



VOC is a non-political, non-religious, non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation in partnership with the University of the Free State, voices of people with disabilities, parents and different academic disciplines writing about their news and views.



Left: Magteld Smith (cochlear impantee), Mariaan van Heerden (audiologist and speech therapist), Rector from the UFS Prof Jonathan Jansen and Henk Wolmarans from Med-El Austria

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The sound of your own voice

Prof Jonathan Jansen

Anger begets more anger; fury has come to define us

ONCE you've met Magteld, you'll never forget her.

It is not because she is deaf. It's because of her unbelievable enthusiasm for life, her commitment to studies (two Masters degrees in hand), and her determination to be heard.

So I felt really chuffed that she invited me to the big day, that – special moment when she would hear clearly for the first time.

The room is quiet. The small audience waits in anticipation. Where is the man with the fancy equipment?

The cochlear implant had been in the ear for about a month; that, say the experts, is the minimum time needed before the device can be activated.

The media is here in force, some hype built-up around this day for some time. So is Ms Deaf South Africa, a young but mature young woman herself

struggling with hearing loss.

My learned colleagues sit behind a glass window and, like me, they must have wondered: 'what if the thing does not work?'

Then the man with the fancy computer and the wires arrives. Sound waves run across vertical bars on the computer.

Slowly he adjusts the volume on

Peaceful citizens turn into murderous villains within seconds

each bar.

"Can you hear it?" he asks Magteld.

"More, please more," she pleads as the vibrations hit the ear. Eventually, all the bars have been set.

Now the big moment arrives. The computer man has to activate the combined sound.

At this point Magteld instructs him to stand back, "My professor

will do this," she says.

I obey the instruction and move towards a chair alongside my colleague. I hold her hand and with the other press the "activate" bar on the screen.

Nothing happens. Then, suddenly, Magteld rocks backward in her chair and the strength of unfamiliar sound hits the eardrum.

"Ek hoor my eie stem" ("I can hear my own voice") she shouts. Tears in the room. Joy on the face of my hearing colleague. A simple sensation taken for granted. A life changed instantly. Here, in the Medical School of the University of the Free State, yet another miracle happens in the life of an ordinary citizen.

In the past few weeks I have thought a lot about that simple but profound statement, "I can hear my own voice."

I am convinced that we seldom take time to hear what we sound like.

We are an angry people.

Whether it is the noise around the leadership of Eskom, or the treatment of Ms Caster Semenya, or the fate of one or other politician, we scream and shout with anger.

We have become deaf to our own voices.

For the first time I now understand how the xenophobic attacks could have happened. We

No hearing, just the unforgiving, relentless noise of accusation

carry our anger on our sleeves.

This anger, unleashed, can turn otherwise peaceful citizens into murderous villains within seconds.

We should be very worried about this. No wonder we are among the most murderous nations in the world.

Small wonder women our exposed to danger in so many homes because of angry men.

Should we be surprised that small children are daily exposed to abuse, even rape, by grown men?

We are an angry people.

I expect denial. After all, we can justify our anger. Our pain matters; nobody else has pain. I am right; the other side is wrong. There is no complexity; no grey areas; no subtlety. Just the harsh, unforgiving and relentless noise of accusation and dismissal.

Here's the problem: anger, like most emotions, can be reproduced. The son who observes the anger of a father often becomes angry himself, assuming the same posture of abuse against women, for example.

Anger then becomes normative; it is not only how we are, it defines who we are.

Magteld taught me something precious the other day. It is not only that I should not take the gift of physical hearing for granted. It is that I need to be conscious of the dangers of deafness to my own voice. ■

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Left: Martha Motosi, Oompie Morake, Sello Monnanyane.
Front: A happy Mosala

People with disabilities prefer to work



Mosala Matlokotsi as Senior Admin Clerk

Mosala Matlokotsi

Mosala Solomon Matlokotsi was born on the 11th of November 1975 in Ventersburg.

I became paralysed in '86 due to poliomyelitis. It was difficult because my parents could not find a school for children with disabilities and my future was doomed. Fortunately my parents found a school in Bloemfontein nl. Tswellang school for the disabled.

There I completed Std 7 and then went to Motheo College where I completed N3 (matrix). Because I did not have money to study further I started to work at Department of Labour as a Switchboard operator until I was promoted to the claims section as a claims officer.

At present I work at Universitas Hospital as a administrative officer. My ambition is to study labour law. ■

Miss Deaf SA is an excellent ambassador



Janie Erasmus, 1ste Prinses, Vicki Fourie, Mej Dowe SA & Mej. Dowe HESC, Mbali Nkosi, 2de Prinses.

Modumo wa lentswe la hao

Prof Jonathan Jansen

Hang ha o ka kopana le Magteld, o ke ke wa mo lebala. Hase hobane e le setholo. Ke ka lebaka la tjheseho e makatsang ya bophelo, maikemisetso dithutong tsa hae, (dikri tse pedi tsa Masters ka letsahong) le ho phehella hore a utluwe. Ka hoo ke ikutlwa ke thabile hore o mmetse tsatsi la hae le lehlo, motsotsong oo o ikgethang ha a tla be a utlwa hantle kgetlo la pele.

Phaposi e kgutsitse. Babohi ba sehlotshwana ba eme ka tjantjello. O kae monna ya tshwereng sesebediswa se majabajaba? Kgokelo ya bokahare ba tsebe (moropa wa tsebe) ha esale e le ka tsebang nakong ya kgwedi; seo, ke se bolelwang ke ditsebi, ke bonyane nako e hlokalang pele sesebediswa sena se ka kenngwa tsebetse. Baqolotsi ba ditaba batlile ka matla, ha e ba le bophatlalatsi bo bongata ka ketsahalo ya tsatsi lena. Ho tjena he ka mofumahatsana Aforika Borwa, ya motjha empa ke Mme ya motjha ya nang le maitemohelo ka boyena a ho thatafalla ke tahlehelo ya kutlo. Baithuti mmoho le nna ba dutse ka mora fensetere/phera ya kgalase, jwalo ka nna, ba tshwanela ba be ba hlolletswe: "Ho ka ba jwang ha ekaba ntho e ha e sebetse?"

Ya ba monna wa khomphyutha e majabajaba e nang le mehala o a fihla. Maqhubu a modumo a matha ho parola mola wa mmimo wa dibara tse tsepameng tsa khomphyutha. Ka boiketlo a lekalekanya modumo wa mola wa mmimo ka bonngwe. "O a o utlwa?" A botsa Magteld. "Haholwanyane, ka kopo

haholwanyane," a kopa jwalo ha ho thothomela ho fihla tsebang. Ho ya qetellong dibara tsohle tsa behwa madulong. Jwale motsotso o moholo wa fihla. Monna wa khomphyutha o tshwanela ho kenya medumo e kopantsweng/momahantsweng tsebetse.

Nakong ena Magteld a mo laela ho emella morao, "Moprofesa wa ka o tla etsa sena," a re jwalo. Ka obamela taelo, mme ka tsamaela thokwana le setulo pela mosebetsimmoho. Ka mo tshwara letsoho la hae, mme ka le leng ka hatella bara ya modumo e sekirining. Ha ho a ba le letho le etsahalang. Jwale, ka tshohanyetso, Magteld a sisinyehella morao setulong sa hae, mme modumo o matla o sa tlwaelehang wa betsa moropa wa tsebe ya hae. A howa a re: "ke utlwa lentswe la ka!". Dikgapha tsa ba teng ka phaposeng. Thabo ya e ba teng sefahlehong sa mosebetsimmoho le nna ya seng a utlwa. Kutlo feela, eo ba bang ba e nkang habonolo. Bophelo ba fetoha hanghang. Mona, Sekolong sa Bongaka sa Yunivesithi ya Freistata, hapehape mohlolo o mong wa etsahala bophelong ba motho feela.

Dibekeng tse mmalwa tse fetileng ke ile ka nahana haholo ka phatlalatsi e bonolo empa e na le botebo, "Ke kgona ho utlwa lentswe la ka." Ke kgodisehile hore medumong yohle e fihlang meropeng ya ditsebe tsa Ma-Afrika Borwa, ha re atise ho nka nako ya ho utlwa ka moo re buang ka teng (mantswe a rona). Re batho ba kgopisehileng. Ekaba ha re utlwa modumo o mabapi le boetapele ba Eskom, kapa tsela eo Mofumahatsana Caster Semenya a tshwerweng ka yona, kapa lotho ya e mong wa boradipolotiki, re a tlerola le ho hweletsa ka kgalefo. Re fetohile ditholo tsa ho utlwa mantswe a rona.

Kgetlo la pele, jwale ke a utlwisisa hore na phutuhelo ya melata e etsahetse jwang. Re jara kgalefo ya rona mamenong a matsoho a dihempe tsa rona. Kgalefo ena, ha e lokoloha, e ka fetola setjhaba se nang le kgotso ho ba ditsotsi tsa babolai ka metsotswana. Re tshwanela ho kgathatseha haholo ka sena. Ha ho makatse hore hobaneng re le setjhaba se hara babolai ba fetelletseng lefatsheng. Basadi ba mmalwa ba ba kotsing malapeng a mangata ka lebaka la banna ba halefileng. Na re ka makalla banna ba banyenyane ha ba hlahella tlhekefetsong letsatsi le leng le le leng, e ka sitana le petong, ya banna ba baholo? Re batho ba halefileng.

Ke lebelletse ho hana. Ho tseo tsohle, re ka sireletsa kgalefo ya rona. Ditaba tsa kutlo bohloko ya rona; ha ho motho e mong ya nang le bohloko ba rona. Ke nepile; lehlakore le leng le fositse. Ha hona ho qaqqa; ha ho dibaka tse putswa; ha ho a hlaka. Empa feela ke ho se amohela, ho hloka tshwarelo le lerata le hlokalang mohau la diqoso le ho tebelo.

Bothata ke bona: kgalefo, jwalo ka maikutlo a mang le a mang, a ka hlahiswang hape. Mohlankanyana ya lemohang ho halefa ha ntatae o atisa ho halefa le yena, le ho amohela mohopolo wa tlhekefetso kgahlanong le bomme, ho etsa mohlala: kgalefo jwale e fetoha tlwaelo; ha se feela hore re jwang, e hlalosa hore re bomang.

Magteld o nthutle ntho e nngwe e babatsehang tsatsi le leng. Hase hore ke tlameha ho nka mpho ya ho se utlwe feela. Ke hore ke hloka ho ela hloko dikotsi tsa botholo ba ho se utlwe lentswe la ka. ■

We who lived in concentration camps



Johan Steyl

Disability to society sounds like a curse, but being 'not disabled' is the worst disability. That sounds like the weirdest statement someone can make. The reason why I make a statement like that is, if you lose something you had, you learn for the first time the importance of what you had. The best of all is the wonderful adaptational ability of the human being.

I was fortunate enough to be able to do a lot of physical activities throughout my life to be able now to have those memories. Yes I might have MS (Multiple sclerosis) and I might be less active physically but I still am the same person with more abilities than before. More abilities because one adapts to

one's circumstances and start using abilities that were never used before. I might not be able to take a scalpel and dissect like before, but I don't have to, I can sit and teach someone else to do it, therefore improve my communication skills and improve someone else's technical ability.

In the workplace it is difficult being a person with a disability for a number of reasons:

Firstly, your place of work needs to be friendly to move around in eg. Steps are for people that can climb them so working elevators need to be there for people that cannot. Secondly, doorhandles are fitted on the right level for people that can walk, for people in wheelchairs it needs to be lower. Thirdly, patience is a virtue, patience with yourself, not to be frustrated with your circumstances and patience with other people for timing purposes, venue allocation and movement constraints. For Example in your car you get cross with pedestrians in the road. Well we in wheelchairs get cross with pedestrians in the hallways.

These are a few negatives, however the positives are great. You save a lot of money because



Johan Steyl en Prof Claassen

you spend less time in shops. You do not have to drive around in a car so other drivers do not frustrate you. You learn to be much more patient with yourself and other people. I have taught myself to stress less, to communicate better with other people, to engage rather to enrage people. To be disabled has taught me to be more considered, we were all

"We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way"

– Viktor Frankel



From the left is Thembi, Riaan, Kentsi en Leboang

made by the same God, but we are all different from one another, we must except and enjoy it. I am thankful to my Creator, God, that

He gave me this disability and the opportunity to get taught a few life skills which I needed to grow. ■

Johan Steyl

Boqhwalaba bo utlwahala jwaloka thohako setjhabeng, empa ho se be le boqhwalaba - ke boqhwalaba bo fetisisang. Polelo ena, e utlwahala e le e makatsang ho tseo motho a ka di buang. Lebaka le etsang hore ke bolele polelo ena e ka hodimo, ke hobane - ha o lahlehelwa ke seo o neng o na le sona, o ithuta lekgetlo la pele ka bohlokwa ba seo o neng o ena le sona. Se leng bohlokwa ho feta tsohle mothong, ke bokgoni bo hlollang ba ho ikamahanya le maemo kapa hona ho a amohela.

Ke bile lehlohonolo haholo bophelong ba ka, ka kgona ho etsa tse ngata ka mmele wa ka; jwale ke kgona ho hopola diketsahalo tseo. Ee, e ka nna ya ba ke na le Lefu le iphetang la ho tiya mesifa (Multiple sclerosis), mme hape nka nna ka se be matjato jwaloka pele, empa ke sa ntse ke le yena motho elwa ya nang le bokgoni jwaloka pele. Bokgoni bo a eketseha hobane ke ikamahanya le maemo a matjha, mme ke qala ho sebedisa bokgoni boo ke neng ke sa bo sebedise pele ho diphetoho. Ka mohlomong nkeke ka hlola ke kgona ho nka thipa e etsang tshoho (operation) le ho seha jwaloka pele, empa hase hore ke tlamehile ho seha ka bonna, nka nna ka dula, mme ka ruta

motho emong ho seha; ka lebaka lena ke ntshetsa bokgoni ba ka ba dipuisano pele, mme ka lehlakoreng le leng ke ntshetsa motho e mong pele bokgoning ba hae ba botsebi (tekniki).

Ho thata sebakeng sa tshebetso ha o le motho ya nang le boqhwalaba, mme sena se etswa ke mabaka a mmalwa:

Lebaka la pele, sebaka sa hao sa tshebetso se hloka ho o dumella ho ya kwana le kwana, mohlala; ditepisi ke tsa batho ba kgonang ho di hlwella, ka hoo dilifti di a hloka hahala mabapi le batho ba sa kgoneng ho hlwella ditepisi. Lebaka la bobedi, mehwele ya mamati e beilwe boemong bo lokileng mabapi le batho ba kgonang ho tsamaya, empa mabapi le batho ba ditulotsa-mabidi mehwele ena e hloka hahala hore e be tlaase. Lebaka la boraro, mamello e kgabane/bohlokwa, ho imamella wena ka bowena, o se ke wa nyahamiswa ke maemo a hao, mamello ya batho ba bang mabakeng a nako, phano ya dibaka le taolo motsamao, mohlala; koloing ya hao o ferekanngwa ke ditaaso tseleng (ba tsamayang ka maoto), mme rona ba ditulong-tsa-mabidi re ferekanngwa ke ditaaso dibakeng moo ho kenwang teng.

Tseo ke tse mmalwa tse sa amoheleng; le ha ho le jwalo, tse amoheleng di kgolo. O boloka haholo hobane ha o ye mabenkeleng haholo. Ha o tsamaye haholo ka koloi, ka hoo bakganni ba bang ha ba atise ho o ferekanya. O ithuta ho imamella wena ka bowena haholo le ho

mamella batho ba bang. Ke hopotse ho se itshwenye haholo, ho ba le dipuisano tse ntlafetseng le batho ba bang, ho kgothatsa batho ho e na le ho ba kgopisa. Ka lebaka la ho ba le boqhwalaba ke nahanisisa haholo, bohle re entswe ke Modimo a le mong, empa ha re tshwane, mme re tshwanetse ho amohela le ho thabela seo. Ke leboha Mmopi wa ka, Modimo, o mphileng ho ba le boqhwalaba, boo ha ke ne ke se na bona nkabeng ke sa ba le monyetla wa ho ba le mohopolo wa ho fumana tsebo ya tsa bophelo e hloka hahala hore ke hole. ■

"Rona ba phetseng dikampong tsa menahano e tebileng, re kgona ho hopola banna ba fetileng mekgorong/metlotlwaneng ba tshedisa le ho kgothatsa batho ba bang; ba fana ka dikotwana tsa ho qetela tsa mahobe a bona. Ka mohlomong ba ne ba ka ba banyenyane ka palo, empa ba nehelane ka bopaki bo lekaneng ba hore dintho tsohle di ka nkwa mothong, empa ntle le ntho e le nngwe: tokoloho ya motho ya ho qetela - ho kgetha boikemelo/boikutlo ba motho maemong ohle a leng teng, hape le ho kgetha tsela ya motho ka mong"

– Viktor Frankel

President of the World Blind Union visited Bloemfontein

Magteld Smith and Dr. William Rowland have one thing in common: Transformation for people with disabilities



Both matriculated at Worcester (School for the deaf), Magteld Smith from VOC and Dr. William Rowland.

Dames Perspektief

Dr. Rowland is a master's graduate of the University of South Africa and holds a Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Cape Town. Rowland is currently President of the World Blind Union, Chairperson of the International Disability Alliance, member of the United Nations Convention on rights of people with disabilities, Honorary Life President of both Disabled People South Africa and the SA National Council for the blind.

"Braille gives a voice to the blind, making equal opportunities possible around

the globe" he says. We should also develop minimum standards that are necessary at every inclusive school and institution before hearing impaired (deaf) and vision impaired (partially sighted or blind) children can be admitted there with the reasonable assurance that they will not suffer unduly. It must also be emphasised that hearing and vision impaired children whether brown, black or white come from a disadvantaged past of discrimination. Efforts must be made at all institutions to ensure that this disadvantage is alleviated. ■



I was Shocked and very Scared

Funiwe Dambe

My name is Funiwe Lillian Dambe. I am well and I trust you are too. This letter is about Ilouise le Roux. She was the speech therapist for my daughter Thando. She is my only child and she has a disability. We are Xhosa-speaking, and initially it was very difficult for Ilouise to speak Xhosa, but Thando and I taught her! She bought a book on how to learn to speak Xhosa and I helped her.

One day, Ilouise told me that Thando needed to have an operation to receive a cochlear implant. I was shocked and very scared for the operation as I knew that procedure and had seen it done as I worked in the Ear, Nose and Throat theatre at that stage. She gave me the (speech therapy) homework and told me I had two weeks to think about it, and discuss it with my family. She explained that it was the only hope for my child and that it was an opportunity which could not be let slip by. Thando would be implanted [with a cochlear implant] provided by the state [provincial hospital]. This will help her for the rest of her life. I was very emotional and found great support from my work colleagues. They assured me she would be well looked after by Prof AJ Claassen and his team.

Ilouise explained that she would like to see Thando

successfully complete grade 12 and become a contributing member of the community. She wanted to see Thando make a success of her life. After the operation, Ilouise explained step for step what to expect and what I would have to do in terms of helping Thando learn to hear. Initially, Thando used to read lips a lot, now she no longer needs to do this! She can hear and I don't need to use sign language. She was enrolled in the Carel du Toit School. This is where deaf children learn to speak.

The speech therapists and teacher at Carel du Toit love children and give their best for these children. They are second mothers for these children when we cannot be there for them. I am very proud of them.

At this stage, Thando is in a mainstream school. Unfortunately, the children there do not know about hearing aids and cochlear implants. One day, they fiddled with her implant and lost the battery pack. Ilouise and her family, Anine and Jean le Roux, paid for a new battery pack for Thando out of their own pockets – R3180! They have done so much for my child, they saved her life! There are so many things she has done for my child, and if there was time I would mention them all.

Ilouise, thank you for your hard work. May the Lord bless you. Please do the same for all the others. ■



Thando in speech therapy in Xhosa, together with her grandmother.

Mobadi ya Ratehang

Funiwe Dambe

Lebitso la ka ke Funiwe Lillian Dambe. Ke phela hantle, mme ke tshepa hore le wena o phela hantle.

Lengolo lena le mabapi le Ilouise le Roux. E ne e le setsebi phekolong ya puo - se thusanang le moradi wa ka Thando ka puo. Ke ngwana wa ka ya mong feela, mme o na le boqhwalwa. Puo ya rona ya lapeng ke IsiXhosa, mme qalong ho ne ho le thata haholo ho Ilouise ho bua IsiXhosa, empa nna le Thando re ile ra mo ruta! O ile a reka buka ya ho ithuta ho bua IsiXhosa, mme ke ile ka mo thusa.

Ka letsatsi le leng, Ilouise o ile a ntsebisisa hore Thando o hloka ho sehuwa (operation) hore a fumantshwe kgokelo ya

bokahare ba tsebe (moropa wa tsebe). Ke ne ke tshohile, hape ke tshaba haholo ho sehuwa (operation) ha hae, ka ha ke tseba tsela eo ho sehuwang ka yona, mme nkile ka bona ha ho sehuwa; hobane ka nako eo ke ne ke sebetsa phaposing ya puo ya bakudi karolong ya Tsebe, Nko le Mmetso. O ile a mpha mosebetsi wa lapeng wa [phekolo ya puo], mme a ntsebisisa hore ke na le dibeke tse pedi ho ka nahana ka yona, le ho ka buisana le ba leloko ka taba eo. O ile a hlalosa hore tsheho ke yona feela tshepo mabapi le ngwana wa ka, mme hape ke monyetla o sa tshwanelang ho tlohelwa. Thando o ne a tla hokelwa [bokahare ba tsebe] boo ho fanwang ka bona ke mmuso [sepetlele sa provense]. Sena se tla mo thusa mabapi le bophelo bohle ba hae. Maikutlo a

ka a ne a phahame haholo, mme ke ile ka fumana tshehetso e kgolo ho tswa ho basebetsimmoho. Ba ile ba nnetefaletsa hore ngwana wa ka o tla ba tlasa tlhokomelo e ntle ya Moprofesa AJ Claassen le sehlopha sa hae.

Ilouise o ile a hlalosa hore a ka lakatsa ho bona Thando a phethela sehlopha sa 12 hantle, mme e eba setho se nkang karolo setjhabeng. O batlile ho bona Thando a atleha bophelong ba hae. Ka mora hore Thando a sehwe, Ilouise o ile a hlalosa mohato o mong le o mong oo re ka o lebellang; le seo ke tshwanetseng ho se etsa ho thusa Thando hore a ithute ho utlwa. Qalong, Thando o ne a atisa ho bala puo molomong wa motho, jwale ha a sa hloka ho etsa sena! O kgona ho utlwa, mme ha ke sa hloka ho sebedisa puo ya matsoho. Thando o ile a ngodiswa sekolong sa Carel du Toit. Mona ke moo bana ba sa utlweng ka ditsebe ba ithutang ho bua teng.

Ditsebi tsa phekolo ya puo le ditiitjhere sekolong sa Carel du Toit ba rata bana, mme ba sebetsa ka bokgoni bohle ba bona baneng bana. Ke bomme ba bobedi baneng bana ha re sa kgone ho ba teng. Ke motlotlo ka bona.

Mothating ona, Thando o sekolong se kenwang ke bohle. Ka bomadimabe, bana ba sekolo sena ha ba tsebe ka thuso ya kutlo le ka kgokelo ya bokahare ba tsebe (moropa wa tsebe). Ka letsatsi le leng, ba ile ba tshwara-tshwara sekgokelo sa hae sa tsebe bohlaswa, mme ba lahla pakana ya beteri/betri. Ilouise le ba leloko la hae, Anine le Jean le Roux, ba ile ba lefella pakana e ntjha ya beteri/betri ho tswa mekotleng ya bona – R3180! Ba etseditse ngwana ka tse ngata, ba bolokile bophelo ba hae! Ilouise o etseditse ngwana ka tse ngata, mme ha nako e ne e le teng, ke ne ke tla di bolela tsohle.

Ilouise, ke a o leboha ka mosebetsi wa hao o matla. Morena a o hlohonolofatse. Ke kopa o etse jwalo le ho bohle. ■

Funny stories wanted

We are in the process of collecting true stories of funny moments experienced by people with disabilities. As we all know, often very strange or embarrassing things happen to us.

We want to appeal to Voices of Change readers who have a story to share to send us an e-mail. We need original stories that have never been published in any form before.

We also would need written permission that we may use and publish your story. People may stay anonymous if they would prefer not to have their names published. We are interested in the facts and the emotions of what happened and therefore people do not need to be concerned about any language mistakes in their mails. We shall appreciate any contributions.

VOC Team ■

Invitation to all graduates with disabilities

Since 1996, the employment situation of persons with disabilities have been investigated. To help micro and macro organisations, government and the corporate world with this process, VOC would like to provide such responsible citizens with a database of graduates with disabilities. It would be highly appreciated if people with disabilities could forward their CV's to voicesofchange.md@ufs.ac.za. We are focusing on both unemployed and employed persons with disabilities to contribute to the transformation for people with disabilities. ■

To believe in a just law of cause and effect, carrying with it a punishment or a reward, is to believe in righteousness.
- Ernest Holmes

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Profoundly deaf student receive Ph.D. degree

Dr. Andrew Nel

I was born profoundly deaf and I have been wearing hearing aids throughout my mainstream schooling (Selborne College, East London) and early university years. I received my first cochlear implant in my right ear in 2007. The first three months after my first switch-on were emotionally draining as I got used to the new sounds I had never experienced before. I am able to hear high frequency sounds such as birds tweeting, the indicator of my car, "s", "th" etc.

Several people have told me that my speech and pronunciation have improved as well as my ability to follow conversations. I still rely on lip reading and I am not missing out as much as I used to do when I was wearing my hearing aids. I continued wearing my hearing aid in my left ear as it was recommended to keep it active while I wore my cochlear implant on the right side.

However, I was finding an imbalance between the two ears. This was quite obvious to me especially when I was switching between different programmes on my cochlear implant to adjust to different environments. I was hearing much more on my cochlear implant side.

Eventually I decided to have my second cochlear implant done in 2008. The switch on was also unbearable, but was much easier to cope with since my right cochlear implant masked the sounds. It has now been nearly two years that I have bilateral cochlear implants. I am able to hear the direction from which the sound is coming and I am seemingly able to pick up much more from around me. Listening to music and talking on the phone is still a big challenge for me, but I am aware it will take practice and time for me to adapt to these challenges. These days I am working as a post-doctorate researcher at the University of Cape Town after obtaining my PhD from the Institute of Microbial Biotechnology and Metagenomics (IMBM) at the University of the Western Cape. ■



Why remain captured in a world of silence?



Prof André Claassen

If hearing loss can be diagnosed early (before 3 years), parents can be taught to develop their baby's brain and teach their child to speak before the brain loses its ability to learn a new language, says ear, nose and throat (ENT) Chief specialist Prof André Claassen.

The earlier the brain pathways can be stimulated for hearing and language development, the better a child can learn to hear and speak normally. If a hearing impairment is diagnosed early the child can be fitted with hearing aids from day one and a CI later if

necessary. These devices are so sophisticated nowadays that they enable children to have virtually normal hearing. In SA the majority of children have their hearing tested too late. Now a group of ENT specialists, audiologists and VOC are striving to get the simple hearing test made compulsory for newborn babies through legislation.

Most private hospitals do conduct a simple hearing screening test on babies if the parents consent. Compulsory hearing testing is the first step towards enabling parents who are dedicated to assist their babies, with disabling hearing impairment, to succeed in a hearing world. Such a world is no longer a figment of the imagination; it has just become easier for children with hearing impairment to become socially and economically independent. Hearing impairment is an extremely complicated disability, yet the most common and neglected in SA. Parents must know which options are available for their children without the influence of hearing people. Behind every successful child with hearing impairment stand exhausted parents, similar to hearing children who are working disciplined towards a goal for their own future. ■



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Volgens die redaksionele beleid en visie van Voice of Change verwelkom ons voorstelle en kommentaar oor die positiewe ontwikkeling van die koerant. Stuur asseblief voorstelle na Magteld Smith by voicesofchange/Voorstel.md.uovs@ufs.ac.za <Voorstel.md.uovs@ufs.ac.za>



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MOTHO YA NANG LE BOQHWALA					PERSON WITH A DISABILITY					PERSOON MET GESTREMDHEID				
MABITSO KA BOTLALO:					FULL NAMES:					VOLLE NAME:				
FANE:					SURNAME:					VAN:				
BONG: NOMORO YA ID					GENDER: ID NO:					GESLAG: ID NO:				
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THUTO					EDUCATION:					OPVOEDING:				
Thuto ka mora dikri	Dikri	Diploma	Setefikeiti	Thuto	Post graduate	Degree	Diploma	Certificate	School	Nagraads	Graad	Diploma	Sertifikaat	Skool
TSA TSHEBETSO					EMPLOYMENT					WERKSAAMHEID				
Mosebeletsi wa saruri/nako e telele	Mosebeletsi wa nakwana	Ho se sebetse			Employed fulltime	Employed part-time	Unemployed			Wersaam voltyds	Wersaam deelyds	Werkloos		
HO HLAHELLETSE NENG HORE A NA LE BOQHWALA?					WHEN WERE YOU DIAGNOSED WITH A DISABILITY/TIES?					WANNEER IS U MET 'N GESTREMDHEID GEDIAGNOSEER?				
Tswalo		Dilemo			Birth		Age			Geboorte		Ouderdom		
Bofofu:		Bothata ba ho kopana le batho:			Visual impairment (blindness): Autism:					Gesigsgestremd (blindheid): Autisme:				
Botholo:		Bosofe:			Hearing impairment (deafness):					Gehoorgestremd (doofheid):				
Na o na le bothata ba ho hoopla kapa ho tsepanisa monahano?					Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?					Is dit moeilik vir u om te konsentreer en dinge te onthou?				
HIV/AIDS:		Mekgwa e meng (ka kopo hlalosa):			HIV/AIDS:		Any other (Please specify):			HIV/VIGS:		Enige ander (Spesifiseer asseblief):		



There is nothing more satisfying than seeing people living with disabilities living their lives to the fullest, regardless of their circumstances. Seeing and experiencing this is one of the reasons why the Absa Foundation is involved in improving the lives of people living with disabilities.

Absa will also be celebrating and showing support to World Disability Day on 03 December 2009, showing support to ease the difficulties that are faced by people living with disabilities.

Absa has undertaken various initiatives to improve the lives of people with disabilities, including;

- Skills training
- Provision of sewing material
- Job Creation

- Provision of wheelchairs in Branches for disabled and elderly clients
- Donations towards transportation

"Philanthropy is an issue held dear within the business objectives of Absa. It is very much appealing to note that our involvement will ensure that people with disabilities will get a chance to create employment opportunities for themselves and also become self sustainable," said Zine Mogorosi – Regional Manager, Group Marketing and Corporate Affairs, Absa Central Region.

Other business units within Absa such as Small Business are in the forefront to assist beneficiaries of Absa projects with business guidance and assists these businesses with start-up finance to enable them to establish their businesses.



Absa Funded Fabric Handover at Kopano Workshop, back row left to right: Jake Thithi; Zine Mogorosi; Tony De Villers. Front row, left to right: Israel Khokhonyane and Victor Motsoeneng.

It is within the set framework of supporting entrepreneurs to develop and being equal partners in the creation of wealth in the country that Absa continues to offer support to beneficiaries of its projects to ensure that they become successful business people.

Absa encourages employee involvement initiatives and employees in various business units commit their time to raise funds for various projects that

involve people with disabilities through out South Africa

Sešego Cares, one of the Absa employee involvement projects also creates a platform where Absa employees' family members are encouraged to partake in community social activities

Mogorosi said," People living with disabilities are not in anyway different from us and neglecting them will mean that we are neglecting the community.

"It is imperative that we take good care of our underprivileged community members for harmonious living and be counted among responsible citizens of this country," she said.

Mogorosi went further to add that World Disability Day is not only celebrated in honour of people living with disabilities but also goes further to prove to society that they are capable of doing things on their own.

She urged the community to continue taking care of these people as per the South African Constitution which encapsulate human dignity which states - , "Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected."

Absa views social responsibility as a business imperative and not just a philanthropic exercise, but a business imperative which has to support the Group's business goals. ■



Helping people
with disability to
go the extra mile



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Nuwe neiging steek kop uit in SA

Mense met gehoorgestremdhede word maklik bedrieg met onvoldoende kennis

Deon Ceronio

Die besluit om gehoorapparate aan te skaf, hou gewoonlik implikasies in vir hardhorende persone. Daar is eerstens finansiële implikasies, aangesien gehoorapparate nie goedkoop is nie, maar terselfdertyd verloop daar ook 'n aanpassingsperiode waartydens die persoon aanpas by die toestelle en aanpas by die wyse waarop sy/haar lewe daardeur geraak word. Die keuse van die regte gehoorapparate vir u spesifieke, persoonlike behoeftes is daarom van kardinale belang. Indien u die regte keuse gemaak het en u verseker is van 'n uitstekende naverkoop-diens, kan gehoorapparate u lewe grootliks vergemaklik en verryk.

Wees daarom op die uitkyk vir persone wat goedkoop gehoorapparate aan u wil verkoop, dikwels sonder om u eers te sien! Hou die volgende in gedagte:

- Besoek 'n gevestigde praktyk met 'n oudioloog in diens.
- 'n Volledige gehoortoets moet gedoen word wat ook 'n spraaktoets moet insluit.
- Die oudioloog moet aan u verduidelik van die verskillende gehoorapparate wat beskikbaar is, verkieslik van verskillende maatskappye. Deesdae is alle gehoor-apparate digitaal.
- Daar moet 'n doelgemaakte passtuk vir u gehoorapparate gemaak word.
- Die gehoorapparate moet deur middel van 'n rekenaar ingestel word tydens die passingsafspraak.

- Die oudioloog moet die werking van die gehoorapparate volledig aan u verduidelik.
- Die klank van die gehoorapparate moet geleidelik harder gestel word soos wat u daaraan gewoond raak. Dit is daarom belangrik dat u vrylik toegang tot die oudioloog moet hê.
- Daar behoort 'n 15-30 dae geld-terugwaarborg op alle gehoorapparate te wees.
- Kies gehoorapparate met 'n bekende handelsmerk.
- Moenie gehoorapparate oor die pos of internet bestel nie.

Skakel die Suid-Afrikaanse Spraak-, Taal- en Gehoorvereniging by 0861 113 297 vir 'n Oudioloog in u omgewing. ■

Moithuti ya hlahileng e le setholo ofumane Ph.D

Ngaka Andrew Nel

Ke hlahile ka botholo bo tebileng, mme ha esale ke kentse sesebediswa se thusang ka kutlo nakong yohle ya ka sekolong sa bohle (Selborne College, East London) le dilemong tse qalang Yunivesithing. Ke qadile ho ba le kgokelo ya pele ya bokahare ba tsebe (moropa wa tsebe) ka tsebeng ya ka e tona ka selemo sa 2007. Kgwedding tse tharo ha esale ke fetohela kgokelong ena, ho ne ho ama

maikutlo haholo, ka ha ke ne ke itlwaetsa modumo o motjha oo ke neng ke sa o tlwaela pele. Ke se ke kgona ho utlwa modumo o phahameng, jwalo ka molodi wa dinonyana, ho panyapanya ha koloi ya ka, "s", "th" j.j.

Batho ba sehlotswana ba ntsebisitse ntlafalo ya ka moo ke buang ka teng, le qapodiso ya ka, hape le ka moo ke latelang puisano ka teng. Ke sa ntse ke tshepetse ho baleng dipounama tsa sebui, mme ha ke sa lahlehelwa ke se buuwang haholo jwalo ka ha ho ne ho etsahala pele; ha ke ne ke kentse sesebediswa se thusang ka kutlo. Ha esale ke kentse sesebediswa se nthusang ka kutlo ka tsebeng ya ka e tshahadi jwalo ka ha ke ne ke laetswe ho e boloka e sebetsa; ha ke ntse ke kentse kgokelo ya bokahare ba tsebe (moropa wa tsebe) ka lehlakoreng le letona.

Le ha ho le jwalo, ke ne ke sa fumane tekatekano ditsebeng tsena tse pedi. Sena se ne se totobetse ho nna, haholoholo ha ke ne ke fetohela mananeong a fapaneng a dikgokelo, e le

ho lekalekanya ditikoloho tse fapaneng. Ke ne ke utlwa hantle haholo ka lehlakoreng leo ke kentseng kgokelo ka ho lona. Ka mora moo ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho fumana kgokelo ya bobedi ya bokahare ba tsebe ka 2008. Ho fetohela mokgweng ona ho ne ho se bonolo, empa ho ne ho le bobebe ho tlwaela ka ha kgokelo e ka letsohong le letona e ne e sireletsa modumo. E batla e eba dilemo tse pedi jwale ke kentse dikgokelo tse pedi. Ke kgona ho utlwa moo modumo o tswang teng, mme ke kgona le ho utlwa se etsahalang haufi le nna. Ho mamela mmimo le ho bua ka mohlala e sa ntse e le phephetso e kgolo ho nna, empa ke elletse hore ho tla nka boikwetliso le nako ho nna ho amohela diphephetso tsena. Matsatsing ana ke sebetsa jwalo ka mofuputsi ya seng a phethetse tsa bongaka Yunivesithing ya Kapa; ka mora ho fumana PhD Institjhuting ya Microbial Biotechnology and Metagenomics (IMBM) Yunivesithing ya Kapa Bophirima. ■

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