

**HAPPY THIRD BIRTHDAY VOICES OF CHANGE!**

# VOICES OF CHANGE



**Transformation for PEOPLE with disabilities**

**DECEMBER 2010**  
VOLUME 15

VOC is a non-political, non-religious, non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation in partnership with the University of the Free State. We give a voice to people with disabilities by giving different academic disciplines a chance to write about their news and views.

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Measures 65cm in height

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# Veels geluk VOC!

Met sy geboorte drie jaar gelede, het Voices of Change (VOC) een groot mikpunt in sy visier gehad: om 'n spreekbuis aan mense met gestremdhede te gee. Vandag slaag VOC steeds hierin.

**Magteld Smith**  
Kogleëre inplanting ontvanger

'n Revolusionere projek - die eerste van sy soort in Afrika - is gedurende nasionale en internasionale maand vir die bewusmaking van mense met gestremdhede in Desember 2007 gebore. Prof. André Claassen het destyds die potensiaal van die projek raakgesien en het, met prof. Gert van Zyl, Dekaan van die Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (UV) se toestemming, hulp en ondersteuning, die geboorte van VOC suksesvol laat geskied.

Alhoewel die projek as 'n unieke gemeenskapsprojek binne die fakulteit gestig is, doen VOC vandag baie om mense met gestremdhede te help deur middel van

bewusmaking. VOC vorm die spreekbuis vir mense met gestremdhede waar hul die geleentheid kry om direk met die publiek te kommunikeer oor hul uitdagings, frustrasies en prestasies. Hul grootste doelwit is om erkenning van hul eie potensiaal te kry. Dit kan gedoen word, mits hul die geleentheid gegun word.

Die hantering van gestremdheid vereis kundigheid; van diagnose af regdeur die persoon se ontwikkeling en beplanning tot en met sosiale en ekonomiese bemagtiging. Kennisoordrag

**Prof. André Claassen**

Foto: Amoré van Schalkwyk



Inserted in: **Sunday Times** **SundayWorld** **Sowetan** **VOLKSBLAD** **Express**

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# VOC Project Management Team



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van kundigheid en vaardigheid deur akademië opgelei in, onder andere, gesondheidswetenskappe, regsgeleerdheid, geesteswetenskappe, ekonomiese wetenskappe en onderwys is van VOC se grootste mikpunt.

Met bogenoemde in gedagte, is die feit dat VOC homself finansier ook 'n groot mylpaal wat bereik is. Die projek dek al VOC se drukkerskoste, verspreidingskoste, redaksionele, grafiese ontwerp van die koerant en adverteerders se advertensies, sowel as alle ander kostes betrokke by die suksesvolle eindprodukt.

Fondse word verkry deur die werwing van advertensies. Op hierdie manier ontvang adverteerders erkenning en die geleentheid om hul dienste aan die publiek bekend te stel. Verder word VOC heeltemal onafhanklik van die UV bestuur, alhoewel die projek vanuit een van die UV se sewe fakulteite gebore is.

Deur jare se harde werk en navorsing het prof. Claassen in 2003 'n lewensveranderende program in Bloemfontein begin; die Kogleëre Inplantingsprogram. Hy het besef hoe 'n groot verskil so 'n inplanting kan maak

in die ontvanger se lewe en aan verskeie pasiënte hoop en 'n tweede geleentheid gebied om ingesluit te word in hoofstroom aktiwiteite wat baie mense met gehoor as vanselfsprekend aanvaar. Alhoewel daar struikelblokke op die pad was, het hy daarin geslaag om die program suksesvol te loods en vandag kan hy in verskeie mense se suksesverhale deel. Prof. Claassen was die voorsitter van die Kogleëre Inplantingsprogram in Suid-Afrika tot en met sy aftrede in Julie 2010.

As deernisvolle mens, veelsydige sportman, Cum laude akademikus en sy passie vir sy vakgebied, wat onder ander in sy vele publikasies en projekte wat hy aanpak gesien kan word, het hy ook Voices of Change aangepak. Hierdie projek, wat fokus op transformasie vir mense met gestremdhede is een van die groot suksesverhale wat die Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe vandag kan vertel. Prof. Claassen se wetenskaplike hart lê inderdaad by kinders en mense met gehoorgestremdhede, maar sy kennis en belangstelling is nie daartoe beperk nie, omdat hy deeglik bewus is van sekondêre gestremdhede wat soms met gehoorgestremdheid gepaard gaan. Hierdie begrip en insig eis veel meer as wat mense buite die veld van gestremdheid besef.

VOC wil aan mense met gestremdhede erkenning gee vir alles wat hulle al bereik het. Ons het reeds hierin begin slaag deur verskeie mense se stories te vertel. Almal wat betrokke is by hierdie Nie-Winsgewende Organisasie (NWO), wil mense met gestremdhede bekend stel aan die publiek sodat hulle hul eie opinies kan vorm en sodoende belangrike werk verrig vir die gemeenskap.

VOC is trots om, alhoewel ons self 'n NWO is, ook aan ander NWO's erkenning

te gee en gratis hul dienste aan die publiek bekend te stel deur artikels te publiseer. Lesers sal kan getuig dat VOC verskeie gestremdhede aangespreek het, soos Autisme, William Sindroom en vele ander onsigbare gestremdhede.

Na 'n uiters suksesvolle 2010, bied VOC 'n opregte dank aan elkeen van sy adverteerders, lesers en ondersteuners. Drie jaar later is ons steeds die enigste koerant en projek van sy soort in die hele Suid-Afrika. VOC word voortaan as bylae in die *Sunday Times*, *Sunday World*, *Sowetan*, *Volksblad* en *Express* in die Vrystaat met 'n drukkersoplaag van 90 000 kopieë versprei.

Nuwe uitdagings word beplan vir 2011 en ons sien uit daarna om saam met verskeie organisasies, mikro- en makro-besighede, mense met gestremdhede en die gemeenskap suksesvolle projekte aan te pak.

Ons bedank enigiemand wat die projek deur middel van die skenking van kapitaal wil ondersteun. Ons bankbesonderhede is as volg:

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Ons wens ons adverteerders en lesers 'n geseende feestyd toe. Ons sien uit daarna om in 2011 weer saam met elkeen van julle te werk. Maak gereed vir 'n groot 2011!



Prof. Riaz Seedat, hoof van ONK aan die UV en dr. RB Lesodi.

Foto: Amoré van Schalkwyk

## Overcoming obstacles with positivity



Jenelle Joanne Ramsami

My name is Jenelle Joanne Ramsami; I am a 27-year old lady from Durban in KwaZulu-Natal and I was born with disabling hearing impairment.

#### Jenelle Joanne Ramsami

AS a little girl, I was a very shy and I didn't want to socialize with the people around me. Luckily, my parents helped me through all the struggles I had to face.

As I look back on the previous years, I remember being filled with hope and anticipation of what lies ahead. Having a disability never stopped me from getting an education. I had the opportunity to study in a mainstream college, where I received distinctions. Thereafter I felt I was capable of doing anything, so I made sure I studied further by doing Business Management. I did extremely well with over 100 hundred hearing students among me. Even though I have a disability, God has given me a range of talents and I am so thrilled with what He has blessed me with.

I decided to do modeling to boost my confidence and to encourage other people with disabilities. I wanted to share what I had achieved with the hearing world. I took part in many pageants but I never won the title as a queen. However, this never stopped me from trying because I am always ready to take on a challenge.

In 2010, I was chosen as a finalist in the Miss India SA KZN pageant. I competed

with nineteen hearing girls, but still received the "Fresh Look" award. This year, I did charity shows, some ramp walk, featured in a music video and people admire me for my dancing skills.

Some people have always wondered how it is possible for me to dance so well. Luckily I do have a little hearing and I soon began to feel the music's beat and express myself through it. When dancing, I feel like a bird because I know I was chosen to do this to show people that we can do anything; no matter what disabilities we may have.

My hearing is felt by the rhythm of my heart. Whenever I see the birds fly, I know they are singing and chirping. I see a dog bark, even though I can't hear it. I see its wagging tail and I know he acknowledges me. I see the trees swaying and I know it's windy. I see my friend talking; I read her lips, saying perfect words to me. I see her body language as she makes eye contact with me; I see her kindness or lack thereof. I now know that I am regarded as a person, even before someone talks to me. Yes, I might not be a picture frame. But neither are you of me.



# Unit for Students with Disabilities

The Unit for Students with Disabilities (USD) aims to ensure that the University of the Free State increasingly becomes an accessible higher education institution for students with disabilities. We join the UFS in striving to be an excellent, equitable and innovative university. The USD offers support and assistance to registered students with challenges including visual, hearing and mobility impairment as well as specific learning difficulties. The USD's main focus is to ensure equal opportunities for students with disabilities. This involves access to courses, buildings, learning material, residences, leisure and sport activities and the opportunity to participate in all student activities. The USD coordinates assistance to all relevant persons in the academic process and other aspects of student life.

**For more information contact Hetsie Veitch : 051 401 3713 : [veitchhp@ufs.ac.za](mailto:veitchhp@ufs.ac.za)**





# My lewe met 'n gesplete verhemelte



Ronel Groenewald

'n Volwasse vrou  
vertel van die  
struikelblokke  
wat sy moes  
oorkom om  
uiteindelik 'n  
normale lewe te  
lei.

## Ronel Groenewald

EK is 31 jaar oud en is gebore met 'n gesplete verhemelte – baie mense verwys daarna as 'n haaslip. Ek sien myself as iemand met 'n gestremdeheid, omdat daar 'n hele aantal prosesse en operasies is wat ek moes ondergaan om vandag normaal te lyk, te eet en te kan praat.

Ek was net agt maande oud toe ek die eerste keer 'n operasie moes ondergaan. Gelukkig weet ek moderne tegnologie het sedertdien baie vorentoe beweeg. Ek het al ophou tel hoeveel operasies ek moes ontvang, maar drie daarvan sal ek nooit vergeet nie.

Ek onthou goed hoe 'n dokter in Linwood Hospitaal in Pretoria 'n stukkie van my heupbeen verwyder het om my neus op te bou. Ek het baie pyn ervaar, maar die dokter het aan my verduidelik ek kon huis toe gaan sodra ek weer kon loop. Ons almal weet tog hoe sleg dit is om in die hospitaal te lê as jy by die huis kan wees nie. Hierdie gedagte het my positief gehou.

Nog 'n operasie wat my bybly, is die proses waarin my kakebeen geskuif is. Dit was verskriklik seer en ek is bly ek het nie geweet presies wat die proses behels het nie. Ek weet nie of ek die waarheid sou kon hanteer nie.

Die laaste operasie wat ek so goed onthou, is gedoen toe ek negentien jaar oud. My gesplete verhemelte is gevul deur 'n gedeelte van my tong vas te werk aan die verhemelte. Ek kon ná die operasie vir drie weke nie eet nie en het van vloeistowwe en fyn stukkies brood geleef.

Alhoewel dit kinders was, het my skoolmaats my lewe baie moeilik gemaak. Ek is lelike name genoem wat my vandag nog bybly. Tydens my jare as 'n hoërskoolleerling het ek baie moeite gedoen om aanvaar te word – ek was bang om my laerskooljare te herleef.

Ek bedank my ouers, Ria en Sybrand Steyn vir hul positiwiteit. My selfvertroue is net aan hulle te danke.

Vandag is ek getroud met Willie Groenewald. Ons het vier pragtige kinders - Monique, Ronê, Zanêl en Zaniel - hulle hou my op die regte dinge in die lewe gefokus.

My hart en gedagtes behoort aan die Here en daarom sal niks my onderkry nie. Ek droom daarvan om eendag 'n sangeres te wees. Ek weet die Vader het 'n doel met my en op die regte tyd sal ek die geleentheid kry om 'n cd op te neem.

Een ding is seker: dis nie die laaste wat jul van my sal hoor of sien nie!

## Voices of Change Editorial Policy

THE articles and features published in Voices of Change undergo a rigorous editorial process. This includes extensive reviews by medical professionals and academics. This supplement, however, is not intended to provide medical care, jobs, financial aid to the public or to sponsor disability assistive devices. The information in this supplement is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses and treatment, please consult your doctor.

The articles, photos, animations, and features found in VOC are created and revised by members, physicians, writers, editors, and graphic designers of the VOC team. Our goal is to make sure that all information is accurate, balanced, current and family friendly.

The VOC editorial members review all our readers' comments on articles in this supplement and suggestions for possible improvements and corrections.

The VOC team makes every effort to be neutral and objective when focusing on different disabilities, sex, race, religion and age. Within the articles, VOC takes turns referring to human beings as "he" or "she". Remember that, even when the author of an article refers to "he" or "she", the information provided is applicable to both male and female readers, unless otherwise specified.

Although every effort is made to verify that the information provided by resources – which includes websites, organizations, books and contact particulars – is up-to-date and accurate, the information tends to change and not all of it was necessarily reviewed by Voices of Change. These resources are provided solely as a convenience to our readers and are not an endorsement by the Department of Otorhinolaryngology within the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Free State (UFS).

## Blind student sees academic future

The story of how a blind student didn't allow her disability to stand between her and academic success

### Magteld Smith

ESTÈ Kemp is a blind student in her fourth year of study at the University of the Free State (UFS). She is currently



studying B.A General at the UFS. Estè has been blind since birth.

She attended Prinshof School in Pretoria, where she matriculated in 2003 with a distinction in Economics at standard grade level.

She passed her UNISA Grade 7 piano practical exam with Honours. She also passed the Grade 5 UNISA theory examination.

Estè has been studying very hard ever since her first year as a student at the UFS. This led to her receiving multiple distinctions for her subjects.

At the beginning of 2010, she received an invitation to become a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society. This society honours students who perform exceptionally in their academic studies. This is a truly extraordinary accomplishment for a blind student.

This inspirational student believes one should never give up. "It's very easy to make a list of everything that you can't do as a disabled person but you must look past this. See your disability as a challenge," she says.



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## 10-year old girl dances to the beat

HER crisp jumps and graceful glides set 10-year old Alana Smith apart from the other ballerinas in her dance class. If it weren't for her hearing aids, no one would guess that she only hears some of the music. She cannot hear her teacher at all. Many hearing people struggle to match their movements to the music when dancing, but not Alana, who was born deaf. She dances skilfully.

When Alana's mother, Debbie, learned her baby had been born deaf, she felt sad, thinking her daughter would never develop a love for music. Smith, a singer with a degree in music education, says she noticed that lullabies soothed Alana only when she was held close to her mother and could feel the vibrations of her voice.

No one else in the family is deaf, and it surprised her and her husband, Jeff, to discover that Alana could hear only very loud low-frequency sounds. Today, Alana has studied ballet for more than four years and she has taken piano lessons for two years.

In class at the Ballet School, Alana watches intently when her teacher demonstrates movements

for the class. Sometimes her teacher bangs the floor with a walking stick to keep the girls on beat, and the noise and vibrations help Alana too.

"She does amazingly well," her teacher says, adding that Alana probably pays more attention than the others. "She is not a quitter."



Alana Smith

## Horses: the key to our souls

Inqwela Equestrian Centre in Bloemfontein tries to create an environment in which children with disabilities are offered the opportunity to take control of their lives and bodies. The children are given the opportunity to touch, love and nurture horses and in return receive the same from these amazing animals.



Horse riding has a scientifically proven positive therapeutic effect on children with visible and invisible disabilities. Horses are used to assist in the treatment of children.



Saddling up and riding a horse is an enjoyable experience for many people. For a person with a disability, however, it may signify a road to recovery.

More people are discovering the benefits of horse riding. Some say man's best friend is a dog, although horses will most surely disagree with this.

For any enquiries please contact Etienne Kassimatis at 084 522 4546.

Photos: Zelda Kassimatis

We love to hear from all our readers! Send us your stories, ideas or experiences – we might even decide to publish it! Drop us a line at: [voicesofchangeletters@ufs.ac.za](mailto:voicesofchangeletters@ufs.ac.za)

## Ear, Nose & Throat Department receive young visitors

Dr Iain Butler

CHILDREN from the Carel du Toit centre in Bloemfontein recently visited the Ear, Nose & Throat Department at the University of the Free State (UFS). These children all have severe hearing impairments and make use of either hearing aids or cochlear implants to improve their access to sound.

The early identification of ear disease is always important, especially in these

children, where every bit of sound is necessary for them to learn to speak. By examining their ears on a regular basis we can ensure that there are no additional hurdles in their paths and can manage any problem before it gets out of hand.

Most of the children see this trip to the doctor as a great adventure, and the presence of their classmates nearby serves to distract from the strangeness of the examination. Receiving something sweet from the doctors' secretaries seems to help as well!



Dr Iain Butler with children from the Carel du Toit centre who visited him recently.

Photo: Magteld Smith

## Officials applaud Sign Language training

Limpopo staff members are excited about the opportunities they learnt about at a recent training workshop.

Sam Makondo

OFFICIALS from the Limpopo Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, who are currently undergoing training on South African Sign Language, described the exercise as an eye-opener and a step in the right direction. About 15 members of the Department are enrolled in an accredited, year-long Short Course in South African Sign Language aimed at empowering them with basic skills in South African Sign Language, in order for them to reach out to the Deaf community.

Sign Language is said to be the most basic human right of the Deaf community and has become widely recognised and is protected in various legislative and Government policies. Furthermore, it is acknowledged as a language equal in status to the eleven official languages of the country.

It is against this understanding that the training division of the Department realised the importance of proper training. With successful training, officials will be able to communicate and understand Deaf and Hard of hearing people by means of basic South African Sign Language.

Some of the officials who attended the training believe it might help in servicing the Deaf community.

Language Services Senior Manager, Dr Agnes Mawela, whose division is charged with the promotion of languages in the province, including South African Sign Language, reckons the training will benefit the Department and the Province at large in terms of the availability of skilled personnel who will be able to assist the Deaf by using basic South African Sign Language in their service delivery.

**Department of South African Sign Language**

**An exciting new world**

Are you enrolled for a degree in which studying a language is compulsory? Then the Department of South African Sign Language at the University of the Free State (UFS) is the right choice for you!

This Department offers Sign Language on an undergraduate as well as postgraduate level.

Knowledge of Sign Language will lead you to many exciting career opportunities.

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# Attitudes toward people with disabilities



**Dr Ronel Kleynhans,**  
Dept of Industrial Psychology  
UFS

SOUTH Africa experienced drastic changes in the political arena during the past two decades. These changes gave rise to improved management of the diverse South African population, compelling the effective management of people with disabilities.

A study done at the UFS looks at the community's feelings toward people with disabilities.

Disability is an international phenomenon that elicits local, national and international commentary. People with disabilities represent a large proportion of those who want to work, but remain unemployed, as managers do not acknowledge their potential. The main reasons for the exclusion of people with disabilities from the main stream are negative attitudes and bias from people without disabilities towards them, as well as a lack of awareness of their abilities. Therefore, people without disabilities show different responses to people with physical disabilities, ranging from negative responses on one end of the continuum such as exclusion, to positive responses on the other end such as mutual adaptation.

One main factor in organisations that influence the attitudes of managers is the strategic priority that managers need to give to people with disabilities. In a study done by Kleynhans it was apparent that the attitude of both managers and

employees towards people with physical disabilities in the workplace was neutral. This can be interpreted as the absence of a positive attitude, apathy towards people with disabilities or denial of the potential of people with disabilities. It also indicates an unwillingness of people without disabilities to express their true attitude towards people with disabilities. In practice, people without disabilities do not make a purposeful attempt to employ or utilize people with disabilities fully.

Furthermore, it indicates an uncertainty of managers and employees about the ways in which the needs of people with disabilities should be addressed, as well as how interaction with these individuals should take place. Therefore, people without disabilities prefer to interact with and employ people who are similar to them. People with disabilities thus still experience work-related discrimination and unjust treatment. This includes reduced benefits and opportunities of

working overtime, as well as unrealistic expectations about their inputs. It also includes different negative behaviours towards people with disabilities. Negative attitudes towards people with disabilities are not verbalised blatantly, but do come to the fore in the apathetic attitudes of employees and managers towards them.

For South Africa to make a difference with regards to diversity management and more specifically managing people with disabilities, managers need to develop a heightened awareness of the benefits of a diverse workforce, and more specifically of including people with disabilities. The legal aspects, as well as the implications of the employment of people with disabilities, must be brought to the attention of employers as well as employees of organisations. By implementing different attitude changing strategies in organisations, a pro-active attempt is made to create a heightened awareness of the needs and potential of people with disabilities.

## The history of Miss Deaf South Africa



**Gert Els (Owner), Vicky Fourie (Former Miss Deaf SA 2009/10), Mariska Healing and Narda Els (Owner). They are all hearing impaired.**

Photo: Amoré van Schalkwyk

After presenting a successful beauty pageant for deaf people, the Miss Deaf South Africa Pageant was registered and founded by Narda and Gert Els in 2001. Candice Morgan won the Miss Deaf World title in 2004, and it was then that the owners realized that there were many undiscovered talented women within

the Deaf Society. It became clear that it was definitely possible for these women to compete with the rest of the world. A decision was made to create a showcase for Deaf people in South Africa, irrespective of race, age or culture.

## Dad for the Deaf

The culture of Deaf people

**Ernest Wilson Kleinschmidt (Deaf)**



CULTURE, as told by Marie Jean Philip, a hearing impaired American: "A set of learned behaviour of a group of people which has its own language, values, rules of behaviour and traditions,"

To show the different aspects of culture, this lady said one should pretend to travel back to the old days in Japan.

When we arrive, we will see strange houses and people with strange clothes and swords hanging from their belts and women with tiny feet. We are taken to the house. It is not like the houses we know; it looks very different; it is a very low building.

Before we may enter the house, we must take off our shoes. Then, in single file

we walk in, and it's just one big room. All the furniture is very low and there are not any chairs and we have to kneel on the floor. It is a bit awkward because we are not used to it. Food is served. It is not like anything we have tasted before, and there are no knives and forks – just chopsticks. We don't quite know what to do. When the meal is finished, we try to thank the host for his hospitality, but he gets upset, and the more we try to thank him the more upset he seems to get. Just to be polite, we mention that we like the painting on the wall and he says "you have it - it's yours". Now it is your turn to get embarrassed. You try and explain you were just admiring it, you can't possibly accept it, but he insists.

There are three aspects of culture:

Materialistic:

This is like the food and the housing (material things) that we see in Japan.

## World's shortest woman born and bred in Bloemfontein



**Madge Bester and Philip Marais (QuadPara Association of South Africa).**  
Photo: Magteld Smith

Madge Bester from Bloemfontein was born on 26 April 1963 and measures 65 cm in height. It is believed that she is the world's shortest living woman. Bester has osteogenesis imperfecta, which is characterized by brittle bones. She is also hearing impaired. She lives in a retirement village in Bloemfontein. Her mother Winnie, who passed away in 2001, also suffered from the same disability and measured only 70cm.



Normative:

It is like having to take off your shoes before we go into the house. Things people do that they can only learn by observing.

Cognitive:

This is the most difficult to learn. For example, it is rude to thank the host for a meal in Japan. Also, if you admire something (such as a picture) the host will insist that you have it.

Not one culture is better than another culture. All cultures are valid and they have their own rules and systems.

Hearing people are not in a position to understand and judge Deaf people until they are able to respect them and their culture.

Contact Ernest Kleinschmidt at [ewk@caperocktours.co.za](mailto:ewk@caperocktours.co.za)

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# HANJO SE STORIE DEUR MY OË

Hanneri Bester vertel hoe haar seun, Hanjo, se kogleëre inplanting die hele gesin aangeraak het.

HANJO Bester is op 2 Maart 1996 in Bloemfontein gebore. Alhoewel ons by geboorte geen gehoorverlies vermoed nie, is daar in Januarie 1998 by Hanjo "profound deafness" gediagnoseer.

Ons het van daar af die lang pad begin stap. Eers na Deon Ceronio, die Oudioloog en ook die pad na Carel du Toit sentrum in Belville, Kaapstad. Hanjo is aanvanklik gepas met die sterkste "Phonak" gehoorapparate beskikbaar op daardie stadium.

'n Oudioloog by Tygerberg Hospitaal het vir ons vertel Hanjo se doofheid is van so 'n aard dat hy 'n perfekte kandidaat vir 'n kogleëre inplanting is. In daardie jare het net die aankoop van die apparaat R120 000 gekos. Daardie bedrag was eenvoudig buite ons bereik en die Mediese fonds se bydrae was te klein.

Gelukkig het 'n nuwe apparaat die mark getref en ons kon weereens vir Hanjo opgradering vir albei sy ore laat doen. Hierdie appaarte se prys was omtrent R20 000, maar darem meer bekostigbaar as 'n kogleëre inplanting.

Drie-maandelikse besoeke aan Carel du Toit sentrum in Kaapstad het deel van ons bestaan geword. Ons as gesin het dus ná afloop van ons besoek aan Kaapstad die verantwoordelikheid gehad om Hanjo bewus te maak van omgewingsgeluide, klank en taal.

Gedurende daardie tyd het ons, in samewerking met ander ouers wat ook dowe kinders het en dus ook gereeld Kaapstad toe moes reis en Michelle de Kock, 'n onderwyseres wat by die sentrum in Kaapstad gewerk het, maar Bloemfontein toe verhuis het, 'n Carel du Toit sentrum in Bloemfontein geopen.

Ons het intussen besef Hanjo kon nie genoegsame wins put uit gewone gehoorapparate om hom taal aan te leer nie. Met die ondersteuning van skole, vriende, familie, en deursettingsvermoë kon ons die geld wat nodig was vir die groot operasie bymekaar kry en sy eerste inplanting laat doen op 1 November 1999.

Hanjo was toe drie jaar en nege maande oud en die Kogleëre-span het dit baie duidelik aan ons gemaak dat hy 'n vier jaar taalagterstand het. Hulle het ons die waarborg gegee dat Hanjo na afloop van die operasie beslis sal kan hoor, maar dat hy nie noodwendig taal sal kan aanleer nie.

Hanjo het ná sy kogleëre apparaat in Desember aangeskakel is, die mees ongelooflike klankervarings beleef. Dit was vir ons 'n absolute bevestiging dat ons die regte besluit geneem het.

Soos vir enige dowe kind, is taal vir Hanjo 'n uitdaging. Taalvaardigheid is ongelukkig gekoppel aan meeste akademiese vakke en daarom neem dit langer om voor te berei vir toetse en eksamens.

As ek dink aan die waarskuwing wat Kogleëre-span aan ons gerig het, kan ek vandag net getuig van 'n groot wonderwerk van ons Hemelse Vader.

Hanjo kan praat, hy is in 'n Hoofstroomskool, hy speel hokkie en krieket vir die skool en vaar uitstekend op akademiese gebied. Hy is sosiaal goed aangepas. Hy het goeie vriende en 'n familie wat vir hom baie lief is.



Hanjo Bester, wat op 'n jong ouderdom 'n kogleëre inplanting ontvang het.

## CDS at the forefront of socio-economic research

EMPLOYEES of the Centre for Development Support (CDS) at the University of the Free State (UFS) strive towards furthering human development, mainly in the Free State, but also in the rest of Southern Africa.

Seeing that the centre is at the forefront of relevant socio-economic research at local, national and international level, it comes as no surprise that they are busy with major research projects.

Prof. Lochner Marais, Director of the centre explains that his colleagues all deal with a certain aspect of the respective

research projects. Researchers at the centre are busy with the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project. This project endeavours to analyse the socio-economic changes taking place during the planning of large radio telescopes in the Carnarvon and Williston areas.

The CDS's research extends much further than South Africa. The centre was approached by Global Development Network in India to determine the role urban agriculture plays in poverty in South Africa and Zambia. The project was managed in collaboration with the

University of Zambia, the University of Otago in New Zealand and the University of New South Wales in Australia.

The CDS also offers a multi-disciplinary Master's degree in Development Studies. More than 60% of the students registered for this programme come from countries outside South Africa. Lecturers from various departments at the UFS and other higher-education institutions are involved in the programme. The programme has specially been developed for individuals who are currently working in the developmental environment.

Magteld Smith, part of the VOC team and employee of the UFS, made history by becoming the first student born with profound deafness to attain a Master's Degree in Development Studies in South Africa. She is also registered as one of the centre's 15 PhD students.

The centre will eventually be able to pride itself upon more national and international publications and distinguished postgraduate programmes. Furthermore, the centre also now focuses on the development of a knowledge centre to bring about a larger degree of informed decision-making at regional level. "The emphasis here is on internationalisation and diversity," Lochner explains.



Prof. Lochner Marais (left) and his team.

Photo: Hannes Pieterse

## Autism conference held at the UFS

Dr Liesl Smit

A successful conference was held recently to educate the community on Autism.

The Free State Association for Autism Spectrum Disorders, in conjunction with Z2A, recently organized a conference on the practical management of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The speakers included Mrs Annalies van Rijswijk of SNAP (Special Needs Adapted Program) in

Durbanville, who spoke on behavioural issues and teaching methods in Autism and Dr David Griessel from the Pediatric department at the University of the Free State (UFS). Dr Griessel presented a lecture on medication use in Autism and Dr Liesl Smit from the Neurology department at the UFS showed images of the Bloemfontein SNAP School.

Mrs Annemarie van Jaarsveld from the Occupational Therapy department at the UFS spoke on Sensory Processing Disorders in Autism

and Mrs Deborah Stodel, a Speech Therapist from Durbanville, presented a lecture on how to manage children on the Autism Spectrum when giving speech therapy.

At the conference were 32 delegates, including parents, teachers from Lettie Fouché School, Pholoho School, Lesedi, Castle Bridge School, Willem Postma primary school, occupational therapists, speech therapists and a physiotherapist.



From left are: Mrs Annalies van Rijswijk, Dr David Griessel, Mrs Deborah Stodel and Dr Liesl Smit. Photo: Received

## The UFS is the right place to qualify as an accountant!

Did you know that the Centre for Accounting at the University of the Free State (UFS) is one of only 6 universities in South Africa with a Grade 1 accreditation from the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA)? The Centre, in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), also offers the Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting on a part time basis.

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# The ART of Language

*"They paint what they experience. They experience what they paint"*

(Jameson)

## Magteld Smith

A person with communication disabilities' primary disability is his or her inability to hear human speech. The whole functioning of this person is hampered by hearing loss. This implicates that communication disabilities can cause secondary disabilities such as language expression, communication, cognitive, social and a spectrum of other disabilities.

These invisible disabilities impose a special challenge to people who intervene with people with communication disabilities. The therapist has to pay special attention to this matter and to the way in which communication will commence and continue.

Therapy implicates effective communication and the use of language

plays an important role in the educational-psychological practice. Diagnostic test and therapeutic techniques require an average language achievement. The therapist must seek alternative, concrete ways in which to assess the person with communication disabilities and ultimately solve the person's problems.

The creation of a work of art is a concrete sensory act. It is important that the therapist will recognise and interpret the projected symbols and that he will use it to change and expand the person with communication disabilities' world of meaning. This is a specialised field and a therapist cannot use any direction at random. Every individual's work of art must be assessed in a phenomenological way before any conclusion can be drawn.

Moreover, the therapist who intervenes with people with communication

disabilities has to be well trained. He or she must have good knowledge and experience of deafness and should have exceptional language and communication abilities. The uniqueness of each person with communication disabilities should be taken into consideration before a therapeutic technique can be chosen.

Gallery Fabriano in Cape Town, together with the Carel du Toit centre once again had a very successful exhibition with the "I can Hear" art competition. Voices of Change (VOC) would like to congratulate and thank Gallery Fabriano for their initiative and dedication to open up the mysterious world of art and create tomorrow's master artists. VOC and Gallery Fabriano with the Carel du Toit centre plans to host the first National Art completion based on disabilities in 2011.



Cullum Morris, 12 years old



Lara de Bruijn, 12 years old



Cara Walters, 11 years old



Ananda van Deventer, 17 years old



Ruan Maree, 17 years old



Hester Rabie, 17 years old



Eloise Britz, 19 years old



Sandra van der Merwe, Adult



Bianca Neetling, Adult