

# VOICES OF CHANGE



**Transformation for PEOPLE with disabilities**

**AUGUST 2010  
VOLUME 12**

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.



**A legend  
leaves the  
UFS**

**Page 3**



**Nominate  
NOW!**

**Page 8**



Prof. Jonathan Jansen Rector and Vice-Chancellor: University of the Free State

## For such a time as this

“... we are determined to open the book on a new and reconstructed future for the University of the Free State (UFS). In this, we will be driven by two goals.

Firstly, the university will become a place that exemplifies the scholarship and the practice of reconciliation, forgiveness and social justice. Scholars and students from around the world will descend on the institution to study and understand the theory and practice of building community across the divides of race but also religion, gender, disability, national origins and, thanks to Athletics South Africa (ASA), sexual identity.

Secondly, the university will move very quickly to become a national and international centre for academic excellence. While the UFS has great programmes in fields like chemistry, agriculture and medicine, we are acutely aware of the need to dramatically scale-up the academic standards of a promising institution.

In this respect, let me be clear that the UFS will be unashamedly elitist in its drive to become an African university instantly recognized for excellence in research, teaching and what my predecessor so beautifully called “engaged scholarship” in relation to the communities around us.

A university is not a welfare organization. It is not a FET College. It is not a giant compensatory programme for students who crawled over the matric finishing line, demanding to study for a degree.

A university is an institution of higher learning serving the best available talent in the nation and beyond. With this purpose in mind, we will recruit only the best white and the best black students and academics to the University of the Free State.”

Available: [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za) “Inaugural Speech of the 13th Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the UFS”

# TAXI DRIVER ROBS GIRL OF DREAMS

The remarkable story of an irresponsible U-turn,  
the loss of dreams and never giving up hope

**Magteld Smith**  
Department of Otorhinolaryngology  
University of the Free State

Born in Ladybrand, Nthabiseng Molongoana was nine years old when her family moved to Botshabelo, where she attended the Mariasdal Catholic School. She matriculated from this school and dreamed of studying further. Sadly, her parents could not afford sending her to a university. She decided to enrol at a teachers training college instead. “It was not really my dream to be a teacher, but I thought if I did well, it could be a stepping stone to studying further,” she explains.

During her first year at college, Nthabiseng’s results were so good that she was given permission to register to be a first-year student at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

“I went to register that Saturday. I was so excited when I got back to the college hostel,” she remembers.

She decided to join a group of friends from the hostel to go to town. They caught a taxi, but the taxi would not start. “Some of the passengers got out and pushed the taxi. I remained inside.”

She remembers the taxi being push-started and then nothing. Two weeks later, she woke up in the hospital. What went wrong on this dreadful day?

A friend told her that, as the taxi engine finally started, the taxi driver

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Me. Nthabiseng Molongoana

Photo: Amoré van Schalkwyk

Inserted in:

**Sowetan**  
THE SOUL TRUTH

**Sunday Times**  
THE PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE

**SundayWorld**





## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

performed an illegal U-turn in the road and collided with an oncoming car. Nthabiseng got incredibly hurt in the accident.

Nthabiseng had to stay in the hospital for nine months. Initially, she did not cry. She firmly believed that she would walk again. The only thing she did worry about was her studies.

She kept asking herself how she was going to finish her degree. "Maybe it sounds silly, but academic achievement was the only thing that defined me at the time," she explains.

One might ask, "What kept Nthabiseng going during those terrible nine months?" She says her family, friends and the Catholic sisters who regularly came and gave her communion gave her hope and the energy to keep going.

"Whenever I hear the Celine Dion song, 'Because you loved me', I think back to all the wonderful people who were always there with me," Nthabiseng says.

Even through this, Nthabiseng believed the accident was just a setback. She believed it would all pass and she would walk again.

"One Easter, I was in hospital and my brother was visiting me. My legs started jumping. We were so excited; we thought my movement was coming back."

But the movements she felt, the cause of her excitement, were just spasms. Slowly the realisation set in that nothing was going to change. A psychologist paid a visit to her.

With the help of the psychologist and an occupational therapist called Erika, Nthabiseng found hope. "I could see the hope in their eyes and I followed it."

"But even while I was going through all these motions, I still did not think of the future. I only thought about going back to university." Erika realised this and talked to Nthabiseng about

it. They agreed that Nthabiseng should go for a career preparation assessment.

Sadly, Nthabiseng failed the assessment. She remembers being nervous, ill at ease, having spasms and sweating. Failing the assessment broke Nthabiseng's heart. "I cried and cried."

Eventually, Erika had a much-needed heart-to-heart conversation with Nthabiseng. Her most important message to Nthabiseng? "If you think you have anything to lose, stop. But if you think you can go through the assessment again, go back."

Nthabiseng was ready to go through the assessment again. This time, she passed it. The biggest difference this time around was the attitude she took on. This time, she noticed the other people taking the assessment. "Some of them were worse off than me, but they were dealing with it. That made me determined to do the assessment to the best of my ability," she says.

Nthabiseng made a promise to herself to complete her degree. Sadly, another challenge was presenting itself: it was time to go home. Nthabiseng's parents had separated in the meantime.

She now had an important decision to make. "I could live with my father in Botshabelo, who had the resources to support me, or I could go to Bloemfontein and live with my mother, who did not have the resources to look after me."

But Nthabiseng's mother was determined - she was not going anywhere without her daughter. "We might struggle but will see this through," she told her daughter.

"So I went to my mother's house in Bloemfontein. There was no electricity to charge my power wheelchair. Within a week of my return, we had electricity. And so I came to understand that this was my life."

But life was not easy. Nthabiseng's brother had finished studying, but was battling to find

employment. Her mother did not have a job either. "I don't know how we managed, but we did. And we were happy."

Erika, in the meantime, had contacted the Association for People with Disabilities (APD Free State) in Bloemfontein and they paid a visit to Nthabiseng's house to help. They discussed Nthabiseng's future. She still harboured her dream of studying further.

Shortly after this, Nthabiseng began working as a switchboard operator at the APD Free State office. Her brother had also found employment and with her disability grant, things were looking up. And she had not forgotten her dream...

Nthabiseng got a loan and went for some psychometric tests. In 1996, she finally registered as a first-year student at the University of the Free State (UFS). Yet another obstacle waited on her.

"At that time, the university was not very accessible and I was too embarrassed to ask other people for help to get to class or go make photocopies in the library." She was embarrassed by who she was. This caused Nthabiseng to not pass all of her subjects.

Nthabiseng did however pass maths and she decided to return to the university. "This time I had a changed attitude. I decided I would pass and if it meant asking for help from 10 people, I would do that." Needless to say, she did pass.

While this success increased her confidence, she had neglected her health and soon developed a pressure sore. Unfortunately her mother, not knowing what a pressure sore was, put Zambuk on it. It healed perfectly on the outside, but on the inside it festered. It took a year before the wound healed completely.

By then, Nthabiseng was in and out of university. But in 2004 she wrote her last exams and stood on the verge of achieving her dream. "I had also been promoted to manager of the Disability Information Line at APD Free State."

Shortly afterwards, in 2004, Nthabiseng obtained a Bachelor of Science degree with Statistics and Psychology from the UFS. She has worked at APD Free State for the past 6 years. She has served as professional advisor on Disability Issues for the APD Free State since 1996. In 2009, she started her own guesthouse.

## Are famous people that glamorous?

Magteld Smith

We tend to think of famous or successful people as living easy lives, or being very intelligent. We admire them for what they own and for what they have accomplished. Sometimes, we even wish we were just like them.

The truth, however, is often very different from what we imagine. More often than not, people are shaped by the obstacles they overcome and not necessarily by their talent, intelligence, luck or money.

There is probably nobody in modern history who matches up with the labels "genius among geniuses", "great thinker" and "super intelligent" more than Albert Einstein. He revolutionized the way we see the universe more so than anyone else in the last several hundred years.

Ever since Isaac Newton's days, no scientist has been able to match Einstein's genius and accomplishments. Yet he suffered from many learning disabilities. He was diagnosed with dyslexia, attention deficit disorder and autism.



Staff members of the UFS Law Clinic

Photo: Hannes Pieterse

## The UFS Law Clinic

The UFS Law Clinic was found in the late eighties by members and students of the Faculty of Law. Initially, the offices were in a small building with a corrugated iron roof.

Today the clinic is a fully fledged lawyer's office situated at 142 Zastron Street in Bloemfontein where members of society receive free legal services on a large array of matters.

The clinic consists of the director, Ad Inez Bezuidenhout and 4 admitted attorneys, 17 candidate attorneys and administrative staff.

The primary function of the clinic is to provide community service but also to provide community service learning to on average 120

final year Law students who, under supervision, provide legal services to the public.

The clinic also has a cooperation agreement with Free State community based paralegal practitioners who receive training and supportive legal services.

From time to time, students organize community service projects at schools and prisons and in particular at the Onse Kinderhuis, a foster home in Bloemfontein.

Once a year, the clinic publishes a newsletter, Non Sibi, which summarises its philosophy beautifully: 'to the service of other; and not for own interest'.

# Die UV Regskliniek/ The UFS Law Clinic



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Westdene  
Bloemfontein  
9300



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# Prof. Claassen, we salute you

## Magteld Smith

Prof. André Claassen was born in Cape Town on 28 July 1945. In 1971, he completed his degree in MB ChB at the University of Cape Town. He then went on to focus on Otorhinolaryngology and completed his M.Med (ORL) degree at the University of the Free State (UFS) in 1977. He was then registered as an Otorhinolaryngologist with the South African Medical and Dental Council (SAMDC).

Prof. Claassen is currently employed as a Professor and Head of the Department of Otorhinolaryngology at the UFS main campus in Bloemfontein. He is the type of person who touches hearts wherever he goes. Not only because he is a remarkable man, but also because he has an enormous amount of knowledge and experience. And he is always willing to share his knowledge with patients,

students and colleagues. The fact that he has presented almost 30 scientific presentations – both nationally and internationally – proves this.

In 1983, Prof. Claassen went to Harvard University in the United States of America to do research on the mucocutaneous junction of tympanic membrane perforations under guidance of the late Prof. Harold Schucknecht, who was a

**What is most striking, however, is the definite balance he has found between being an academic and a passionate friend, husband and father.**

renowned professor at the Massachusetts eye and ear infirmary.

He has been Chairman of a panel at two international congresses. The first took place in Hong Kong in 1991 and the second in Perth, Western Australia, in 2002.

He has been on the Executive Committee of the SA Society of Otorhinolaryngology since 1986 and in 1997 became Chairman of the Academic committee of the Society of Otorhinolaryngology. In 1998, he was appointed as Chairman of the South African Society of Otorhinolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery. During that same year he was also appointed as President of the College of Otorhinolaryngology of the College of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA), a position that he still holds to-day. In 2009 he was elected onto the executive committee of the CMSA.

Prof. Claassen has published widely in various national and international journals. In 2006, he co-authored an extremely well-researched chapter in Dietary fats and risks of chronic disease. This book was published in Illinois and can be found all over the world.

When reading through Prof. Claassen's Curriculum Vitae, his talents and passions become clear. His knowledge can most certainly not be denied. What is most striking, however, is the definite balance he has found between being an academic and a passionate friend, husband and father.

In 2003 this remarkable man started a life-changing program in Bloemfontein. The Cochlear Implant program gave various patients hope and a second chance. Four patients received a Cochlear Implant with R800 000 which was obtained by Prof. Claassen himself in Austria from the Med-El Cochlear Implant Company.

It is, amongst others, his big heart that makes him a well-known and loved member of the Bloemfontein community. In 2004, Jim Fouché School in Bloemfontein awarded

Prof. Claassen with their Prestige award for excellent service delivered to the community and hearing impaired learners in the Free State.

In 2007 Prof. Claassen was honoured with a CUM LAUDE award by the Kopsie Alumni for outstanding academic and service achievements in his field of practice.

When he is not changing lives and making a difference, Prof. Claassen enjoys taking part in and watching various sports. He has finished the Comrades marathon five times and even won

a silver medal in both 1981 and 1982. As if that's not enough, he has also completed the Cape Argus Cycle Tour twice. Nowadays, he enjoys spending time on the golf course.

He loves the outdoors and enjoys spending time watching birds. If he isn't doing this, he likes drinking and tasting red wine. Furthermore, he is also a part time cattle farmer.

At the end of July when Prof. Claassen retires he will celebrate spending nearly 34 years as a staff member of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the UFS. He has spent 28 of the 33 years as Head of the Department Otorhinolaryngology within the Faculty of Health Sciences.



27 Successful Cochlear implants under the leadership of Prof. Claassen

## STEM CELLS MAY BE THE HOPE DISABLED PEOPLE ARE WAITING FOR

New steps in therapeutic treatment procedures proving to be a success

### Prof. Hennie Oosthuizen

As disabled people, we frequently read and see reports on new developments and treatment procedures used in medicine. One therapy which is often reported on at the moment is the use of stem cells in therapeutic treatment procedures.

Researchers from all over the world regularly report on new successes in the treatment of a wide variety of diseases by using stem cells. Reports indicate that excitement and expectations are generated by the many preclinical and early clinical studies that continue to reveal the enormous potential of regenerative medicine.

According to reports, many diseases are currently being treated, including heart diseases, some blood disorders such as thalassaemia, Fanconi's anaemia and sickle-cell anaemia, cancers such as leukaemia and lymphoma and metabolic and immune disorders. Extensive research is also being undertaken in the field of neurological diseases, which includes ischaemia (strokes and cerebral palsy in young children), spinal-cord injuries, demyelinating disease (multiple sclerosis), Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. It is, however, a known fact



Prof. Hennie Oosthuizen (wheelchair-user) Head of the Dept Criminal and Medical Law, Faculty of Law, University of the Free State

that magnitudes of fraudulent stem cell research projects are being done and that controversies regarding research on stem cells do exist.

One thing that we can be sure of, however, is that the use of stem cells in therapeutic treatment procedures is here to stay. According to the Human Tissue Act and the National Health Act, the removal and use of stem cells in therapeutic treatment procedures are legal and ethical and are not prohibited in South Africa. Therapeutic cloning of stem cells is also not prohibited

and will be clearly regulated when the relevant sections of the National Health Act come into operation.

Stem cell therapy and the successes obtained with such treatment has progressed considerably in the past few years. However, there is still much to be learnt about this. Researchers seem to be very optimistic and are of the opinion that stem cell therapy will play a significant part in future treatment procedures which includes disabled persons.

Please write to VOC:  
voicesofchange@ufs.ac.za

Now, after spending 33 years and 7 months at the UFS main campus in Bloemfontein, Prof. André Claassen has decided to end this chapter of his book. Later this year, he will take his last metaphorical bow and say goodbye to the UFS by retiring. Community members, students and colleagues are all sad to see him go. This is a man who touches lives wherever he goes. He has a sense of wonder, a reverence for nature and an understanding of humanity which can be felt in the atmosphere whenever he enters a room. Let us salute this remarkable person as he takes his last bow.



**By honouring this remarkable man, the Department of Otorhinolaryngology at the UFS, together with Voices of Change, has decided to dedicate the September issue of VOC to Prof. Claassen. Stories and memories will be shared by colleagues in this issue. This is one issue that you simply can't afford to miss!**

## VOC Project Management Team



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Amoré van Schalkwyk  
Marketing Consultant  
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# Kids Talk



## Diabetes Mellitus

Say: dye-uh-be-tees meh-luh-tis

When someone has diabetes, his or her body doesn't use glucose properly. Glucose, a sugar, is the main source of energy for the body. Glucose levels are controlled by a hormone called insulin, which is made in the pancreas. In diabetes, the pancreas does not make enough insulin (type 1 diabetes) or the body can't respond normally to the insulin that is made (type 2 diabetes). If diabetes is not under control or a person doesn't know he or she has diabetes, the person may experience problems like increased urination, extreme thirst, tiredness, not sleeping well or unexplained weight loss.

## WORD!

A Glossary of MEDICAL words

## Autism

Say: aw-tih-zum

Autism causes kids to experience the world differently from the way most other kids do. It's hard for kids with autism to talk with other people and express themselves using words. Kids who have autism usually keep to themselves and many can't communicate without special help.

## Neurologist

Say: nyoo-ral-uh-jist

The neurologist is a specially trained doctor who diagnoses and treats disorders in the nervous system, whether caused by disease or injury. This includes diseases of the brain, spinal cord, nerves, and muscles.

## Otorhinolaryngologist

Say: oh-toh-ri-no-lar-un-gah-luh-jist

Ear! Nose! Throat! Head and Neck Surgery! An otorhinolaryngologist is a doctor who takes care of all these parts. You might go to see an otorhinolaryngologist (also called an ENT doctor) if you experience deafness, sinusitis, too many ear infections or problems with your tonsils, to mention a few conditions.

## DIABETIC COOKIES RECIPE

This recipe is especially for South African kids with diabetes. You can include cookies in your diabetic meal plan. Plan ahead and remember to eat in moderation.

### Ingredients:

- ♥ ⅔ C. light margarine, softened
- ♥ ⅔ C. Sucralose (sugar substitute)
- ♥ 2 tsp. vanilla essence
- ♥ 2 eggs
- ♥ 1½ C. whole wheat flour
- ♥ 1 tsp. baking soda
- ♥ ¼ tsp. salt
- ♥ ¾ C. sucrose free chocolate chips
- ♥ ¼ C. pecans, chopped

### Baking equipment:

- ♥ knife
- ♥ oven
- ♥ baking sheet
- ♥ measuring cup
- ♥ measuring spoons

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 180 °C.
2. Cream margarine, sucralose and vanilla essence together in a mixing bowl.
3. Add eggs to mixture one at a time, mixing well after each addition.
4. Add flour, baking soda and salt. Mix well until blended.
5. Stir in chocolate chips and pecans.
6. Place tablespoon size of cookie dough on a greased baking sheet.
7. Bake for 10 – 12 minutes or until golden brown.
8. Remove from oven and cool on wire cooling rack.

Serves: 36

### Diabetic exchanges:

⅔ carbohydrate exchanges

### Variations:

Substitute another type of nut if you don't like pecans. Store the cookies in an airtight container. You can either freeze half the batch or share them with your friends.



## BIG QUESTION?

What is an invisible disability?

Intellectual disability

Cerebral palsy

Deaf blindness

Autism

DISABILITIES THAT CAN'T BE SEEN WITH THE EYE, LIKE:

Mental Disability

Down Syndrome

Multiple disabilities

Traumatic brain injury

Visual impairment including blindness

Deafness

Emotional disturbance

Speech or language impairment

Specific learning disability

Other health impairment

Disabling Hearing impairment

Orthopedic impairment



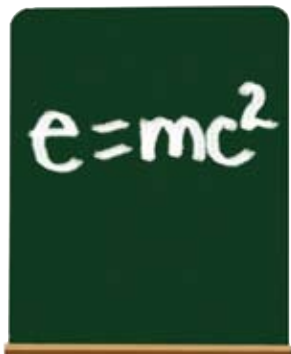


## Was Albert Einstein “mentally retarded”?

**Albert Einstein** provided the theory of relativity and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for the work he did with photoelectric effect. Characteristics which may indicate that Einstein was a fellow Aspie include the following: Einstein could not speak fluently at the age of nine- language delays are common in children with high functioning autism. His parents suspected that he might actually be what they called “mentally retarded”.

Often, children with Autism are labeled as “mentally disabled” or “Behaviorally Disordered”. Einstein attended the ceremony of induction as an American without socks. Children and adults with autism and Aspergers Syndrome often have peculiar habits, extreme sensitivity to textures and are often rated high on scales measuring atypicality, demonstrating odd behaviors, and seemingly lost in their own

little world. Frequently, children with Aspergers struggle to find socks that “feel right” or prefer to wear socks with a line at the toe that does not bother them.



Einstein's famous formula  
www.disabled-world.com



Learners from the SNAP School, Free State Province

## Brand new Bloemfontein school for autistic learners

**Dr Liesl Smit**  
**Department of Neurology**  
**University of the Free State**

Do you have a heart for children? Would you like to learn about autism?

Then you should volunteer at the new school for autistic learners in Bloemfontein!

There are five learners in our school.

We are a SNAP franchise and also present workshops where a child receives one-on-one teaching. We receive help for a week once in approximately every six weeks.

You are invited to sit in on our classes and observe how the SNAP people work with our children. Then you can decide if you would like to know more about teaching autistic children.

This really is an incredible experience. To see the progress of these children in just one week is amazing.

If you are interested in volunteering at our school, please contact Liesl Smit on 082 856 6618.



### Expand your knowledge of Development!

**The Centre for Development Support within the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences at the University of the Free State is presenting a two-year, multi-disciplinary Masters in Development Studies Programme that combines distance-based learning with five one-week contact sessions held at the University of the Free State.**

- **Compulsory first year modules:**  
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**Application deadline: 30 September 2010**

**Contact: Mrs D. Olivier, Centre for Development Support, UFS,  
PO Box 339, Bloemfontein, 9300.**

**Tel: +27(0)51 401 3746, Fax: 086 586 9464**

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## DA VINCI'S APPARENT AUTISM

Leonardo da Vinci took twelve years to paint the Mona Lisa and could write with one hand while drawing with the other. These are all perfectionist tendencies, with moderate cross over discrimination deficits and savant skills?

The Mona Lisa is one of the most mysterious pieces of artwork. The smile given by the woman in the painting has been endlessly analyzed, and the meaning behind the painting has been debated.



Da Vinci's Mona Lisa  
www.disabled-world.com

## Tax allowance for advertisers and contributors

Voices of Change (VOC) has been registered as a public welfare organisation by the South African Revenue Service (SARS). In accordance with Article 18 of the Income Tax Act, VOC may now receive contributions and issue an invoice (certificate).

We ask corporate companies, individuals and organisations to make use of this opportunity and support our project by placing advertisements in VOC or contributing money. The money will be used to help people with disabilities. This will be done in many forms, like helping with the development of persons with disabilities and buying auxiliary equipment or technology.

As a result, Advertisers and Contributors can deduct their contributions from their tax revenue and receive tax allowance. Initials, surname and full residential address and/or

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# INVISIBLE DISABILITY PARKING ON VISIBLE SPOTS



**Magteld Smith**

The word 'disability' is defined by the World Health Organisation as a "disadvantage or deficiency, especially a physical or mental impairment that prevents or restricts normal achievement" or "something that hinders or incapacitates."

When you turn on the television, watch a movie or open a popular magazine or newspaper, you are confronted with healthy and beautiful models under the age of thirty.

That is what life is supposed to be about - or so we are told. We are all supposed to enjoy our bodies, exercise aerobically, be sexy, drive glamorous new cars and remain under the age of thirty without showing any effects of age, gravity or disease. Or at least that is the "hype".

Society tells us that we can measure a person's character by the car they own, the size of the house they live in and the labels on their clothing. Many people often talk about their friends as being "successful" or a "prominent

figure," as if their worth as a human is elevated when they have finished climbing the ladder to financial status.

South African society puts extreme value on image. The way you look, your job title and the people you spend time with are very important. In many ways, life becomes a charade and the essence of who you are stays hidden from your loved ones and yourself.

However, our visually oriented society may not take the time to look beyond appearances. People tend to believe what they see; and if it can't be seen, it simply doesn't exist.

When we see a person getting out of a car that is parked in the disability parking, we usually double-check to make sure that person is actually disabled. Sometimes we even wait in our cars to see if the person getting out is disabled. After all, those spaces are saved for someone who has a legitimate need to park there! And it is a good and noble thing to make sure nobody is cheating.

Consequently, when we see someone stepping out who is not using a cane or a wheelchair, we get extremely angered. Sometimes we even get so upset that we go out of our way to give them a dirty look or yell something at them. We tell ourselves we do not want to see those parking spots being misused because we know they are for people who actually need them.

So, what if someone who looked fine on the outside tried to tell us they needed to park there? Wouldn't we think they were lying or just lazy? What if they had a disability permit? Wouldn't we assume they must have stolen the sticker or

borrowed the car? For goodness sakes, we can all tell who is disabled and who is not; it is obvious, isn't it?

The truth is, there are millions of people in this world who suffer from what I call "invisible disabilities". They may have a ruptured disk in their back, a spinal injury, brain injury or a disease that is attacking their cells, muscles and/or nervous system. They may have heart problems, lung problems, neurological disorders, sensory disability and/or a mental disability or experience severe pain. In other words, their disability is just as real, even though it is invisible.

Sadly, many who suffer from disabling illnesses and injuries are often harassed when they try to park in a space that is legally reserved for people in their condition. In fact, many people with legitimate disabilities are so intimidated by onlookers that they often have to give up even trying to run an errand because they are afraid someone might yell at them or damage their vehicles. So often a person with an invisible disability will be approached by a person without any disabilities saying sarcastically; "I hope you feel good about parking there", and other mean remarks.

It can be quite humiliating and frustrating to be a person who has a physical need and legal right to park in a disability parking when others stare, yell and even become confrontational. Unfortunately, this kind of reaction is all too common in South Africa. These spaces are reserved for those who have many types of disabilities, whether they are visible or not to the onlooker. The fact of the matter is, if the person has a disability permit, it is not for you to judge if they have a need to be there, simply by the way they look on the outside. Therefore, let us be sensitive to those who are living with invisible disabilities, injury and debilitating pain.



**When most people think of a disability, they picture in their minds a person with a visible and obvious impairment**

## 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).

# VUVUZELA: TERRIBLE TO HEAR, SO DO LISTEN



**Prof. De Wet Swanepoel**  
Dept of Communication Pathology  
University of Pretoria

The Vuvuzela was a unique and distinct feature of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup held in South Africa. It has now been exported to numerous countries and is characteristic of all South African Premier Soccer League (PSL)

matches. The intensity of the Vuvuzela's sound output may however pose a significant hearing health care risk.

Researchers at the University of Pretoria (UP), Department of Communication Pathology conducted several studies to document the possible risks posed by the Vuvuzela to the hearing of spectators. These studies, published in the South African Medical Journal, received much attention from international media during the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

Results of the investigations demonstrated that the Vuvuzela can reach dangerously loud levels of noise that place spectators at risk for hearing loss, if exposed to these levels for more than a few minutes. The intensities varied from 113 to 131 dB, depending on whether measurements were taken at the opening of the Vuvuzela or 2 metres from the opening. A follow-up study measured actual noise exposure levels of spectators at a PSL soccer match. The findings indicated that all the spectators experienced excessively loud levels of noise exposure for the 2 hour duration of the match. Noise levels exceeded the legislated limits for occupational noise exposure. The hearing of these spectators was compared before and after the match and demonstrated significant deterioration in auditory functioning after a single match. These spectators attended a match with 30 000 other spectators, many of whom blew Vuvuzelas.

It can only be assumed that the noise levels may be significantly higher in the new stadiums that can accommodate up to 90 000 spectators.

These studies have highlighted the need for preventative measures leading for all sporting events where the Vuvuzela is used. Widespread public awareness regarding the possible risks should be prioritized and personal hearing protection for all spectators and personnel working at stadiums should be encouraged.



**Ernest Wilson Kleinschmidt (Deaf)**

I was born in Cape Town on 19 August 1939 as the second of five children. At the age of five, I went to a school in Cape Town for the first time. During my Grade 5 year, our family moved to Heidelberg in the Western Cape.

In September 1953, during my Grade 9 year, I became ill with a severe pain in the left hip. Doctors sent me to an orthopaedic hospital to lay in traction for three months. At the beginning of that December, I became very ill, with a high temperature. I even lost consciousness at times. It was soon discovered that I have all along been suffering from TB Meningitis.

I spent another six months in hospital. It was then discovered that my hearing started deteriorating slowly. After leaving the hospital, the plan was for me to go back to school, but when my hearing failed more and more, I could not go back to my old school. At the end of 1955 I was profoundly deaf.

In 1956, I started attending the school for the deaf in Worcester. Seeing that the academic level at this school went up to only Grade 8, I was trained as a cabinetmaker. At the same time I started an afterhour's correspondence course for a matriculation certificate. I found it very difficult to settle down and struggled to get through the three years I had to spend there. I could not let go of my dream to become a teacher or lawyer.

I got appointed as a factory labourer with a firm of Shopfitters, waiting to sign a contract as an apprentice. I was very unhappy in this job. I couldn't stop thinking of a better work and an opportunity to study further. Before I could sign the contract, with the backing of my family, I resigned and found work as a temporary clerk in the Public service, where I was promised a

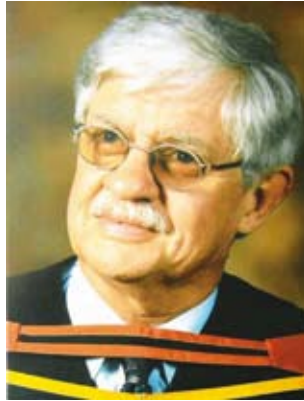
# Dad for the Deaf

**Ernest Kleinschmidt is VOC's very first columnist! Read more about him here. As from next month, he will voice his opinion on issues faced by people with disability.**

permanent position after completing my matriculation. However, upon gaining this certificate, it transpired that my deafness prohibited me from permanent work in the public service.

During this time, I became friendly with a hearing girl. We were very fond of each other. When her parents noticed that our friendship was deepening into something more serious, they did everything in their power to convince her to break up with me. This prompted me to reconsider my future - I had to get away. This episode made me realize I would have to work harder than other people to be accepted as an equal and to prove to the world that deafness need not be seen as a barrier.

Once again, I left and found work as an invoice clerk in the private sector in Cape Town. I was, once again, appointed for a trial period. Fortunately I had a very good employer who appointed me permanently after only two months. I started studying for secretarial and accounting qualifications and passed two diploma courses in four years. After five years, I became



Ernest Kleinschmidt

assistant accountant at the firm. When the accountant was promoted to Managing Director of the firm, I took over his previous position as accountant and office manager.

During this time, I married Brenda De Swardt - a girlfriend from my school days at the deaf school, and we became parents of two boys. Today, our eldest son is an internationally accepted Sign Language interpreter, who officiated at world meetings and functions. He also became the first Sign Language interpreter on TV in South Africa.

After working for the firm in Cape Town for 16 years, I was approached to open an institute for multiple handicapped Deaf people. I saw this not only as an opportunity to serve the Deaf community, but also as the chance to fulfil some of my dreams. The firm I worked for gave me their blessing and promised me I could return to them, should things with the institute not work out.

At the Institute for the Deaf in Worcester, we worked hard to see this facility grow from 8 workers and residents to over 80 in 15 years. At present, this facility includes a wide range of services for Deaf people.

While working at this job, I started studying for a BA degree, eventually majoring in Education and Criminology. I also took courses in Sign Language teaching and started teaching a wide range of groups, also at university level, to become proficient in Sign Language. I also completed courses presented by universities in England and Sweden. These courses were later accepted as an Honours degree.

When the University of Stellenbosch (US) started a Masters degree in Sign Language Linguistics, I was invited to complete this course. After two years, I became the first Deaf person to receive this degree - one of only two at present.

After receiving this qualification, the Institute for the Deaf in Worcester requested me to start a Deaf affairs section, mostly to promote and teach Sign Language. Upon my retirement, this section was advancing beyond expectations and at present they reach out to many African countries - with great success.

My involvement in the Deaf world made me acutely aware of the plight of Deaf people at almost all levels of society. Having personally suffered many forms of discrimination and marginalizing, I realised that my command of the spoken English and Afrikaans could help me to do my utmost to better the position of Deaf people. Every since 1960, I have been deeply involved at almost every level of life.

At present I am working on a Generic Description of Sign Language for use in African countries, and I hope to finish this project as soon as possible.

Although I have retired more than five years ago, I am still actively involved in affairs pertaining to the Deaf and their well being. I hope to have many more years of good health to keep going with my work amongst and for the Deaf.

## REGISTRATION AS A VOC MEMBER/BOINGODISO JWALOKA SETHO SA VOC

VOICES OF CHANGE, PO BOX 38425, LANGENHOVENPARK, 9330

E-mail: [voicesofchange@ufs.ac.za](mailto:voicesofchange@ufs.ac.za)

APPLICANT DETAILS (PERSON WITH A DISABILITY) DINTLHA TSA MOINGODISI! (MOTHO YA NANG LE BOQHWALA)	PERSON/S WITH A DISABILITY/TIES MOTHO YA NANG LE BOQHWALA	PARENT OF A PERSON/S WITH A DISABILITY/TIES MOTSWADI WA MOTHO/BATHO YA/BA NANG LE BOQHWALA
<b>Full Names:</b> <input type="text"/> Mabitso ka botlalo: <input type="text"/>	<b>Education</b> <b>Thuto</b> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Primary school <input type="checkbox"/> Thuto ka mora dikri Thuto ya motheo High school <input type="checkbox"/> No schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Thuto e phahameng Ho se be le thuto ho hang e telele	<b>Education</b> <b>Thuto</b> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Primary school <input type="checkbox"/> Thuto ka mora dikri Thuto ya motheo High school <input type="checkbox"/> No schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Thuto e phahameng Ho se be le thuto ho hang e telele
<b>Surname:</b> <input type="text"/> Fane: <input type="text"/>	<b>Marital status</b> <b>Boemo ba tsa lenyalo</b> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Living together <input type="checkbox"/> Missing <input type="checkbox"/> O nyetse /O nyetswe Ho dula mmoho Lahlehile Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widower/widow <input type="checkbox"/> O hladiile/hladiilwe Mohlolohadi	<b>Marital status</b> <b>Boemo ba tsa lenyalo</b> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Living together <input type="checkbox"/> Missing <input type="checkbox"/> O nyetse /O nyetswe Ho dula mmoho Lahlehile Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widower/widow <input type="checkbox"/> O hladiile/hladiilwe Mohlolohadi
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<b>ID number:</b> <input type="text"/> Nomoro ya ID: <input type="text"/>	Run or do any kind of business, big or small, for yourself or with one or more partners? Ho na le kgwebo eo o e etsang, e kgolo/nnyane, o le mong kapa le motho e mong <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Residential Address:</b> <input type="text"/> Aterese ya bodulo: <input type="text"/>	<b>PLEASE TICK X THE APPLICANT'S PREFERRED METHOD/S OF COMMUNICATION</b> <b>JWALOKA MOINGODISI, TSHWAYA KA X MOKGWENG WA DIPUISANO WA KGETHO YA HAO</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b> <input type="text"/> Khouu ya poso: <input type="text"/>	English <input type="checkbox"/> Sesotho <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Postal address:</b> <input type="text"/> Aterese ya poso: <input type="text"/>	Symbols and pictures: <input type="checkbox"/> Braille: <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone: <input type="checkbox"/> Email: <input type="checkbox"/> Mailing: <input type="checkbox"/> Audio: <input type="checkbox"/> Matshwao le ditshwantsho: Mongolowa Braille: Telefounu: Imele: Poso: Modumo:	
<b>Postcode:</b> <input type="text"/> Khouu ya poso: <input type="text"/>	Deafblind signing: <input type="checkbox"/> Finger spelling: <input type="checkbox"/> SMS texting: <input type="checkbox"/> Large print: <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language: <input type="checkbox"/> Puo ya ditholo le difofu: Mopeleto wa menwana: Puisano ka SMS: Mongolo o moholo: Puo ka matshwao:	
<b>E-mail address:</b> <input type="text"/> Aterese ya imeile: <input type="text"/>	Total communication: <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): <input type="text"/> Puisano ka botlalo: Mekgwa e meng (ka kopo hlalosa):	
<b>Cellphone:</b> <input type="text"/> Nomoro ya selefounu: <input type="text"/>		
<b>Date of birth:</b> <input type="text"/> DD / MM / YY <b>Occupation:</b> <input type="text"/> Letsatsi la tlhaho: Mosebetsi:		
<b>WHEN WERE YOU DIAGNOSED WITH A DISABILITY/TIES?</b> <b>HO HLAHELLETSE NENG HORE O NA LE BOQHWALA?</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Birth <input type="checkbox"/> Age Tswalo Dilemo		
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment (blindness) <input type="checkbox"/> Speech impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Autism <input type="checkbox"/> Disabling hearing impairment (deafness) Bofofu Bothata ba puo Bothata ba ho kopana le batho Botholo (Na o ntse o na le bothata ba kutlo le ha o sebedisa dithusa-kutlo?)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing your glasses? Na o ntse o na le bothata ba pono le ha o sebedisa diborele?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating? Na o na le bothata ba ho hopola kapa ho tsepamisa monahano?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Because of a physical, mental, or emotional health condition, do you have difficulty communicating, (for example understanding or being understood by others)? Na o na le bothata ba dipuisano, kapa hore batho ba utlwisise seo o se bolelang, ka lebaka la boqhwala mmeleng, kelellong, kapa tshetiso ya maikutlo?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have difficulty with self-care, such as washing all over or dressing? Na o na le bothata ba ho ithokomela, jwaloka ho thapisa hohle mmeleng kapa ho ikapesa?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps? Na o na le bothata ba ho tsamaya kapa ho hlwa ditepisi?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have any difficulty joining in community activities (for example, festivities, religious or other activities) in the same way as anyone else can? Na o na le bothata bo itseng ba ho nka karolo diketsahalong tsa sejhaba (mohlala: meketeng, bodumeding kapadiketsahalong tse ding) ka tsela e tshwanang le ya batho ba bang?		





# International Day of People with Disability 2010



## 2010 International Day of People with Disability

### WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY?

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) is a United Nations sanctioned day that focuses on the achievements, contribution and experiences of people with disability.

The day aims to unite people with disability, non-government organizations (NGOs), businesses, all levels of government and the wider community.

### HISTORY OF IDPwD

IDPwD is celebrated all over the world on 3 December each year. Later this year, the day will celebrate its 29th anniversary.

The recognition of issues faced by people with disability had its beginnings during the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981. In 1992, at the conclusion of the United Nations' Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 3 December as International Day of Disabled Persons. The Decade was a period dedicated to raising awareness and enacting measures to improve the situation of people with disability and to ultimately provide them with equal opportunities.

### HOW ARE WE CELEBRATING IDPwD?

#### Awards

The Free State Province Disability Awards will form part of VOC's celebration of IDPwD. The awards are to be held later this year and will acknowledge the academic achievements and contributions individuals with disability make to our community.

The 2010 Free State Disability Awards will be presented after a VOC Golf day at the Gala Awards ceremony.

Nominations for the Free State Disability Awards close at 17:00 on Thursday 30 September 2010. The 2010 awards are divided into the following categories:

**Junior Disability Challenge Award** for junior learners aged 10 - 12 years who have received school certificates at their school's prize giving.

**Senior Disability Challenge Award** for senior learners aged 13 - 19 years who have received school certificates at their school's prize giving.

**Undergraduate Achievement Award** for persons between the ages of 20 and 35 who have obtained a diploma or degree from any South African institution.

**Postgraduate Honors Degree Achievement Award** for persons between the ages of 25 and 60 who have obtained an Honors degree from a South African university.

**Postgraduate Master's Degree Achievement Award** for persons between 25 - 60 years of age who have obtained a Master's degree from any South African university.

**Postgraduate Ph.D Degree Achievement Award** for persons between 30 - 60 years of age who have obtained a Ph.D degree from any South African university.

#### Business Award

The Business Award will be awarded to businesses that have improved opportunities for people with disability. The businesses' focus can be on anything, such as greater inclusion, participation or employment.

**Shopping Centre Award** for local shopping centres/malls who have succeeded in implementing substantial changes to improve physical, social, economic and cultural access and inclusion for people with disability and their families.

#### Social Inclusion Award

- School focus
- Community group focus

These awards are for schools that have actively focused on the inclusion and full participation of learners with disability alongside other learners or members of community.

**Accessible Building Award** for property developers, builders and others in the building sector that have developed innovative and accessible private dwellings for people with disability.

### KEY DATES

3 August 2010	IDPwD event registrations open at <a href="http://www.ufs.ac.za/voc">www.ufs.ac.za/voc</a>
30 September 2010	Nominations close for Free State Disability Awards
From 30 August – 29 October 2010	Golf Day Registration and Ticket Sales
23 November 2010	Announcement of Free State Disability Awards winners
3 December 2010	VOC International Day of People with Disability

### OFFICIAL WEBSITE

Be sure to visit [www.ufs.ac.za/voc](http://www.ufs.ac.za/voc) regularly for updates on nomination rules, guidelines and news.

VOC will be available as a supplement on these dates:

Sunday Times Sunday World	Sunday 5 September 2010
Sowetan	Monday 6 September 2010
Sunday Times Sunday World	Sunday 3 October 2010
Sowetan	Monday 4 October 2010
Sunday Times Sunday World	Sunday 7 November 2010
Sowetan	Monday 8 November 2010
Sunday Times Sunday World	Sunday 5 December 2010
Sowetan	Monday 6 December 2010
Sunday Times Sunday World	Sunday 2 January 2011
Sowetan	Monday 3 January 2011

## International Day of People with Disability 2010 with VOC

Voices of Chance (VOC) will celebrate International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) on Wednesday 3 December 2010 at the VOC Golf day, to be held at Schoemanspark in Bloemfontein. On this day, people will different disabilities will speak about their experience with their particular disability.

"The aim of the VOC Golf day is to showcase the academic achievements and the contribution people with disability make to society," said Prof. André Claassen, Project Manager and Editor-in-Chief of VOC.

International Day of People with Disability was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992. The aim of this day is to promote awareness of the contributions and experiences of people with disability. It is celebrated worldwide on 3 December each year.

"International Day of People with Disability is a really important day – it's a day to raise awareness of disability and to

acknowledge that people with disability play a vital part in the community," said Magteld Smith, Medical-Social Researcher from the Department of Otorhinolaryngology, University of the Free State.

On this day, people with disability, non-government organisations (NGOs), businesses, all levels of government and the wider community unite to celebrate the achievements of people with disability.

With one in five South Africans experiencing some degree of disability, it is vital their achievements and contributions are promoted and acknowledged.

The VOC Golf day will be hosted by Shoprite Checkers.

For more information, contact:

Amoré van Schalkwyk

072 0988 023

E-mail: [vocproject@ufs.ac.za](mailto:vocproject@ufs.ac.za) or [voicesofchangeletters@ufs.ac.za](mailto:voicesofchangeletters@ufs.ac.za)



Front from left: Leon N. van Wyk, Charmaine van Niekerk, Johanna Kearney, Khwezi Duma  
Middle from left: Dikeledi Shupinyaneng, Winston Choene, Nthabiseng Molongoana  
Back from left: Natus van Niekerk, Magteld Smith, Mpute Stuurman

Photo: Amoré van Schalkwyk

### 2010 Free State Disability Awards

VOC intends to produce publications and conduct public awareness campaigns to promote the 2010 Free State Disability Awards and International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD).

#### Nomination Form

This nomination form should be read in conjunction with the 2010 National Disability Award Nomination Guidelines. A copy of the Guidelines can be downloaded from the Voices of Change website at [www.ufs.ac.za/voc](http://www.ufs.ac.za/voc). Alternatively, you may send a sms with your Name and Postal Address to 082 828 9131 to order a hard copy of the nomination form.

#### How to nominate somebody

You are allowed to nominate yourself or someone else you know who is eligible for any award.

It is your responsibility to ensure the person you are nominating has agreed to be nominated for an award. The nominated person's personal information should be provided in the nomination form in the correct manner. Please remember that the information provided in the nomination form may be used by VOC.

The person you are nominating must indicate their consent by completing Section 6: Declaration of this nomination form.

**Remember people with invisible disabilities may also be nominated for an award!**

Attach a statement from your referee, a photograph of the nominee, certified copies of academic documents, Identification Document and a Medical Certificate from a registered medical practitioner registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

