th annual conference in Polokwane. Since his retirement, Prof Moffet has published a number of book chapters, books, reports, and articles on various aspects of fauna and flora. At the ceremony were, from the left: Prof Glynis Goodman-Cron, SAAB President, Prof Moffett, and Prof Sandy-Lynn Steenhuisen.

Dr Prince Sarpong awarded ACCA prize for financial management

Dr Prince Sarpong, Senior Lecturer in the School of Financial Planning Law (SFPL), was recently honoured with the prestigious Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) prize for Financial Management. The ACCA is a globally recognised professional body for accountants. Dr Sarpong's research primarily revolves around financial market behaviour – he has published several papers in esteemed international peer-reviewed journals. Obtaining an ACCA qualification opens doors to new opportunities in teaching, research, and collaborative endeavours. [b](#)



Photo: Supplied

New talent joining the UFS ranks


Prof Mogomme Masoga was appointed as Dean: Faculty of The Humanities at the UFS. Prof Masoga holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of the Free State. He began his academic career with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where he proceeded to complete two honours and a master's degree. He received a second Master of Arts in Musicology from the University of South Africa. Prof Masoga has an excellent research publication record within the broad niche area of oral history, Africanism, and indigenous knowledge system studies.



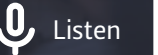
Prof Nicolene Barkhuizen was appointed as Director: Business School. Prof Barkhuizen holds a PhD in Industrial Psychology from the North-West University. She began her academic career as a research assistant at the same institution before gaining lecturing experience at the University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria, among others. Her research output to date has resulted in more than 150 accredited research publications, 180 peer-reviewed conference presentations, two books, and eight book chapters. She is regarded as the leading author on talent management on the African continent.

Prof Vasu Reddy was appointed as Vice-Rector: Research and Internationalisation at the university. He completed a BA, BAHons, and an HDE at the University of Natal (Durban), a master's at Wits University, and a PhD in Gender Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He began his career as a lecturer in languages, comparative literature, and gender studies at the same institution in 1993, before moving through the ranks as senior lecturer, associate professor, honorary professor, and research fellow. He has been involved in partnerships with civil society organisations and some multilateral agencies, which have resulted in successful research collaborations with scholars and activists in South Africa and abroad.



Prof Serges Kamga was appointed as Dean: Faculty of Law at the UFS. Prof Kamga holds an LL.D degree in Human Rights Law from the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria. He has also worked as a researcher at the South African Institute for Advanced Constitutional, Public, Human Rights and International Law (SAIFAC). As a researcher, he has published in accredited journals and presented papers at various national and international conferences. In 2021, he received the prestigious Ali Mazrui Award for Scholarship and Research Excellence from the University of Texas at Austin in the USA. 

Photos: Sonia Small, Supplied



COUPLEPRENEURS:

stirring legacies, one kidpreneur at a time!

After years of hard work, the lonely entrepreneur rode off into the sunset. No family. No one to share the lived experience with. The entrepreneurial journey can be a recipe for loneliness. However, it does not have to be, you can enjoy an entrepreneurial family that leaves a legacy.

Dr Tafadzwa Maramura, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration and Management at the UFS, participated in a study with Drs Eugene Maziriri (University of Johannesburg), Miston Mapuranga (University of Pretoria), Brighton Nyagadza (Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences) on couplepreneurs and ways in which they influence their children to become better entrepreneurs. The interinstitutional study drew on several fields of expertise and was a fresh addition to the research on access to water that Dr Maramura is doing.

Couplepreneurship is a concept that explains businesses owned and operated by married and/or cohabiting couples. According to Dr Maramura: "The development of couplepreneurship in

South Africa as an emerging economy has led to increasing interest in the study of how kids are inspired and/or influenced by their parents towards starting their own and to participate in the already existing family enterprises."

Couplepreneurs are in a great position to raise kidpreneurs. Who better to listen to the heroic stories of how mom and dad started off with a big dream, growth mindsets, and steadfast commitment to building their business than their offspring? Like teaching a person how to fish rather than giving them fish, couplepreneurs do not hand their kids a business, they teach them how to run and grow a business.


Dr Maramura believes that nurturing an entrepreneurial potential is the result of "encouraging resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to embrace failure, even as a learning opportunity". Combine this with an environment that promotes creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, and you have the recipe for a kidpreneur to become an entrepreneur. Now add more ingredients: parents who offer support, mentorship, and exposure to diverse experiences. Put it in the heated oven called business – and you have created the meal all entrepreneurs crave: Legacy. 

Photo: Igno van Niekerk

Eight things we do to make tomorrow better

The most popular definition of sustainability is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Simply put, sustainability refers to the capacity to maintain or support a process continuously over time. The UFS prides itself in several sustainable practices and research to encourage a balanced use and application of resources. We are going green!

Alternative energy on campus



A flagship renewable energy project is the installation of solar plants across the three campuses in response to the call for urgent solutions to load-shedding problems and promoting sustainable, clean energy solutions. The photovoltaic (PV) systems are grid-tied without storage to ensure maximum benefits and faster payback periods. And the microgrid installation on the Qwaqwa Campus is one of the biggest solar-diesel hybrid systems installed in South Africa. The university has saved up to R32,5 million since the first solar plant was commissioned in 2017. Our energy consumption has decreased by 14,5% since 2017, even though the gross surface area of the university has grown by 8,8%. UFS carbon emissions have shown a significant reduction over the years – from 0.115 CO₂/m² in 2013 to 0.088 CO₂/m² in 2022 – making it a frontrunner in low carbon emissions among South African higher education institutions.

Using water wisely on campus

The university has been implementing innovative waterwise and greywater initiatives over the past couple of years in response to continuous local drought conditions and sporadic water restrictions, replacing large expanses of lawn with hard elements and paving, as well as waterwise indigenous plants, including a range of hardy succulents. Rainwater harvesting systems have been fitted at all residences and academic buildings. Other water-saving initiatives include greywater systems installed at residences, waterless urinals in administrative and academic buildings, water restrainers, pressure control systems (reducing the volume of water), and push-button systems instead of taps.

Photo: Supplied

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Save money, save the environment

A new, reusable sanitary pad (RSP) will bring relief to many women during their menstrual cycle. Dr Marietjie Schutte-Smith, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, together with Prof Deon Visser, Head of the Department of Chemistry, and Prof Lizette Erasmus, Associate Professor in the same department, are leading a diverse and innovative team. They decided to do something about the challenge of not having access to conventional sanitary ware and water due to poverty and infrastructure challenges – obstacles that many young women in South Africa face every month. A product that can be washed and dried indoors, has antibacterial and antimicrobial properties under normal light conditions, and with durable superabsorbent inner layers, could be the solution.

Fuel research

Biogas, produced from the spineless cactus, can help solve our energy crisis, says Axel Tarrisse, a PhD student in the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development at the UFS. It has the potential to complement the supply of South Africa's existing industrial energy companies to produce sustainable jet fuel and diesel and a variety of other products with the gas-to-liquid process they use. The spineless cactus is a unique perennial plant that can yield close to 40 tons of dry matter per hectare per year with a rainfall of 500 mm per annum. This equates eight tons of biomethane or 11 000 litres of diesel-equivalent energy per hectare. With rainfall, key nutrients, carbon dioxide, and solar energy, it is possible to produce biomass from cactus, says Tarrisse. Besides the benefits of producing biogas from the cactus plant, there is also the opportunity for job creation.

3. Pictured are, from the left: Prof Katinka de Wet, Dr Marietjie Schutte-Smith, Prof Deon Visser, and Prof Lizette Erasmus.
4. Axel Tarrisse believes biogas produced from the spineless cactus can help solve our energy crisis.

Food security

A healthy, tasty, and nutritious snack? Sounds like a typical health and wellness consumer trap – but it is not. Addressing the issue of food security in South Africa, Dr Brandon van Rooyen from the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development and Manager of the Food Innovation Laboratory at the UFS, teamed up with Prof Wilna Oldewage-Theron, Professor of Nutrition from Texas State University (USA) and Research Fellow in the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development, to develop nutritious products tailored to the needs of the low-income population. Their soya sausage costs less than the hot-dog bun you serve it in. They have also developed soya nuts in original, barbeque, fruit chutney, and hot and spicy flavours. Taste tests in the market are currently underway and feedback will be used to improve the products.

Clean water to combat cholera

Dr Yolandi Schoeman, a postdoctoral researcher in the Centre for Environmental Management (CEM), says cholera, a severe diarrhoeal disease caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*, has been a significant concern in South Africa. Cholera outbreaks often occur in areas with poor sanitation, inadequate access to clean water, and overcrowding. Contaminated water sources, such as rivers or wells, become breeding grounds for the bacterium, which is then transmitted through contaminated food and water. In response to the recent cholera outbreaks in South Africa, a team from CEM, in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), is at the forefront of developing a ground-breaking solution that aims to revolutionise low-cost

5. Addressing the issue of food security in South Africa are, from the left: Dr Brandon van Rooyen, Ingrid Woodrow – Chief Executive Officer of SAAFoST, Prof Wilna Oldewage-Theron, and Prof JW Swanepoel from the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development.



Watch

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Photos: Supplied



Listen

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Photo: Dr Willem Daifue

8

domestic wastewater treatment and transform the country's water infrastructure in rural areas. This innovative approach is centred around ecological engineering and offers a promising solution to the pressing water security concerns and increased pollution risks facing the nation.

Prof Paul Oberholster, Director of CEM, says the centre has introduced a range of natural-based solutions, including phytoremediation, phytoremediation, and microbial bioremediation. Implementing these ecological engineering solutions provides transformative opportunities for small to medium-sized wastewater treatment works in South Africa. By incorporating these technologies, local communities can enhance treatment capacity, create employment opportunities, and recycle materials, while benefiting from cost-effective and environmentally conscious solutions. Upgrading existing treatment works becomes feasible, reducing the need for significant infrastructure investments. CEM's work has already demonstrated its efficacy and potential by piloting these advanced treatment technologies in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. Further research and capacity-building efforts within South Africa will enable the widespread implementation of these solutions and address the unique challenges that small and medium municipalities face.

Trees tell all

Long-lived trees store environmental information in their growth rings, acting as living libraries. By applying stable carbon isotope analysis to collected wood samples from indigenous trees,

we can extend our current, limited instrumental climate records by using proxy climate data from the growth rings of trees. In 2018, Prof Stephan Woodborne and colleagues proved that *Vachellia erioloba* (camel-thorn trees) act as trustworthy libraries, providing a 250-year precipitation record for the southern parts of Botswana. Marthie Kemp from the Centre for Environmental Management is currently extending the geographical distribution of the stable isotope network from camel thorn growth rings to the central, arid parts of South Africa. Sustainability can only be achieved if we know our planetary boundaries. One of those boundaries is climate change. In order to become more resilient to climate change, our current reactive response to droughts and floods in Southern Africa needs to become more proactive. These extreme events can be predicted with more accuracy if our regional climate models are calibrated and tested, using long-term (>150 yr) proxy climate data from growth rings.

Into the wild

Prof Francois Deacon is Associate Professor in the Department of Animal Science. He has dedicated most of his research to giraffe conservation, using innovative research tools such as GPS collars and unmanned aerial vehicles with great success. Currently, he is branching out his research field to rhinos, where he is part of an international project on rhinos in Indonesia and Pakistan. By invitation from the Minister of Climate and Environmental Affairs, he is also part of a research project on brown bears in the Himalayas in Pakistan – a species about which little is known – with an estimated number of 20-30 individuals left. [b](#)

6. According to Dr Yolandi Schoeman, cholera is a significant concern in South Africa.

7. Marthie Kemp from the Centre for Environmental Management.

8. Prof Francois Deacon joined a group of rangers who GPS-collared and tracked down Himalayan brown bear in the Deosai National Park.

Access the *Sesotho* article here.

Dr Catherine Namakula is Senior Lecturer of Public Law at the University of the Free State and a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. In her latest book, *Fair Trial Rights and Multilingualism in Africa*, she incorporates a 'language-fair trial rights code' – an amalgamation of 31 principles proven by case law and trial practice as best approaches to ensuring language-fair trial rights.

No compromise: LANGUAGE-FAIR trial rights

Photo: Sonia Small

The code advances the minimum language guarantees for vulnerable participants, especially persons with speech and hearing disabilities, sign language users, accused persons making confessions, and victims of gender-based or sexual violence. *Bult* discussed her research in more depth with her.

Your research spans multiple jurisdictions in Africa, from the Sahel region to the Horn of Africa and the Cape. What country-specific practices have you found regarding fair trial rights in these regions?

Language-fair trial rights are entrenched as constitutional imperatives in many African countries. They are non-negotiable. Nigerian and Kenyan courts have exceeded rhetoric and lip service to language-fair trial rights and actually declared trials absolute nullities due to lack of comprehension of proceedings by accused persons. Indigenous languages are languages of record in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, and Tanzania. Rwanda elevates the standard of linguistic competence of an accused to thorough competency, whereas in Lesotho this translates to the mother tongue. In Canada, even jury panellists are subjected to language competency tests, and in South Africa, judges are assigned cases according to their proficiency in the language indicated by the trial participants as the preferred language of trial. Almost all the studied countries express no compromise on the principle that a confession must be recorded in the language used by the person making it.

Multilingualism is a significant challenge in legal processes across Africa. What were some of the most common issues or difficulties related to language that you identified during your research, and how do these impact the fairness of trials?


There is a gap bordering on disconnection between the formal courts and the population they serve – to the extent that legal processes are perceived as elitist and foreign, mainly because of the language question. Trials require unequivocal expressions, whereas African tradition for the most part considers sexual language

as pervasive. This constrains the trial and punishment of sexual violence. Investment in the standardisation of sign languages is limited, making the trial of persons with speech disabilities in their 'home-made' languages impracticable. There is heavy reliance on translation and interpreting to propel trials, often leading to resource constraints and recourse to controversial measures, such as engaging police officers as interpreters. Transplanting African customs from indigenous languages to fit court situations by way of translation leads to loss of meaning and watering down of concepts. African courts battle with evaluating interpretative competency against the backdrop of a lack of training of judicial interpreters on the continent. Measuring linguistic comprehension is an actual challenge for courts, often manifesting in asking people whether they know what they do not know, but this research presents the objective test based on special circumstances advanced by the Supreme Court of Justice of Ontario that would resolve this hurdle.

Your book also mentions the potential applicability of lessons from African jurisdictions to those outside of Africa.

Contrary to popular opinion, the study confirms that African languages are already serving as channels for trials; they are not merely colloquial speech, but carriers of identities and human dignity. They should not be ignored but recognised and promoted. A trial that must proceed in a language that an accused person does not understand is a trial in *absentia* and the safeguards governing such trials must apply.

As the legal landscape and languages in Africa continue to evolve, what recommendations or measures do you propose to improve existing approaches to ensuring fair trials in multilingual contexts?

Decolonial discourse and reparation to Africa from the legacies of enslavement, colonialism, and apartheid should characterise the rise in esteem of African languages in all spheres of society. The use of intermediaries in Kenya and South Africa to protect and support vulnerable victims – especially children and victims of gender-based violence – in their communication with the courts should be emulated by other countries and extended to persons who are illiterate, in order to mitigate the intimidating sophistication of the courts on our people. 

Infant body composition research REVOLUTIONISED with new PEA POD TECHNOLOGY



Access the Afrikaans article here.

Listen

Photo: Sonia Small

Nutritional and growth patterns during early life have been associated with health, development, and well-being throughout the life cycle. It is also associated with risks for developing obesity and non-communicable diseases, such as cardiometabolic diseases, later in life. These are the findings of **Prof Corinna Walsh**, Professor in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics.

“In line with national priorities, a strong research focus area of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences is maternal and child health,” she says. She goes on to mention that the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics has established a reputable research programme. This programme focuses primarily on the nutritional status of pregnant women and how the early environment to which they are exposed during and after pregnancy affects short- and long-term health outcomes of the offspring.

“In our previous work, the assessment of birth outcomes of infants was, however, limited by the lack of equipment to analyse body composition. The research that we can conduct with the PEA POD® provides us with immense additional potential,” remarks Prof Walsh.

She explains, “The PEA POD Infant Body Composition System is an infant-sized air displacement plethysmography system. It works by directly measuring an infant’s body weight and volume, and then uses these measurements to calculate the body fat percentage, fat mass, and fat-free mass.”

According to her, the assessment of body volume takes two minutes. “The PEA POD technique also

does not require collection of any fluids and does not expose the infant to radiation. It can be performed as often as required without any risks and be used up to a maximum of 8-10 kg body weight, from birth to about eight months,” she says.

In the context of research on infant body weight and composition, there is a need for accurate measurement techniques that can differentiate between fat mass and fat-free mass. Prof Walsh is of the opinion that traditional measures such as body mass index (BMI) and weight for length have limitations in this regard, as they do not provide a clear distinction between these components, which change significantly during infancy. Furthermore, BMI may not be reliable for assessing adiposity or obesity in paediatric populations, and it can vary significantly with age and gender.

Addressing these challenges, the PEA POD equipment offers advanced technology that allows for highly accurate quantification of infant body composition. This technological capability opens up opportunities to study the effects of early-life nutrition on growth and the developmental mechanisms that may lead to later comorbidities. So, when it comes to researching infant body weight and composition, the PEA POD equipment plays a crucial role in providing precise data and insights. [b](#)



Dr Grey Magaiza:

passionate about
empowering communities
to thrive on their own

Photo: Sonia Small

“The future should be one where communities can decide on their development agenda and futures. That’s the most important for me.” Dr Grey Magaiza, Deputy Director of the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies (CGAS) and Head of the Community Development programme on the Qwaqwa Campus, is passionate about capacitating communities to be agents of change and advancement. His vision for the future emphasises the empowerment of communities to take charge of their development by actively participating in decision making and the implementation of development projects that can improve their lives.

Since joining the UFS in 2008, Dr Magaiza has worked extensively on approaches that can foster the socio-economic transformation of societies. Over the years, he has crafted his research speciality into one that he is most proud of – being an interdisciplinary scientist immersed in the development of communities.

“I’m in a fortunate position of researching what I like. I say ‘fortunate’, because I’ve taken the time to understand what I’m passionate about, which is the overall field of rural livelihoods and livelihood futures – in short, community development. My research starts from an engaged university, understanding the elements that a university must use to enhance transformation and relevance to its immediate community in terms of development.”

One of the ways he has done this is by looking at social entrepreneurship as a development approach for young people in a rural setting. Through workshops with non-profit and civic organisations in Qwaqwa, Dr Magaiza has been helping these

organisations to map out their needs and actively meet them through the involvement and support of external role players.

“We understand that communities are part of the national development agenda, but even that national agenda respects community knowledge and intentions and allows communities to shape their identity. A critical enabler of this is community organising. You bring back the capacity in communities to have dialogues on issues affecting them as spaces for engagement, knowledge exchange, and for people to just talk about their way forward.”

By enabling communities to define their development agenda, they can address their specific needs, challenges, and aspirations, he said. “When I look at livelihood futures, it’s quite an exciting aspect of my work – it’s like looking into a fortune tellers’ globe, because you’re not deciding for communities what they should do, but the communities themselves take those decisions.”

UFS scientists contribute to the battle against cancer

Cancer stands as a prominent contributor to deaths worldwide, with a big impact on families and communities. Prostate cancer is one of the leading causes of mortality in the world. The recent diagnoses of cervical cancer are 10 702 annually, with 5 870 patients passing away. Female breast cancer surpassed lung cancer as the most commonly diagnosed cancer in 2020 (American Cancer Society), representing 11,7% of all cancer cases, making it the fifth leading cause of cancer mortality worldwide. Researchers at the university are doing their part in the fight against cancer.

In July 2021, Dr Osayande Evbuomwan, Senior Lecturer and Medical Specialist in the Department of Nuclear Medicine, along with a team of university doctors, initiated patient treatment using radioligand therapy (RLT). This targeted nuclear medicine therapy delivers high radiation levels precisely to cancer cells, minimising damage to normal organs and tissue, a benefit not typically provided by conventional therapies.

1. Dr Osayande Evbuomwan. Photo: Sonia Small
2. Dr Nerina van der Merwe. Photo: André Damons
3. Prof Alicia Sherriff. Photo: Supplied
4. Profs Andreas Roodt and Alice Brink. Photo: Sonia Small



It was the first time that Lutetium 177 PSMA – a type of PRRT – has been used to treat patients with metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer (MCRPC) in the Free State, providing hope when standard treatments and conventional therapy are not an option. This treatment generally enhances quality of life, slows disease progression, and extends overall survival, with minimal side effects.

All three patients treated with Lu 177 PSMA so far have completed at least four therapy cycles and tolerated it well. The first two patients, while initially responding well, sadly passed away due to unrelated causes. The third case stands out as the most successful, responding excellently to seven treatment cycles and remaining in good health.

Dr Evbuomwan recently also obtained a license for a more effective therapy, AC 225 PSMA, as an alternative to Lu 177 PSMA.

Precise cervical cancer therapy

Medical personnel at the Universitas Academic Hospital also became the first in Southern Africa to use interstitial brachytherapy as a method for treating cervical cancer. Prof Alicia Sherriff, Head of the Department of Oncology, explains that brachytherapy – a form of internal radiation therapy – places the radiation source near or inside the cancer. “Precise delivery of curative doses to the cancer protects surrounding organs such as the bladder, rectum, and small bowel,” she explains.

Three to five weekly brachytherapy sessions under conscious sedation usually begins after two weeks of daily external beam radiation. On brachytherapy days, external beam radiation is not administered. “The intracavitary brachytherapy applicators are placed within the cervix and uterus and deliver high doses locally, but for surrounding tissue infiltration, additional needles are inserted via the Venezia applicator, delivering high-dose radiation while sparing organs,” says Prof Sherriff.

Their work aligns with the broader goals of the university and its commitment to advancing health care in the region by ensuring the continued growth of their skills and technology, while applying these skills to improve the possibility of disease control, cure or palliation with quality of life.


Familial breast and ovarian cancer testing

Dr Nerina van der Merwe, a principal medical scientist in the Division of Human Genetics, and colleagues are engaged in breast cancer research. They are involved in translational research using new technologies that, once validated as a first-tier diagnostic test, could revolutionise genetic testing for familial breast and ovarian cancer in South Africa when used in conjunction with genetic counselling. This parallel application is ideally suited for primary hospitals and rural clinics, as it will dramatically increase accessibility and uptake of genetic testing in rural areas.

By performing first-tier genetic testing at a community clinic, patients no longer have to be transported to tertiary hospitals for testing, and more patients and related family members who are unaware of a familial predisposition will be reached. “By warning unaffected related individuals about their potential increased risk, we can play a part in the earlier detection or diagnosis of patients, improving their cancer survival rate,” states Dr Van der Merwe.

Patenting cancer research

Prof Andreas Roodt, a retired Distinguished Professor in the Department of Chemistry, and colleagues – particularly Prof Alice Brink and co-worker Prof Roger Alberto from the University of Zurich – have published widely on the chemistry of radiopharmaceutical models. Since the 2000s, the world has introduced the concept of ‘theranostics,’ which involves the use of a single compound for both cancer detection and therapy. “These compounds contain a radioisotope that provides internal radiation for cancer detection (diagnostic) and a second part for treatment,” explains Prof Roodt.

Their research enables the high-yield preparation of compounds containing multiple isotopes often present in very low concentrations. “This allows combining diagnostic isotopes such as technetium-99m (used in >80% of diagnostic patient studies worldwide) with therapeutic radioisotopes, such as rhenium-186 (used for bone cancer therapy), with ease. Many therapeutic radioisotopes do not have good diagnostic radiation; thus, by combining the two types of radioisotopes in one medicine, the oncologist can now clearly see where the therapeutic part is going and apply more effective treatment,” he says. 

Did you hear the one about the funny lecturer?

Once upon a time, there was a monotonous teacher: the students did not like his lectures. Nothing interesting ever happened. The teacher grew old and retired. The end. Or not? According to research, teaching can be a humorous, fun, and enjoyable experience if you do it differently.

Prof Jannie Pretorius, a lecturer in the School of Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Technology, uses an engaging and humorous teaching style that keeps his Life Science and Natural Science students fascinated and engaged. When starting out at the UFS, Prof Jannie wondered about using humour in a “serious tertiary environment.” He soon discovered that students, like most other people, also enjoy appropriate humour.

Using humour in education turned into a research project, and Prof Pretorius found himself showing Mr Bean videos and watching Trevor Noah shows to develop a lesson where the impact of using intentional humour was studied by measuring students’ reactions. An example from the transcription of his class on the mating habits of the praying mantis, where the female often bites the male’s head off to eat him for nourishment, shows how fun can be integrated into learning: *So, it seems that the praying mantis is like – praying; the male is saying: ‘Please don’t eat me, Sylvia, please!’ ... (laughter) ... and she would pray back and say, ‘Please, Ronnie, I can’t resist you.’ (laughter).*

Despite the classes being fun, Prof Pretorius also cautions that it is important for teachers to be sensitive to their learners’ preferences and cultural backgrounds when using humour. “There is always an element of risk in the use of humour. As such, humour should always be used in a respectful and inclusive manner to ensure that all learners feel comfortable and included in the classroom.”


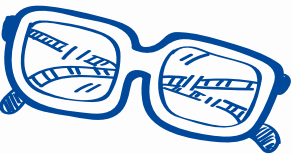
Prof Pretorius recognises that the use of humour depends on educators’ personal preferences. Ultimately, it is about what the students learn. 

Photo: Igno van Niekerk

 Access the Afrikaans article here.

 Listen



Transforming academic excellence



Photo: Sonia Small

Since the inception of the Transformation of the Professoriate Mentoring Programme at the UFS in the second half of 2019, the programme has contributed to increased research productivity, scholarly excellence, and societal impact among the group members. The programme has led to more than twenty promotions to associate professor level, three vice-dean appointments, leadership roles in academic departments, and others receiving NRF ratings. Apart from an upward career trajectory, this initiative generates a large number of excellence awards and positive feedback from participants regarding their professional and personal development.

Dr Henriëtte van den Berg, Manager of the Transformation of the Professoriate Mentoring Programme, loves seeing people succeed and find meaning in their work. “The opportunity to work with young colleagues with excellent commitment, perseverance, and enthusiasm is inspiring and energising,” she remarks.

The programme addresses different developmental and support needs, including mentoring, coaching, peer support, and a wide range of strategies aimed at quality output, increased impact, and relevance to the broader society.

“We aim to establish mentoring as a critical talent management strategy that every staff member has access to. This objective is closely aligned with the vision of the university to grow our own timber and expose staff members to opportunities to optimise their scholarly contributions and impact,” says Dr Van den Berg.

She believes that the programme provides the opportunity for the participants to clarify their career goals and to find the resources necessary to achieve these goals. Alumni who have participated in this endeavour appreciate how much they have benefited from the mentorship provided and are committed to sharing their experiences with other colleagues.

The programme is based on the best practice principles of researcher development, providing a wide array of support and development activities for all group members, while being tailored to the individual needs of participants.

Some of the top women scholars in the Transformation of the Professoriate Mentoring Programme are, from the left: Dr Ntsoaki Lucia Meko, Dr Angélique Lewies, Dr Nthatsi Nyembe, Dr Matshediso Moleko, Dr Anke Wilhelm, Dr Catherine S. Namakula, and front: Dr Maréve IM Biljohn.

Doctor's dual passion paves the way to several degrees



Photo: Supplied

Medicine and music keep him systematic and focused – skills that are crucial to being successful, according to Dr Gerhard de Bruin. He says many medical professionals have a talent and an interest in music. “It’s not just an escape from daily routine; it nurtures creativity and activates different brain hemispheres. Organisational skills are vital in medicine and music. Both require discipline and extensive practice to excel.”

Dr De Bruin, an alumnus of the UFS, is not only a dedicated paediatrician with a keen interest in pulmonology, developmental and learning disabilities, and paediatric oncology, but also a passionate organist actively pursuing a PhD in this musical discipline.

He has been providing medical care to infants, toddlers, and adolescents since 2004. After completing his MB ChB at the UFS, he lived abroad before returning to South Africa to specialise in paediatrics.

However, his passion for music was ignited earlier on. “Kovsies offered me exposure to other faculties and their workings and helped to integrate medical students into campus life, more than other campuses in the

country.” With a solid background in piano, Dr De Bruin began organ lessons at the Odeion School of Music during his second year of study. Realising that his musical skills would wane without active practise, he embraced this ‘wonderful escape’ from academia.

His doctoral music study refers to Prof Jacobus Kloppers’ work. Prof Kloppers contributed greatly to organ music in Bloemfontein during his tenure in the Department of Music in the 1970s. “I fell in love with his composition style and feel comfortable performing his works. There is growing interest in documenting his career as a South African-born composer, offering me the chance to conduct a practice-based study on the thematic underpinnings in his compositions.”

Balancing his responsibilities as a paediatrician with after-hour commitments, Dr De Bruin occasionally serves as a substitute organist to maintain proficiency and confidence in front of an audience. “Performing for yourself and others is essential to becoming a well-rounded musician.”

His commitment to his dual passions taught him that success requires consistent effort. He advises aspiring students to take continuous, small steps in the right direction to achieve their goals and realise their dreams.

Zola Valashiya's

journey of professional growth and impact


Zola Valashiya graduated from the UFS almost ten years ago with an LLB. Since then, amid life's twists and turns, he obtained an LLM from the University of Washington, secured a job with a successful law firm in the US, and married the love of his life. Currently, Zola is pursuing a second LLM in Technology and Innovation with the Seattle University School of Law.

Following the advice of a dear friend, Zola figured out what drives him and pursued it relentlessly. "This very simple piece of advice taught me the value of my time, and how much power you take back when you prioritise and protect it," he remarks.

Fast forward nine-plus years since UFS graduation day, Zola works as a strategic adviser at Coopersmith Law + Strategy, a boutique firm in Seattle specialising in health care, global health, gender/racial equality, and climate health. "The legal work I do involves various tasks, from drafting legal contracts to conducting data analysis, and developing business strategies for deploying new technologies in health systems or addressing climate change. I value this environment, because our efforts are focused on advancing the greater good. I have the opportunity to work on projects that I know will benefit individuals, communities, and the planet," says Zola.

One of the highlights of his career occurred during the pandemic when he played a key role in preserving one of the largest US training programmes for physicians from diverse backgrounds who serve marginalised communities. He explains, "The pandemic placed a strain on

health-care systems worldwide, leading to cost-cutting measures in private hospitals, the termination of community health programmes, and the closure of small clinics in remote areas, in order to recover from the financial losses. However, these programmes and clinics are vital to the communities they serve, because the nurses and doctors are often the only health-care providers for miles around. My contributions have helped to ensure the programme's continuation, and the continued delivery of quality health care to underserved communities."

For the future, Zola says he is working towards diversifying his skill set. "The modern-day lawyer needs to know more than just the law. I have learned coding skills, and I am currently focused on expanding my knowledge of artificial intelligence. In so doing, I am equipping myself with the necessary tools and expertise to thrive in this rapidly evolving field, thereby future-proofing my career. 

1. At the Bean (Cloud Gate) in Chicago.
2. In Cannon Beach, Oregon.



Listen



Photos: Supplied



"Education at the UFS was not limited to the classroom, but rather included a holistic approach that prepared me for the challenges and complexities of the world beyond academia."

– Zola Valashiya

From **mining** impact to **environmental** solutions



Photos: Chris Nelson

Only 16% of plastic gets recycled in South Africa, despite technological advancements. While the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulation of 2021 assigns post-consumer recycling responsibility to producers, substantial efforts are needed to develop effective waste management strategies, heighten public awareness, discover practical solutions, and hold plastic-producing companies accountable.


Dr **Maryam Amra Jordaan** co-founded SA Rebuilders with her husband, **Yasar Amra**, in 2016. By combining 3D printing, chemistry, and plastic recycling, they tackle socio-economic issues while prioritising environmental sustainability. As the daughter of a miner from Kimberley, Dr Jordaan is committed to mitigating the negative effects that industries have on the health, environment, and social aspects of local communities. She was honoured with an Alumni Cum Laude Award from the University of the Free State (UFS) for her work in this regard.

Dr Jordaan's academic journey at the UFS from 2001 to 2013 includes a BSc in Chemistry and Physiology, BSc Honours, MSc, and a PhD in Organic Chemistry. She dedicated five years to

lecturing and research on the Qwaqwa Campus and four years at the Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). During this time, she authored 19 pharmaceutical and environmental chemistry research papers and won numerous national and international awards. She entered the UFS with dreams of assisting in some way and ended up helping to solve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"Remarkable potential for rapid prototyping and supply chain resilience through digitisation exists, but the current energy crisis hampers the full realisation of 3D printing's potential," Dr Jordaan explains. Added to this, is the complex endeavour of becoming a 3D engineer. "Expertise in materials science and project management is equally essential. Creativity, quick

learning, and meticulous attention to detail are all characteristics necessary to excel as a 3D engineer."

Dr Jordaan stresses the need for effective waste management, awareness, practical solutions, and accountability for individuals and plastic-producing companies. Therefore, she promotes reusable and recyclable shopping bags, among others, and instils this behaviour in her children. The Amras actively seek out biodegradable product alternatives, as they are fully aware of the environmental impact of the manufacturing industry. They incorporated this ideology in the manufacturing process of organic butter by transforming the plastic waste from this process into a 3D filament. This product is currently undergoing SABS testing, after which it will be available to the local market. 

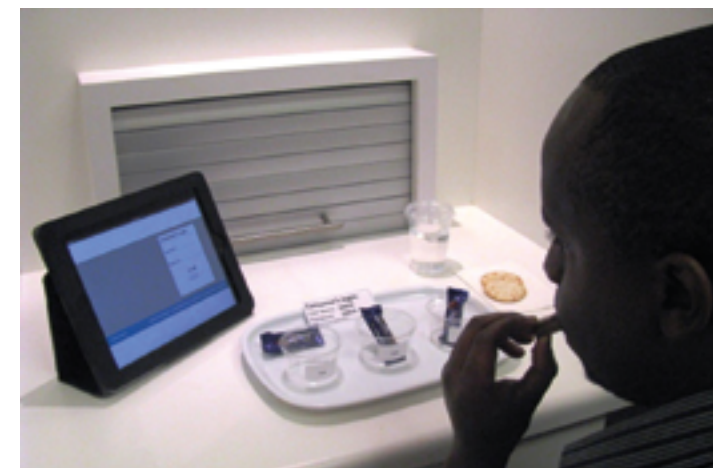


Annelize de Wet:

leading the **future** of **snacking** worldwide

It happened nearly two hundred years ago in the beautiful village of Bournville, Birmingham in the United Kingdom (UK) – Cadbury Dairy Milk was born. And today, **Annelize de Wet** is living her dream job as a consumer scientist for Mondelez International right there.

“**M**y number one focus is to bring the consumer’s voice to everything we do,” says Annelize, a Food Sciences alumna in the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development. In the company – an incorporation of Cadbury and the Kraft Food Business (since 2012) – she is leading a team of sensory and consumer scientists. They are supporting the business agenda for chocolate in Europe and North America.



Photos: Supplied

Far left: A view of London during the Queen’s jubilee. **Left:** Annelize, a Food Sciences graduate from the UFS. **Above left:** Annelize’s workplace, Bournville 3, located in Birmingham, UK. **Above right:** One of the beautiful parks in England. **Below right:** A typical setup inside a sensory tasting booth, where they employ the quantitative descriptive analysis methodology.



The team plays a critical role in decision making for new product innovations, quality improvements and renovation programmes, as well as productivity/margin projects.

She says it is very rewarding to work in a positive environment with multicultural, skilled professionals, working towards a common goal. “We are leading the future of snacking around the world by offering the right snack, for the right moment, made the right way,” Annelize remarks, excited about her role in this process where they have access to state-of-the-art facilities and the newest advancements in digital tools and techniques. She is proud of the scientific rigour they apply to their decision-making processes – “this is very satisfying for any scientist, I would say”.

Passionate about the field in which she has been working for the past 23 years, Annelize believes that studying Food Science at the UFS has set her on the path to her specialised career in consumer science. Being introduced to the world of quality sensory evaluation as an exchange student in Virginia in the United States (US) in her third year and receiving a recommendation for a position in consumer science



at Clover SA by one of her lecturers, Dr Carina Bothma, were key in her decision to pursue this career.

For Annelize, the epiphany of success is working in a role where you have a strong sense of belonging, feel passionate, stretched, and motivated, and are making a difference in reaching common goals. She built a successful career, guided by the words once shared with her, ‘When you decide to do something, do it well and finish it.’

In her profession, she has experienced a number of highlights, but says it is difficult to single out one. She is, however, very proud of her team’s recent achievements, winning the prestigious Global Research and Development Award for best execution of a renovation programme on the Milka Chocolate brand, competing among more than 2 500 employees. Furthermore, she enjoys the opportunity to travel to interesting, beautiful, and rich cultural destinations such as Egypt, Nigeria, Botswana, Swaziland, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, France, Poland, Belgium, Russia, and the US.

“Being in the UK, I am experiencing a strong sense of belonging and satisfaction. Working in this environment is really encouraging. Themes such as diversity and inclusion, work-life balance, health and wellness, mental health, careers and development are being prioritised in the UK,” she says.

Overall, it has been exciting, yet challenging to relocate to the UK, states Annelize, who has made England her home for the past seven years. “While we miss the warm, friendly culture and people in South Africa, we wouldn’t have it any other way, as we see a promising future for our family,” Annelize concludes. **U**



Photos: Sonia Small



“He started as a volunteer in my office in 2014. In 2017 he was appointed as an intern, and now he is making waves in his chosen career.” Belinda Janeke, Head of Career Services at the UFS, can tell many stories about students who have built careers in a country where one of students’ biggest fears is that they will not find work after graduation.

Upon pondering the Hamletian dilemma, ‘to find a job after graduation, or to study further?’ students may find their heart rate accelerating, and blood pressure rising. Unlike Hamlet, students at the university do not have to navigate the drama of entering the world of work and adulthood in isolation. *Enter centre stage:* the Career Services team – on a mission to provide students with the necessary tools to embark on any career path of their choice.

The Career Services team, from the top left: Karabo Makhalemele, Belinda Janeke, Yolisa Xatasi; middle: Boitumelo Brandon Tau, Dr Nthabeleng Rammile; bottom: Letshego Litelu, and Nobesuthu Sonti.

How to find work – that is the question

The dynamic Career Services programme offers students a wide range of resources and services that enable them to cultivate employability skills essential in today’s competitive job market. This is done through the various career development programmes on offer that aid students in transitioning from education to the workforce. The Career Services team also hosts career fairs that allow potential employers to showcase their career opportunities, as well as faculty-specific career weeks offering students opportunities to explore careers in their chosen fields. In addition to this, Career Services provides online resources backed by the presence of the CareerHub, which serves as a centralised job portal.

Janeke describes her role as Head of Career Services as *extremely rewarding*, as “there is something special about guiding students on their career journeys”. Career Services understands the importance of connecting students with potential employers and stakeholders. The university has many stakeholders, and there are many stories of students who have found their dream careers via these stakeholders. No wonder futurists recommend tapping into the power of personal and institutional networks. Networks may just be the lever that Archimedes mentioned when he said: “Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world.” The place to stand? The Career Services office, of course.

Career Services proudly boasts a Career Closet initiative that supports students in their job-seeking journey by providing them with donated free, basic clothing items that may be hard for them to come by. Neat clothing is often the only thing one needs to bolster confidence before an intimidating interview – Career Services to the rescue.

To keep up with changing times and leveraging the power of mentors and networking, Career Services hosts a podcast where guests from a wide range of careers share *the good, the bad, and the ugly* of their chosen fields. Even if students are not interested in a specific guest’s chosen career, some experiences are universal, and students often learn something new by listening to the guests. According to Janeke, one of the most interesting guests on the podcast was Dr Rosaline Sebolao, a deputy-director from the Faculty of The Humanities, who wrote a book while engaging in multiple activities. A great example of not allowing yourself to get stuck doing one thing while pursuing a career.

There is an old adage that it is not always about what you know that matters, but also who you know. ‘To find a job after graduation or to study further?’ That is not the question. The question is: ‘Have you taken advantage of the opportunities offered by Career Services today?’ And ‘If not, why not?’ Opportunity is knocking ... Career Services is ready to open the door. **b**

The celebration event's master of ceremonies, and Signals Chairperson, Nhlanhla Simelane.



Kovsies celebrate SA's twelfth

SASL as official language

Today, South African Sign Language (SASL) is recognised as the twelfth official language of our country. On Friday 21 July, the UFS celebrated this significant milestone with an event collaboratively hosted by the Department of South African Sign Language and Deaf Studies and the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS).

According to the Head of the Department of South African Sign Language and Deaf Studies, Prof Annalene van Staden, we are taking a giant stride towards providing access to quality education for the deaf community by recognising South African Sign Language as an official language. "It is through education that we nurture minds, foster understanding, and cultivate a society that values and respects the right of all citizens," she said.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Francis Petersen, alluded to *Vision 130* – which is the university's commitment to diversity in all its formats. He paid homage to the achievement of "breaking new ground, and having an impact, not only at the UFS, but the environment around the university".

Before receiving his honorary sign-name, Prof Petersen concluded by leaving the audience with a message: "Don't tell me the sky is the limit when there are footprints on the moon."

Prof Theo du Plessis, Dr Philimon Arca, and Emily Matabane played significant roles in ensuring that the UFS was the first university in the country to present Sign Language at a higher education level in 1998 and established the Department of South African Sign Language in 2010, also a first of its kind. Combined, the two units eventually formed


the Department of South African Sign Language and Deaf Studies in 2018.

The celebration programme included cultural performances from the likes of Yandisa Deyi and Lisa Msiza, the first Deaf person from the UFS to receive the prestigious Abe Bailey Travel Bursary.

A handful of students, staff, and the deaf community participated in an hour-long silent march across the campus.

The hard work and dedication from staff, students, and the deaf community over the decades bellowed and thundered, but without a sound, as the silent march continued to the Thakaneng Bridge where the group was welcomed with cake and balloons. The silent march attracted a lot of attention as the group walked the streets of Kovsies. The celebration of SASL's officialisation ended on a colourful note for the community as they dug deep

to awaken their artsy sides, grab a can of spray paint, and graffiti away. This must have been one of the university's most exciting signing ceremonies to date.

Many different languages could be heard during the celebration on 21 July 2023, but none of them as loud as SASL. 

Pictured at the bottom: Students, staff, and the deaf community participated in an hour-long silent march across the campus.



Department of Architecture celebrates international recognition



From the left: Dr Stella Cynthia Khumalo, the Acting Director-General of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture; Thando Thabete, MC for the event; Anya Strydom; Khalipha Radebe; Yamkelwa Simelane; Jan Truter; and Phadi Mabe.

The 3D-printed sculptural artefact entered by a group of third-years from the UFS.



Photos: Supplied

A group of third-year students from the UFS Department of Architecture exhibited their work at the 2023 Venice Biennale, an international architecture exhibition showcasing ground-breaking architectural work from various countries around the world.

The contributions of world-class architects, researchers, and institutions in architecture are exhibited at this exhibition. "To be featured in this exhibition means that we are recognised by the international community as one of the leading architectural learning sites in South Africa and the work being produced at the institution deserves international acclaim," says Phadi Mabe, Lecturer in the department.

The students representing the university with Mabe and participating in this event are Anya Strydom, Yamkelwa Simelane, Jan Truter, and Khalipha Radebe. Mabe says the artefact produced from this project is a 3D-printed sculptural device that shows the translation between sound and object and illustrates the sound data through 3D-printed forms. "The sound structures of South Africa's languages are mapped three-dimensionally to create a visual and spatial record

of language. This unique artefact demonstrates that there are uncharted terrains in architecture, suggesting alternative dimensions that can be extrapolated to show that architecture can represent the intangible" he explains.

The UFS artefact was one of six design artefacts selected for the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, which opened to the public in May and closes on 26 November 2023.

Hosted by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the competition involved an emphasis on students incorporating African traditional architecture into their design models. [b](#)

Sixteen-year-old's message guided a journey of transformative leadership

At 16, he wrote himself a letter with a quote from a book he was reading: "To achieve the impossible, it is precisely the unthinkable that must be thought." This became his guiding light.

"Dreams and expectations are the foundation of transformative leadership, fuelling my determination to push boundaries and strive for the seemingly impossible in pursuit of positive change," says Siphilangenkosi Dlamini, Assistant Coordinator of the Initiative for Creative African Narratives (ICAN) in the Centre for Teaching and Learning and a student in Political Governance and Transformation.

Dlamini has served in numerous leadership roles – from President of the Fakazi Combined School RCL in 2013 up to his current position as President of the UFS Chapter of the United Nations Association of South Africa. "What inspired me to take this position, was my commitment to the United Nations' principles and values, with a focus on advocating for peace, sustainability, and social justice within the university community," he says.

Other highlights in Dlamini's activist career include serving as the Interim Chair of the African Youth Business Council and driving discussions on the African Union Continental Free Trade Area. He also founded Lihawu Industries PTY LTD, where he facilitated 7 698 placements in South African institutions through Operation Siyafundza, providing disadvantaged youth with access to higher education.

Dlamini champions curriculum decolonisation and equitable, inclusive education. Among others, he served as a member of the South African Students Congress (SASCO), was a FeesMustFall activist, and has been involved in the call for free education in South Africa since its inception in 2016. He tirelessly advocates for youth voices, sustainable development, and positive change in the region, making a significant impact with his initiatives. [b](#)

access
faith
reform
dignity
respect
inclusion
justice
trust
change
opportunity
freedom
equality
truth
fairness



Photo: Sonia Small

Sci-Ed


Science Education Centre:

a space where science education can thrive

The Faculty of Education opened the first Science Education Centre (Sci-Ed) in Central South Africa on its Bloemfontein Campus, comprising an indoor Science Discovery Centre and an outdoor Science Park. It is characterised by interactive educational exhibits and features a Physical Sciences ICT Laboratory, Career Mentoring space, Darkroom, Science Café, Family Math training facilities as well as a stargazing area. It also serves as a social space on campus where students can interact within a fun and exciting popular science environment.

Sci-Ed aims to enhance innovative and effective science communication, teaching, and learning, which is beneficial to students, educators, learners, parents, other interest groups and the public at large. “Our vision is to establish a world-class STEAM+ (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics-related) teaching and learning environment in the South African context, where innovative and 21st-Century science education can thrive,” says Dr Cobus van Breda, Manager of Sci-Ed and Programme Director of Science-for-the-Future in the Faculty of Education.

This facility is also a platform to include science communication and science awareness programmes, as well as engagement with the public. Through outreach programmes and formal and non-formal visits to the centre, the community can make use of the benefits of the centre.

The Sci-Ed Building, designed to accommodate all the crucial elements of a modern science education centre, is an extension of the existing Winkie Direko Building. The architect designed the new building to seamlessly merge with the Winkie Direko Building, which dates from an earlier era. A conscious decision was made to use some cladding from the old building, where it merges into the new facility. This architectural feature can also be seen as a metaphor for building a bright new future on sound foundations. 

INNOVATION in infrastructure development

The university is transforming its campus with state-of-the-art infrastructure development. We are creating spaces that foster learning, empower groundbreaking research, and offer an enriching university experience.

UFS Sasol Library

The UFS has been hard at work to move away from traditional library spaces towards creating tech-enhanced, flexible environments that are dynamic for teaching and learning. According to Jeannet Molopyane, Director of Library and Information Services, they strive to align their spaces with global best practices with the infrastructure changes.

Centre for Mineral Biogeochemistry

The Centre for Mineral Biogeochemistry – completed in February 2023 – integrates seamlessly with its surrounding environment, while also providing a new collaborative workspace for the centre's personnel. This state-of-the-art facility boasts various laboratories which were mainly funded by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). The CMBG includes, among other initiatives, the Mineral Node of the Biogeochemistry Research Infrastructure Platform (BIOGRIP), an initiative of the DSI. This space is situated next to the existing Microbiology Building on the Bloemfontein Campus.

Photo: Incline Architects

University Estates Building

For this repair and renovation project, with a construction theme, internal and external materials were selected for their low-maintenance qualities. The first office, located opposite the entrance door, features cladding with exposed galvanised corrugated iron. A new steel mezzanine level was installed and painted in 'CAT' yellow and black. All pipes, including plumbing and electrical, are exposed on wall surfaces. The use of internal exposed brickwork, concrete floors, and oriented strand board in ceilings and cupboards further accents this quality in the completed project.

Photo: Premo Consulting and Associates (PTY) LTD

Photo: Incline Architects

INFRASTRUCTURE

Animal Research Centre

The Animal Research Centre on the Qwaqwa Campus, replaced the temporary structure that previously served as animal housing. The new structure complies with the requirements and standards for a research facility and caters to the needs of researchers and animals, including small and large rodents. The exterior materials used complement those of the surrounding buildings, providing a low-maintenance profile. The building, accessible to persons with disabilities, contains two research laboratories, an ecotoxicology laboratory, a veterinarian's office, and a procedure room.

South Campus 24/7 Study Space

The shift to extended programmes and dramatic increase in student enrolment on the South Campus created the need for additional study areas. Considering the steep site outcrop and the existing pedestrian routes from the lower campus, the design explored building blocks that progressively staggered up the hill to accommodate a small amphitheatre study area, maximising seating capacity. This allows the building to accommodate the site's steepness rather than ignore it. The final design provides study spaces on three levels, all accessible via a ramp, with the main functions situated on the primary level. This design also ensures accessibility for all users, including those with disabilities.

KovsieGear

Incline Architects has designed a new innovative space on the Thakaneng Bridge on the Bloemfontein Campus to accommodate the expansion of the KovsieGear outlet. This new design incorporates extra retail space along with additional room for administration work. The KovsieGear shop now features a new aesthetic, created with natural materials to complement the UFS colours. [b](#)

Photo: Incline Architects

Photo: Incline Architects



Photo: Sonia Small

Kovsies contributes to SA's success on world stage

South Africa finished in the top 20 countries – 19th – with a total of 20 medals, and as the best in Africa at the World Student Games. Six UFS representatives formed part of the Mzansi magic at the 2023 version of the global showpiece in Chengdu. Robert Summers (badminton), Ester de Kock (tennis), **Yolandi Stander** and Wernich van Rensburg (both athletics) were the Kovsie student-athletes at the games. Kesa Molotsane (athletics team manager and coach) and Marco Markgraaff (swimming head coach) were members of the national team management.

Stander (discus, silver) and Van Rensburg (4 x 400 m men's relay, bronze) contributed to the South African medal tally at the International University Sports Federation World University Games in China from 28 July to 8 August 2023. Stander says she has never started a global event on such a good note and immediately knew she had a medal chance. The Kovsie was surprised by her first throw of 57,89 m, which earned her a silver. And her performance has inspired her to dream even bigger.

"I have never started a big competition with a throw so close to my personal best (58,80 m)," says Stander. "I realised I had a shot at winning a medal, but the exact placing was still unclear."

For the Fichardtspark High School teacher – who is doing her BEd Honours in Education Management and Governance – the silver ranks as her best performance yet.

"My goal next year is to compete at the Olympic Games. And to medal at the next Commonwealth Games in 2026."

400 m relay

The South African men's 4 x 400 m relay team had a plan going into the final, and this helped it win a World Student Games bronze medal. This is according to the Kovsie **Wernich van Rensburg**, who ran the third leg in the final. "In the heats I ran the first leg, but we had a brilliant coach and he switched us for the final," he says. "And luckily for us it worked out perfectly. Our team chemistry was awesome, and we had a lot of fight in us." Van Rensburg was also crowned African U20 400 m hurdles champion earlier in 2023.



Photo: Sonia Small



Photo: Supplied

Badminton

KovsieSport Sportsman of the Year in 2022 and 2023, **Robert Summers** (right), won three medals at the All Africa Badminton Championships in February 2023. He won medals in men's singles (bronze), men's doubles with **Jarred Elliott** (gold), and as part of the South African (bronze) mixed team in Benoni. He represented South Africa at the World Student Games in Chengdu during July and August 2023. In the men's doubles, Summers and Elliott reached the round of 32 and in men's singles, Summers reached the round of 64. Summers and Elliott qualified for and played in their first World Championships in Copenhagen, where they reached the round of 64 (men's doubles).

Swimming

The UFS coach **Marco Markgraaff** was the head coach of the swimming team for South Africa at the World Student Games in Chengdu. Seven of the 20 medals that South Africa brought home from China were won in the swimming pool.

Tennis

The Kovsie tennis star **Ester de Kock** represented her country at the World Student Games.



Photo: USSA, Skhu Nkomphela



Photo: Facebook

Athletics

Kesa Molotsane is not only a professional athlete herself, but the KovsieSport staff member was an athletics team manager and coach for South Africa at the World Student Games. The athletics team won a total of 10 medals at the games.



Photo: Facebook

Cricket

Four Kovies were among those honoured by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) as members of the successful Momentum Proteas at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. Two members of management and two players in the team studied at the university. The former Kovie Anneke Bosch and UFS student Annerie Dercksen were in the South African World Cup squad. The Protea head coach, **Hilton Moreeng**, and physiotherapist, Molebatsi Theletsane, are also former Kovies. Moreeng, who played cricket for the Free State and the university, was a nominee for Coach of the Year at the 16th SA Sports Awards in March 2023. The Proteas were the first South African team to reach a cricket World Cup final.



Photo: Cricket South Africa



Photo: ASEM Engage/Catherine Kotze

Rugby

Michael Annies played for the Shimlas in the Varsity Cup this year before representing the Junior Springboks at the World Rugby U20 Championship. The versatile backline player was named KovieSport Junior Sportsman of the Year for 2023.



Photo: Supplied

Cross country

Kesa Molotsane represented South Africa at her third World Athletics Cross Country Championships in Bathurst, Australia (February 2023). She finished 48th (37:37) in the world in the senior women's 10 km, with the South African team taking seventh position in this division. She took part in the Athletics South Africa Half Marathon Champs, and in her debut outing finished fourth (01:14:31) in the women's category during June 2023. She was included in the SA team for the World Athletics Road Running Championships in Riga, where she finished 45th (1:15:19) in October 2023.



Photo: Moeketsi Mogotso

Football

Jabulile Baloyi was appointed as the university's women's football head coach in April 2023. She has coached at the University of the Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg, SA women's U20 team, USSA women's team, and Maties. She has also been a Banyana Banyana assistant. As a player, she represented Banyana Banyana. With her at the helm, the Kovies were crowned Stream B winners in the Free State Sasol League, played in the provincial playoff against CUT, and scored a mammoth 124 goals in only 14 league matches in 2023.

Netball

Earlier this year, **Burta de Kock**, the Netball Head Coach since 2002, was elected for a fifth time to serve on the World Netball Coaching Advisory Panel. De Kock, whose coaching career spans the past three decades, has coached the Kovie Netball team, the national South African Proteas, as well as the South Africa Under 23s in the past twenty years.

Under her guidance, the university has been Varsity Netball champions four times (2013, 2014, 2018, 2021) and is the most successful university team in the competition. She has also helped to produce 18 Protea players, with Refloe Nketsa the latest Kovie. The UFS has also won other titles, such as USSA, with her as coach.



Photo: Sonia Small



Photo: Supplied

Hockey

The UFS hockey player **Devan van Niekerk** returned home from Egypt with a gold medal in March 2023. The Kovie goalkeeper helped the South African U21 team to the African crown and qualification for the FIH Hockey Junior World Cup. The South African men's and women's sides, who also qualified for the Junior World Cup, both won the Junior African Cup of Nations in Egypt. From the left are the Kovie goalkeeper Michael Davids (left), Braam van Wyk, UFS men's hockey head coach, and Van Niekerk at the SA Youth Challenge in Bloemfontein.

Netball

Humbled, grateful, and blessed. Those are words **Karla Pretorius** uses to explain how it feels to be part of an elite centurion club of South African netball players. And the UFS alumna thanks those before her for their impact.

The Protea vice-captain became only the fifth South African to achieve 100 international caps in July 2023 at the World Cup in Cape Town. The others to have reached the milestone are Maryka Holtzhausen (former Kovsie), Bongiwe Msomi, Phumza Maweni, and Erin Burger.

Pretorius, Khanyisa Chawane, Lefébre Rademan (substitute), and Refiloe Nketsa (substitute) all played for the university and were involved in the 2023 World Cup. Pretorius says it is amazing to have played for South Africa so long. “That moment (when you play your 100th game) gives you an opportunity to reflect on your journey,” she says. “They (Holtzhausen, Msomi, Maweni, and Burger) are people I shared my journey with. They definitely contributed to my performances and brought the best out of me.”



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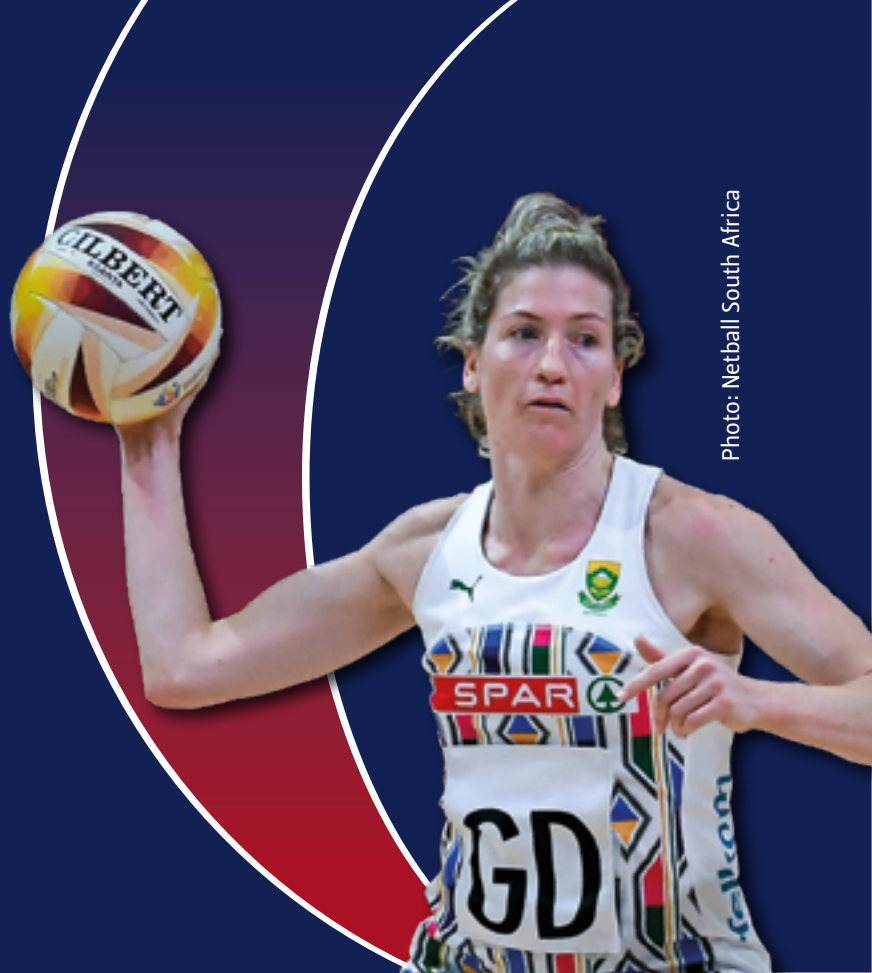


Photo: Netball South Africa

Long-distance running



Listen

The year 2023 was an exceptional one for **Gerda Steyn**. This UFS Alumna of the Year achieved record-breaking performances in both the Two Oceans and Comrades marathons, leaving an indelible mark on the running community. Triumphant in her second Comrades Marathon is a testament to her unwavering dedication. She also won the Two Oceans Marathon for a fourth consecutive time in 2023. An unyielding commitment to self-improvement and a profound love for the sport motivates her. “I also get a lot of motivation when I hear or see young aspiring girls and boys wanting to take on sport because of my running.” For Gerda, success hinges on aligning race outcomes with dedicated effort and uplifting others on their journey. Her global travels and interactions with diverse athletes have enriched her perspective on people and cultures and she cherishes each moment. Training can be equally humbling and rewarding, she says. “You get to learn so much about yourself because the process is personal, and even though we are all working towards similar goals, each journey is unique.”



Photos: Supplied

UFS alumni steer Boks to World Cup history

The Springboks became the first South African team to win consecutive World Cups, and a former Kovsie was for the second time in four years at the helm of a world champion side. Jacques Nienaber (head coach) helped his country become the first to win the trophy a fourth time when it defeated New Zealand 12-11 in the World Cup final in Paris on 28 October 2023. In 2019 in Japan, Rassie Erasmus (now Director of Rugby) was the head coach when the Boks claimed a third title.

UFS alumni, either as players or team management, have been part of all four South African World Cup winning teams (1995, 2007, 2019 and 2023). In 2023, the former Kovsies were Nienaber, Erasmus, Daan Human (scrum coach), and Bongani Tim Qumbu (strength and conditioning coach) in the Bok management, with Ox Nche playing for South Africa. “The UFS is very proud of the Springboks – and of course the former Kovsies involved – for winning the World Cup again,” Marius van Rensburg, UFS Rugby Club Chairman, said.



Photo: Facebook



Photo: Facebook



Photo: Facebook

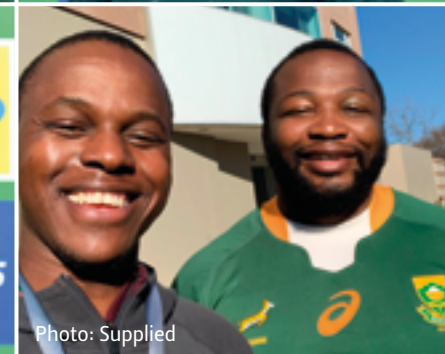
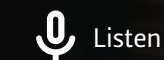


Photo: Supplied

Clockwise, starting from the top left: Daan and Suzette Human, Jacques Nienaber, Bongani Tim Qumbu and Ox Nche, and Rassie Erasmus.



Listen

Challenges pave the way for strength

Imagine a journey of remarkable achievements. **Louzanne Coetzee** – a name that is making waves – clinched a coveted silver medal at the World Para Athletics Championships, conquered the gruelling London Marathon, and secured spots (1 500 m and marathon) at the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Her achievements extend beyond medals; it reflects unwavering dedication. With an intensive training regimen of seven to ten weekly sessions, Louzanne prioritises rest and nutrition as crucial components of her preparation. But her secret weapon is consistency. She faces each day – especially the tough ones – with unwavering determination, highlighting the power of a resilient mindset. “Pushing through challenges ultimately builds strength.”

Pictured is Louzanne and her guide, Estean Badenhorst.

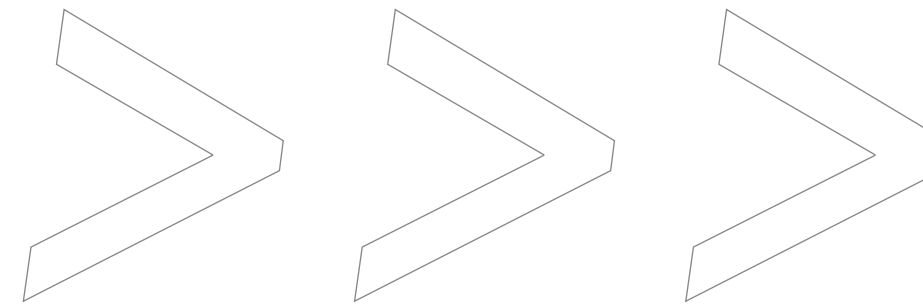
Photo: Sonia Small





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articles*

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Dr Catherine Namakula ke morupelli ya ka sehloohong lefapheng la dithutso tsa Molao wa Setjhaba (Public Law) Unibesithing ya Freistata hape ke leloko la United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. Bukeng ya hae ya moraora tjena, e bitswang *Fair trail rights and multilingualism in Africa*, o kenyelletsa "boitshwaro bo loketseng ba tekatekano ya puo dinyeweng" – e leng tlatsetso mehopolong e 31 e pakilweng ke molao wa dinyewe le tlwaelo ya teko e le e ngwe ya tsela tse molemo ka ho fetisisa tsa ho nefetatsa tekatekano ya puo dinyeweng.

Ho Se Tenyetsehe: Toka Ditokelong tsa Puo Dinyeweng

Boitshwaro bona bo ntshetsapele bonyane ba tiisetso ya ditokelo tsa puo ho batho ba tlókotsing, haholoholo ba phelang le bokowa ba puo le ba kutlo, ba sebedisang puo ya matsoho, baqosuwa ba ipolelang melato le mahlatsipa a tliekefetso ya bong kapa ya motabo. Bult e sekasekile dipatlisiso tsa Dr Namakula tshetshefo le yena.

Dipatlisiso tsa hao di fetelletse bolaoding bo bongata kontinenteng ya Afrika, ho tloha lebatoweng la Sahel ho ya Lenakeng la Africa le Kapa, ke ditlwaelo difeng tsa dinaha tseo o di fumaneng mabapi le tekatekano ya puo dinyeweng mabatoweng ana a boletsweng?

Ditokelo tsa tekatekano ya puo dinyeweng di kenyelleditswe e le ntlha tsa bohlokwa melaotheong ya naha tse ngata tsa Afrika. Ke ntlha tseo ho sa rerisanweng ka tsona. Makgotla a dinyewe naheng tsa Nigeria le

Kenya di hatetsepele hofeta puo ya molomo feela mabapi le ditokelo tsa tekatekano ya puo dinyeweng mme di phatlaladitse ho phumulwa ha nyewe ka ho feletseng ha ho ka fumanwa hore moqosuwa ha a ya fumantshwa kutlwisiso ho seo a qoswang ka sona. Puo tsa lapeng ke puo tse thontsweng e le puo tsa kgatiso makgotleng a Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia le Tanzania. Rwanda e phahamisa boemo ba bokgoni ba puo ya moqosuwa ho ba bokgoni bo tebileng, ha Lesotho teng ho fetoletswa sena ho puo ya lapeng. Canada, le maloko a lekgotla la baahlodi a behwa tlasa teko e netefatsang bokgoni ba bona ba puo, athe Afrika Borwa, baahlodi ba nehelwa dinyewe ho ya ka bokgoni ba bona ba puo e bontshitsweng ke babapala-karolo ba nyewe e le yona kgetho ya bona ya puo ya tsamaiso nyeweng. Boholo ba dinaha tse kenyelleditsweng dipatlisisong tsena di bontshitse ho se tenyetsehe mehopolong ya tsona ya hore ho ipolela molato hwa moqosuwa ho lokela ho hatiswa ka puo e sebedisitsweng ke moqosuwa.

Bokgoni ba ho bua puo tse ngata ke phephetso e kgolo tsamaisong ya taba tsa molao Afrika Borwa. Ke difeng tse ding tsa diqaka tse amanang le puo tseo o di hlwaieng phuputsong tsa hao, le teng di ama toka nyeweng ka tsela efe?

Ho na le se sekgeo se ka lekantshwang le ho kgaowa ha maqhama pakeng tsa makgotla a dinyewe le baahi ba sebeletswang ke makgotla ana – hoo tsamaiso tsa tsa molao di ka nkuwang e le ntho tsa dirutehi tse hole le batho, haholo kabaka la puo e sebediswang makgotleng a dinyewe. Nyewe di hloka puo e kekeng ya ferekanya motho, empa meetlo ya Afrika Borwa e nka puo e mabapi le motabo e le e tala. Sena se setisisa nyewe le kotlo tabeng tsa nyewe tse amanang le tliekefetso ya motabo. Matsete hlakoreng la ho ntlafatsa maemo a puo ya matsoho a ya haella, e leng se etsang hore nyewe tse amang batho ba phelang le bokowa ba puo di be buima ho ka tsamaiswa ka toka. Nyewe tsa mofuta ona di itshetlehlile haholo botoloking, mme hangata sena se baka kgaello ya ditoloko le tharollo tse bakang dipuo-

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di-hana-ho-fela, jwalo ka ho sebedisa maponesa e le ditoloko. Ho tlosa ditlwaelo tsa seAfrika puong tsa Afrika hore puo e be maamong a tshwanetseng makgotla a dinyewe ka tsela ya toloko ho baka tahlehelo ya moelelo ditabeng tsa bohlokwa. Makgotla a dinyewe kontinenteng ya Afrika a tobane le qaka ya ho lekola bokgoni ba ditoloko kgahlano le nalane ya kgaello ya kwetliso ya toloko tsa makgotla a dinyewe. Ho lekanya kutlwisiso ya puo basebetsing ba tsa molao ke phephetso e kgolo, eo hangata e lebisang ho botsweng ha basebetsi hore na ba fela ba tseba seo ba sa se tsebeng, empa dipatlisiso tsena di fana ka teko e sa kgetheng nku ka pere ho ya ka maemo a ikgethileng a fetisitsweng ke lekgotla le phahameng la dinyewe la Ontario, naheng ya Canada, ho ka rarolla tshitiso ena.

Buka ya hao e bontsha hape kgoneho ya ho kenya tshebetsong dithuto tse fumanweng mabatoweng a bolaodi a Afrika bolaoding bo kantle ho Afrika.

Dithuto di pakahatsa ha puo tsa Afrika di se ntse di sebetsa e le tsamaiso ya dinyewe; ha se dipuo fela tseo e seng tsa semolao, empa di tsamaisa botjhaba le serithi sa botho. Ha di ya lokela ho kwekwetlwa empa di tshwanetse ho ananelwa le ho phahamiswa. Nyewe e tla tsamaiswang ka puo eo moqosuwa a sa e utlwisising ke nyewe bosiong ba hae mme e lokela ho tsamaiswa jwalokaha ha eka moqosuwa ha a yo ha ditaba di buuwa.

Jwalokaha tsa molao le dipuo tsa Afrika di tswelapele ho fetola sebopeho, ke kgothalletso difeng tseo o ka fanang ka tsona ho ntlafatsa tsela tse sebetsang ha jwale ho nefetatsa hore nyewe di ba le toka le hoja ho sebediswa puo tse fapaneng?

K: Ho hlabollwa hwa kelello tsa bokgoba le puseletso ya ding tsa Afrika ho tswa lefeng la bokgoba, bokoloniale le mmuso wa kgethollo ya mala di lokela ho ba kapelepele phahamisong ya puo tsa Afrika dibakeng tsohle tsa setjhaba ka kakaretso. Tshebediso ya bakena-dipakeng Afrika Borwa le Kenya ho tshireletsa mahlatsipa a tlókotsing – haholoholo bana le phofu tsa tliekefetso ya bong – puisanong ya bona le makgotla a dinyewe e lokela ho etsiswa ke dinaha tse ding mme e fetisetswe le ho batho ba sa tsebeng ho bala le ho ngola, e le hona ho fokotsa tshabo e tliwang ke bophahamo ba makgotla a dinyewe ho batho ba habo rona. **D**

Navorsing oor liggaamsamestelling van babas

TOTAAL HERVORM met nuwe

PEA POD -TEGNOLOGIE

Access the English
article here.

Voedings- en groeipatrone gedurende die jeugjare word met gesondheid, ontwikkeling en welstand deur die hele lewensiklus geassosieer. Maar ook met die risiko om later in die lewe vetsug en nie-oordraagbare siektes – soos kardiometaboliese siektes – te ontwikkel. Dit is die bevindinge van **prof Corinna Walsh**, professor in die Departement Voeding en Dieetkunde.

“In ooreenstemming met nasionale prioriteite is moeder- en kindergesondheid ’n sterk navorsingsfokusarea van die Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe en die Skool vir Gesondheids- en Rehabilitasiewetenskappe,” sê sy. Sy noem voorts dat die Departement Voeding en Dieetkunde ’n betroubare navorsingsprogram gevestig het. Hierdie program fokus hoofsaaklik op die voedingstatus van swanger vroue en hoe die vroeë omgewing waaraan hulle tydens en na swangerskap blootgestel word, die kort- en langtermyn gesondheidsuitkomste van hulle nageslag beïnvloed.

“In ons vorige werk is die beoordeling van babas se geboorte-uitkomste egter beperk deur die gebrek aan toerusting om liggaamsamestelling te ontleed. Die navorsing wat ons met die PEA POD kan doen, bied aan ons ontsaglike bykomende potensiaal,” merk prof Walsh op.

Sy verduidelik, “Die PEA POD®-babaliggaamsamestellingstelsel is ’n babagrootte lugverplasings-pletismografiestelsel. Dit werk deur ’n baba se liggaamsgewig en -volume regstreeks te meet, en gebruik dan hierdie metings om die liggaamsvetpersentasie, vetmassa en vetvrye massa te bereken. Die PEA POD evalueer vetmassa en vetvrye massa deur die regstreekse meting van liggaamsmassa en liggaamsvolume en deur die toepassing van hele-liggaam densitometriele beginsels.”

Volgens haar neem die beoordeling van liggaamsvolume twee minute. “Die PEA POD-tegniek vereis

ook nie die versameling van enige vloeistowwe nie en stel nie die baba aan bestraling bloot nie. Dit kan so gereeld as wat nodig is sonder enige risiko uitgevoer word, en kan vir liggaamsgewig tot ’n maksimum van 8-10 kg gebruik word – vanaf geboorte tot ongeveer agt maande,” sê sy.

In die konteks van navorsing oor die liggaamsgewig en -samestelling van babas, is daar ’n behoefte aan akkurate metingstegnieke wat tussen vetmassa en vetvrye massa kan onderskei. Prof Walsh is van mening dat tradisionele maatstawwe soos liggaamsmassa-indeks (LMI) en gewig vir lengte in hierdie verband beperkings inhou, aangesien dit nie ’n duidelike onderskeid tussen hierdie komponente bied nie – wat tydens babajare aansienlik verander. Verder is LMI moontlik nie betroubaar vir die beoordeling van oormatige vet of vetsug in pediatriese bevolkings nie, en dit kan aansienlik verskil wat ouderdom en geslag betref.

Om hierdie uitdagings die hoof te bied, verskaf die PEA POD-toerusting gevorderde tegnologie wat hoogs akkurate kwantifisering van babaliggaamsamestelling moontlik maak. Hierdie tegnologiese vermoë bied geleenthede om die uitwerking van vroeëkinderevoeding op groei en die ontwikkelingsmeganismes wat tot latere komorbiditeite kan lei, te bestudeer. Dus, wanneer dit kom by navorsing oor die liggaamsgewig en -samestelling van babas, speel die PEA POD-toerusting ’n deurslaggewende rol om presiese data en insigte te verskaf. [b](#)



UDkt. Grey Magaiza: unesineke ekuthuthukiseni umphakathi ekutheni uzimele ngokwawo



“kusasa kumele kube yileli lapho imiphakathi izokwazi ukuzinqumela khona maqondana nezindaba zentuthuko kanye nempilo eya phambili. Ngokwami, ikhona-ke lokho okubaluleke kakhulu.” UDkt. Grey Magaiza uyiSekela-Mqondisi lesikhungo i-Centre for Gender and Africa Studies (CGAS) aphinde abe yiNhloko yomnyango wezifundo zentuthuko yomphakathi, phecelezi, i-Community Development Programme ezinze eNyuvesi yase-Free State ophikweni lwaseQwaqwa, unothando lokufukula umphakathi ekutheni ube yizishoshovu zoguquko nempucuzeko. Umbono wephupho lakhe ugcizelela ukunikezelwa kwamandla emphakathini ekutheni ukwazi ukuziqhubela mathupha intuthuko yawo ngokuthi ube mdibi-munye ekuthathweni kwezinqumo nasekulawulweni kwezinqubomgomo zentuthuko ehlelelwe ukuguqula izimpilo zezakhamizi.

Kusuka ekujoyineni iNyuvesi yase-Free State ngowezi-2008, uDkt. Magaiza usesebenze kakhulu kwiminxa esebenza ukufukula uguquko lwenhlalo-mnotho yemiphakathi. Eminyakeni edlule, usekwazile ukuzichabela indlela yakhe yocwaningo yaba yileyo azigqaja ngayo kakhulu – nokuwukuba usosayensi wemikhakha enhlobonhlobo ekuthuthukisweni kwemiphakathi.

“Ngiphakathi komhlane nembeleko njengoba ngicwaninga into engiyithandayo. Ngithi ‘ngiphakathi komhlane nembeleko’, ngoba sekukaningi kakhulu ngizitshela ukuthi ngimandla kakhulu kuphi, nokuthe ekugcineni ngabona ukuthi ngimandla emkhakheni wenhlalo yasemakhaya kanye nesasasa lemiphakathi yawo – ngamanye amazwi, ngisho umkhakha wentuthuko yomphakathi. Ucwano lwami lusuka ekuqondeni kwami isikompilo lenyuvesi, nokuwukuqonda imibandela inyuvesi ekumele iyisebenzise ukuqhakambisa uguquko nodumo emiphakathini esondelene nayo maqondana nentuthuko.

Enye yezindlela aseke wazisebenzisa ukuqhuba lolu hlelo, ukubheka izishoshovu zenhlalo-mphakathi zamabhizinisi afufusayo njengendlela emqoka yokufukula intsha ezindaweni zasemakhaya.

Ngokusebenzisana ngokwama-workshop nezinhlaka ezingabheke nzuzo eQwaqwa, uDkt. Magaiza ubelokhu esiza lezi zinhlaka ukuthi ziveze izidingo zazo aphinde ahlanganyele nazo ngokubandakanya kanye nokuletha uxhaso lwezinhlaka ezivela ngaphandle.

“Siyaqonda ukuthi imiphakathi iyingxenywe yohlelo lwentuthuko kazwelonke, kodwa noma kunjalo nawo uzwelonke uyaluhlonipha ulwazi nezifiso zomphakathi futhi uyawuvumela umphakathi ukuthi uzihlelele ukuthi ufisa ukuthuthuka kanjani. Okuyiyona ndlela yokuqondisa lokho ukuhlela umphakathi. Uwuhelela ngokuthi ubuyisele amandla kuwo ukuze uxoxisane ngezinqinamba ohlangabezana nazo njengokuthi babe sezindaweni zokuxoxisana, zokucobelelana ngolwazi, nokuthi nje abantu bakwazi ukukhuluma ngezixazululo zezinkinga.” Uqhuba uthi, uma umphakathi ungase uthole ukunikwa ithuba lokuzisholo wona ukuthi ufuna ukuthuthuka kanjani, ungakwazi ukusho izinkinga ezingqala, izingqinamba, nokuthi kungabhekwana kanjani nazo. “Uma ngibheka isasasa lasemaphandleni, ngiye ngibone ukuthi iyona ntakasi yomsebenzi wami – kufana nokuya kwababona ngokomoya, kufana ngoba akusiwena othathela umphakathi izinqumo zokuthi kumele kwenzekeni, kodwa yiwo ozithathela lezo zinqumo.”

Umyalezo womfundi osakhula oneminyaka eli-16 umsize ekudlondlobaleni ebuholini boguquko lwesimanje

Wayeneminyaka eli-16 nje vo mhlazane ezibhalela incwadi: “Ukufezekisa amaphupho amakhulu, kumele ngempela kwenzeke okungajwayelekile,” kubhala yena. Isicaphuno lesi esivela encwadini ayeyifunda. Mhlazane evula le ncwadi ngonyaka wakhe wokuqala enyuvesi, kwaba ukuqala kokukhanya kwesibani sakhe.

“La mazwi asengisize kakhulu ohambweni lami, engivuselela ukuthi amaphupho nezifiso kuyisisekelo sobuholi boguquko lwesimanje. Lesi seluleko sivusa usinga kimi bese ngizama ngamandla onke ukuya phambili, ngiphokophele kokubonakala kunzima ukukuthola ukuze ngizoletha uguquko oluhlabahlosile,” kubeka uSiphilangenkosi Dlamini, onguMsizi kaMqondisi-Jikelele we-Initiative for Creative African Narratives (ICAN) eyengamelwe Isikhungo esaziwa ngele-Centre for Teaching and Learning and a student in Political Governance and Transformation seNyuvesi yase-Free State.


UDlamini owaqala ubushoshovu bakhe esangumfanyana, useke waphatha ezikhundleni eziningana zobuholi – kusukela eba nguMengameli wesikole i-Fakazi Combined School RCL ngowezi-2013 kuze kube yimanje esenguMengameli woMgomo weNyuvesi yase-Free State owaziwa ngele-UFS Chapter of the United Nations Association of South Africa.

Lesi asesibambe manje isikhundla usibuka njengentuba eza nomsebenzi nedumela elivelele. “Okwangigugquzela kakhulu ukwamukela lesi sikhundla kwaba ukuzibophezela kwami ezinkambisweni nasemaveni esiGungu Samazwe Angamadlelandawonye, phecelezi, i-United Nations nokuyilapho engigxila khona ngokulwela ukuthula, ukulondolozeka, kanye nenhlalanhle kumalunga enyuvesi,” kusho uDlamini. Umgomo weNyuvesi yase-Free State owaziwa ngele UFS Chapter usuthe wazibandakanya nezinhlalo eziningi, esibala kuzo izinkundla zokufunda okungama-workshop, ama-seminar, kanye

nama-campaign ukugqugquzela ukufundisa ngokubaluleka kweziMfuno Zokudlondlobala Ngokwesimo Esiphilayo kanye nobumqoka baso kubafundi nemiphakathi ebazungezile.

Amanye amagalelo obushoshovu bukaDlamini abhangqa ukusebenza njengoMbambi-Sihlalo weNhlango i-African Youth Business Council nasekuqhubeni izingxoxo enhlanganweni i-African Union Continental Free Trade Area. Waphinde futhi wasungula iNkampani iLihawu Industries PTY LTD nokulapho asiza ukuthola izikhala eziyi-7 698 ezikhungweni zemfundo ephakeme zaseNingizimu Afrika ngohlelo i-Operation Siyafundza nokulapho okwabonakala khona evulela intsha esuka emakhaya ahlwempu amathuba emfundo ephakeme.

Kuwo wonke amagalelo akhe obuholi, uhlezi eggama njengongqondongqondo kwezemfundo, aphinde afukule uhlaka lwemfundo nokuyenza ingaqhakambisi ubandlululo, kanye nokulwela imfundo ethuthukile neqondene nezinkinga zethu. Ngaphandle kwezinye izikhundla aseke aziphatha, useke waba yilunga lesigungu sabafundi i-South African Students Congress (SASCO), waba isishoshovu somzabalazo we-FeesMustFall, kanti futhi ukhona nasezingxoxweni zokuthi iNingizimu Afrika ibe nemfundo yamahhala kusuka lolu daba lukhwezelwe ngowezi-2016.

UDlamini usebe yisishoshovu esilwela intsha, walwela intuthuko ephilayo, kanye noguquko oluhlabahlosile esifundeni, nokumshiyele igama elihle ngemisebenzi yakhe. 



Het jy die een gehoor oor die

snaakse dosent?

 Access the English article here.



Eens op 'n tyd was daar 'n vervelige onderwyser: die studente het nie van sy lesings gehou nie. Niks interessants het ooit gebeur nie. Die onderwyser het oud geword en afgetree. Die einde. Of nie? Volgens navorsing kan onderrig 'n humoristiese, prettige en aangename ervaring wees as jy dit op 'n ander manier doen.

Prof Jannie Pretorius, 'n dosent in die Skool vir Wiskunde, Natuurwetenskappe en Tegnologie, gebruik 'n innemende en humoristiese onderrigstyl wat sy Lewenswetenskap- en Natuurwetenskapstudente gefassineer en betrokke hou. Toe hy by die UV begin het, het prof Jannie gewonder oor die gebruik van humor in 'n 'ernstige tersiële omgewing'. Hy het gou agtergekom dat studente, soos die meeste ander mense, ook gepaste humor geniet.

Die gebruik van humor in die onderwys het 'n navorsingsprojek geword, en kort voor lank het prof Pretorius Mr Bean-video's begin wys en na Trevor Noah-vertonings gekyk om 'n les te ontwikkel waar die impak van die gebruik van opsetlike humor bestudeer is deur studente se reaksies te meet. 'n Voorbeeld uit die transkripsie van sy les oor die paringsgewoontes van die bidsprinkaan – waar die wyfie dikwels die mannetjie se kop afbyt en hom vir voeding eet – wys hoe pret by leer geïntegreer kan word: So, dit lyk amper asof die hottentotsgot – bid; die mannetjie sê: 'Moet my asseblief nie eet nie, Sylvia, asseblief!' ... (gelag) ... en sy bid terug en sê, 'Asseblief, Ronnie, ek kan jou nie weerstaan nie.' (gelag).

Afgesien daarvan dat die klasse baie pret is, waarsku prof Pretorius ook dat dit belangrik is vir onderwysers om sensitief te wees vir hul leerders se voorkeure en kulturele agtergronde wanneer hulle humor gebruik. "Daar is altyd 'n element van risiko met die gebruik van humor. As sodanig moet humor altyd op 'n eerbiedige en inklusiewe manier gebruik word om te verseker dat alle leerders gemaklik en ingesluit voel in die klaskamer."

Prof Pretorius erken dat die gebruik van humor van opvoeders se persoonlike voorkeure afhang. Dit gaan uiteindelik oor wat die studente leer. 