

Winner of the 2008 Institute for Marketing, Advancement & Communication in Education (MACE) Excellence Award for Best Internal Publication

## The future of Higher Education

**O**n the eve of the third democratic elections, two high-profile visitors to UKZN focused on the challenges facing Higher Education in South Africa.

The Minister of Education Mrs Naledi Pandor presented an address on *Achievements in Transforming Higher Education and the Impact it has had on the Universities in South Africa* on the Westville campus on 27 March.

Mrs Pandor identified a number of achievements, including a comprehensive Higher Education policy which visualises the sector as part of the institutional framework of transformation in South Africa.

Government funding for Higher Education has increased significantly, reaching R19.3 billion for 2009/10. The provision of student financial aid through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has led to an increase in student enrollments, allowing many, especially young women, who were previously denied access to study at university. The Department of Education is set to conduct a review of the NSFAS.

Turning to the challenges facing Higher Education, the Minister highlighted the need to make a success of institutional reorganisation.

"... the mergers have, to some degree, settled down but what we've got to do is move ... into making [them] work for institutions and for young people," she said.

Other important challenges are accommodating and celebrating differentiation and diversity; and the need for institutions to address governance in Higher Education within the context of academic freedom and public accountability.

"Our universities must be the seat of public accountability, of high levels of democratic practice, and



(l-r) Mr Sandile Ngcobo, President of Convocation; Professor Dasarath Chetty, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations; South Africa's Deputy President, Ms Baleka Mbete and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba.



(l-r) Minister of Education, Mrs Naledi Pandor; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations, Professor Dasarath Chetty; Miss Naziema Jappie, Executive Director, Advancement, Durban University of Technology; Dean of Education, Professor Michael Samuel; and Vice-Chancellor Professor Malegapuru Makgoba.

very fine examples of academic freedom," said Mrs Pandor.

Higher Education in South Africa needs to meet the country's human resource and knowledge production goals. Mrs Pandor emphasised that: "This requires Higher Education to pay greater attention to teaching and learning and to the success rates of students. The current throughput rates are cause for alarm and cannot be

blamed entirely on the inadequacies of the schooling sector."

The development of a new curriculum and programme reform is another area for concern. The Minister noted that: "There is a degree of success at some institutions but some are failing to explore new learning methods, new knowledge available, new books, new writers and new sources."

Mrs Pandor made a call to renew the academy by developing young intellectuals. "We are running out of young academics. We have to encourage more young people to become academics and we must urgently attend to the emergence of new intellectuals able and ready to become new academic practitioners."

South Africa's Deputy President, Ms Baleka Mbete addressed more than 200 students and staff on the

Westville campus on 1 April on the *Role of Higher Education in Strengthening Democracy*.

Ms Mbete said that while universities have made significant gains in the past 15 years, existing gender and racial imbalances and expansion to meet the increasing demands for tertiary education should be the priorities of Higher Education Institutions in the country.

Strengthening Higher Educational Institutions should be a concerted effort of Government, Higher Education stakeholders, business and non-governmental organisations, said Ms Mbete. She praised UKZN for its role in the freedom struggle and its numerous intellectual activities aimed at knowledge generation.

The Deputy President cited white domination within the publishing industry as an example of racial inequality. She said that 80 percent of royalties paid by publishers accrue to white authors compared with 18 percent to blacks.

While acknowledging that higher numbers of women enroll for tertiary education, Ms Mbete expressed concern over the declining number of women who study at postgraduate level. She added that while "gender parity in the profile of our academic staff [has improved] with the share of women increasing between 1990 and 2001 from around 30 percent to 40 percent...this is still not enough, especially that 70 percent of these women are from our white community."

Of the view that knowledge production was confined to "a small core of active scientists" Ms Mbete said there was room for further growth in knowledge production in the areas of science and technology for South Africa's advancement globally.

- Thembeke Dlungwane and Neesha Maharaj

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# Launch of ESAACH

The Encyclopedia of South African Arts, Culture and Heritage (ESAACH) – a project which began in 2008 under the auspices of the National Department of Arts and Culture – was launched at the Pietermaritzburg campus by the national Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Pallo Jordan.

The project will produce comprehensive reference material on southern African creative output and will comprise multi-volume and multi-media work on the verbal, performing and visual arts as well as on the many expressions of South African cultural heritage.

ESAACH will be housed at UKZN's Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs).

In a welcome address, Deputy-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities, Professor Fikile Mazibuko, congratulated Minister Jordan for championing a project of such importance and magnitude.

"UKZN associates itself with the Encyclopedia project. We will provide all the necessary assistance in making it a success in promoting social cohesion and the buttress values of *ubuntu*. The Encyclopedia will help us to explore all facets of our arts, culture and heritage bringing together the old and new in a meaningful synthesis."

Dr Jordan said the Encyclopedia project promoted the spirit of some of Africa's greatest visionaries. "It

encourages the celebration of difference and affirmation of diversity, and promotes the integration of arts and culture into all aspects of social and economic development."

The Minister said the project would serve as an effective instrument of educating the youth in schools and at universities that would, at the same time, foster social cohesion and understanding in a very fractured society.

Minister Jordan said that the education and training of arts and culture practitioners was crucial. "Arts and Culture must entail integrated development and critical thinking."

Professor Mbulelo Mzamane, who was appointed by the Minister as the Project leader and General Editor, described ESAACH as both a traditional encyclopedia and hypertext web. He said published volumes would emerge from collaborative writing space provided within the Wiki database. By tapping into the collaborative spirit of social networking, the ESAACH Wiki would build a communal knowledge base that will be far more than the sum of its parts.

The Encyclopedia project seeks ultimately to contribute to the process of decolonising South Africans and reintegrating them into their collective cultures, languages, history and heritage.

- Thembeke Dlungwane



Picture: Shan Pillay

Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations, Professor Dasarath Chetty; Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities, Professor Fikile Mazibuko; Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Pallo Jordan; and Vice-Chancellor Professor Malegapuru Makgoba.

## UKZN promotes Podcasting



Picture: Supplied.

Professor Manoj Maharaj, Head of the School of Information Systems and Technology during the presentation on Podcasting.

UKZN will soon become the first university in South Africa to use Podcasting in higher education as a fully featured solution.

Unveiling the initiative on 30 April Professor Manoj Maharaj, Head of the School of Information Systems and Technology said: "It's a wonderful project that will assist in making sure that teaching and learning becomes easy for students. This way of teaching is being used internationally and we are happy to

introduce it for our students here at our university."

Podcasting comes from two words, iPod and broadcasting. It is a process whereby content is delivered to the end-user in a convenient manner requiring a subscription or a simple download.

The content can be anything from audio files to recordings of lectures with attachments. It is also a way for people to be able to selectively subscribe to audio or video content over the Internet. This content can then be automatically added to a mobile device, like the iPod, iPhone or indeed almost any modern mobile phone.

Podcasting is becoming more prevalent in higher education. Instructors are using its versatility to enhance their lecture delivery. Universities like Princeton, Yale, Oxford and Lyon are now integrating podcasting into their course delivery.

"As an international brand it is important for our University to be

in line with what is happening globally. Globally, technology is fast becoming the way of life so we don't want to be left behind," said Professor Maharaj.

Podcasts may be viewed on any platform. The most versatile platform for the creation and dissemination of Podcasts is the Apple platform. The School of IS&T is planning to start podcasts of its lectures this semester. The School will provide this service to other Schools requesting it. The total cost of the first phase – up to live capture – will cost in the region of R500 000. The School has already invested R100 000.

Some of the advantages of podcasting are that it makes teaching and learning interesting, and opens opportunities for online learning and course delivery. It also improves communication platforms and makes the interaction between students and staff easier. It can also be used to manage delivery across multiple campuses.

- Sabelo Nyuswa

## Spotlight on skills shortage

SOUTH Africa has a critical shortage of skills and Government needs to move swiftly to create an environment to correct the imbalance and woo trained people back to this country.

This is according to prominent businessman and Treasurer-General of the African National Congress, Dr Mathews Phosa, who was the guest speaker at a seminar hosted by UKZN's Graduate School of Business (GSB).

The seminar, titled: "The Economic Outlook for South Africa after the Elections in Light of the Global Economic Crisis", was attended by GSB alumni and students, members of various political parties, academics, business community members and academics.

Dr Phosa gave a general overview of the current global economic environment and its challenges. "The International Monetary Fund has downgraded its global growth estimates five times in the recent past to the current 0.5%. Our own growth in the fourth quarter of last year was -1.8%."

Dr Phosa said the whole world was facing extremely challenging times which had contributed negatively to the local economy. In South Africa this was manifested in job losses especially in the commodities and resources sectors; a decline in the property market; challenges in maintaining the high levels of exports and the overall credit crunch.

A flight of skills to foreign countries had also caused serious problems.

He emphasised that the South African government was well aware of the critical role it had to play in supporting growth in the economy through appropriate monetary and fiscal policies.

"In such a space government has to step in and develop appropriate policy responses, some of which could include:

- A further expanded public works programme;
- An increased focus on the 2010 Soccer World Cup and job creation opportunities that it might bring;
- An increase in government spending in education, health and housing infrastructure;
- Reserve Bank consideration of lower interest rates, as will be done on a monthly basis; and
- Promoting external investment and removing internal hurdles to competition."

Dr Phosa stressed the importance of South Africa's role in the SADC region as well as throughout Africa. He added that engaging other tax payers on the continent and fostering peace keeping could contribute to a better economy for South Africa and the rest of Africa.

"We need to work diligently with our private sector partners to ensure that we define projects that will bring substantive income to replace the losses, jobs and opportunities that the major stakeholders in that and other sectors have suffered," said Dr Phosa.

One of many government's priorities for the next five years was to focus on rural development because 60% of the rural community was poor. Dr Phosa believes that economic growth in local communities can be boosted through involving the communities in infrastructure development programmes so that they can earn money from development in their own areas.

Head of the GSB, Professor Anesh Singh, said the seminar was part of a series which the GSB used to engage with its alumni, students, business community and politicians on issues that affect South African society. "Politics and business cannot be separated," said Professor Singh.

Professor Dasarath Chetty, Pro-Vice-Chancellor: Corporate Relations, facilitated the seminar and commended the GSB for critically engaging in interesting debates that brought alumni back to the university.

- Hazel Langa

# Post-doctoral lunch

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Professor Nelson Ijumba and Dean of Research Professor Cheryl Potgieter hosted 60 post-doctoral students at a luncheon on the Westville campus on 8 April.

The event, attended by Deans of Faculties and leading researchers, advised students on their future research endeavours and provided a platform for interaction between students and UKZN's research community.

Welcoming guests, Professor Ijumba emphasised the importance of support structures for those embarking on post-doctoral research. He suggested the formation of an organisation of post-doctoral students aimed at keeping one another aware of research developments.

In his call for growth in post doctoral research keynote speaker, Professor Nceba Gqaleni, Chair: Indigenous Health Care Systems Research indicated a need to

improve on the quality of research generated and increase the number of researchers undertaking post-doctoral research.

"When knowledge generation entailed interaction between researchers and communities, researchers had to earn the trust of the communities they engage with," said Professor Gqaleni. He said this placed huge ethical and moral obligations upon the researcher.

On completing their PhDs he advised post-doctoral students to explore avenues in research implementation. Developing their research niche area was imperative to securing grants.

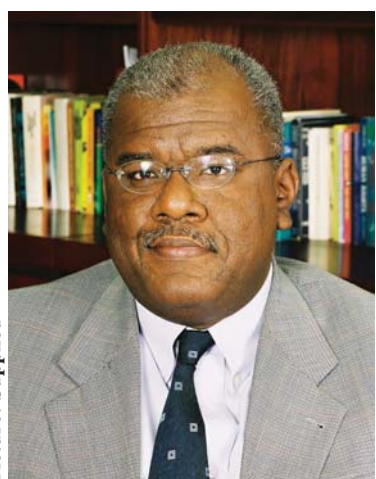
According to Professor Gqaleni important considerations for researchers included: the need to keep abreast of the NRF (National Research Foundation) rating systems, and proper time management in research output. The publication of research findings in reputed journals played a pivotal role in securing grants.

- Neesha Maharaj



Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Professor Nelson Ijumba (extreme right); Professor Cheryl Potgieter, Dean of Research (fourth from the right) with post-doctoral students.

## Confronting the student divide



Professor Jonathan Jansen.

AN ENDEAVOUR to understand racial and ethnic divisions among students at historically white tertiary institutions in South Africa inspired Professor Jonathan Jansen, the Vice-Chancellor designate at the University of Free State to pen his book *Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past*.

He shared his insights into the research undertaken in writing the book at a talk organised by the Centre for Critical Research on Race and Identity (CCRRI) on the Howard College campus on 28 April.

Known for his ability to engage with students at the various institutions he has been attached to, Professor Jansen was confounded by the "indifference" he experienced from the Afrikaner students after he joined the University of Pretoria as the Dean of Education in 2001.

"I am an intellectual and when things do not make sense I am drawn to that as a problem. I wanted to know why exactly the students felt alienated in relation to the new South Africa, the future and of course their new leader," said Professor Jansen.

The book includes 25 stories compiled while visiting schools, churches and haunts frequented by Afrikaner students in Pretoria to observe their interactions and understand their perceptions of a democratic South Africa and its black population. According to Professor Jansen students were angry and disillusioned about their future due to a lack of understanding of South Africa's struggle history because they were not a part of the era.

Arising out of these visits was the realisation that he too would share similar views should he socialise within the same social circles and the existence of a bitter knowledge among this group of students towards the anti-apartheid struggle.

The title of the book, derived from an Irish poem by Macdara Woods was used to emphasise that knowledge is not only held in the head but also the heart – a deep emotional and spiritual knowledge which is difficult to change.

Researching and writing the book has been a transforming experience for Professor Jansen who said: "It keeps me humble and hopeful about the human condition, that by engaging people out of a sense of empathy and respect, they can and do change more readily than when the (black) approach is disrespectful and dismissive about our white brothers and sisters."

He hopes documenting the complexities of change among white students, particularly Afrikaner students at former white Higher Education Institutions in post-apartheid South Africa will convey a message of hope about the possibilities of transformation through an approach based on "mutual vulnerability and recognition".

- Neesha Maharaj

## South Africa's 'democracy gap'

AUTHOR and political commentator, Professor William Gumede presented a Harold Wolpe Lecture on "South Africa's Democracy Gap" at the Centre for Civil Society on the Howard College campus on 30 April. The theme of the lecture was "why liberation movements come to power and kill democracy."

Professor Gumede criticised liberation movements in Africa, saying their time was over.

"If you look at the trends where liberation movements have come into power, more often soon after, democracy dies. The reason is that when they come into power liberation movements suddenly lose democratic political culture," he said.

In a fierce critique of the African National Congress (ANC), Professor Gumede who is also an associate professor at the Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management warned that if the ANC was not prepared to prioritise service delivery it will soon kiss the power it possesses goodbye.

"This is the time for the ANC to deliver to its promise otherwise it will soon lose power. The majority of the people have been waiting for too long for service delivery. The time for rhetoric is over and it's time to deliver. During the recent elections that we have just witnessed the masses have demonstrated that they still trust the ANC but the question will be for how long? Once they become impatient as we have seen in some of the service delivery related demonstrations, then the writing will be on the wall for everyone to see," he said.

Professor Gumede cited three spheres where liberation movements have disappointed and where they have failed drastically. He highlighted democratic practices, equitable economies and leadership.

"Liberation movements have failed these three pillars. They have failed to practice democracy at all levels. What they have managed to do is to dispense patronage to avoid being criticised. We have seen how powerful patronage was in Zimbabwe during the Thabo Mbeki era. This normally results in the election to leadership positions of questionable characters who are not interested in serving the people but only to enlarge their pockets," he said.

Professor Gumede who is also a Senior Associate and Programme



Professor William Gumede.

Director at the Africa-Asia Centre of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London has just finished his book *The Democracy Gap*.

He encouraged civil society to play a critical role in making sure that those in power deliver their promises to the masses. He said civil society in Africa is a key component of creating a democratic political culture.

"An active civil society will enable those in power to be accountable...the working class and the poor are the ones who carried the ANC to power and for that the ANC must be accountable to the poor for its actions and inactions. The reason why liberation movements become arrogant is simple: because they know that they can get away with whatever they are doing. But if civil society is there, critical of their actions, service delivery can improve. Most of the time democracy benefits the elites not the poor," he said.

Asked about his views now that South Africa has entered a new era under President Jacob Zuma's leadership he said: "It will all depend on how he responds to critical issues of service delivery like education, creation of decent jobs, rural development and many other issues. What is important is that people should be able to see the difference between his tenure and Mbeki's. He should from the beginning encourage ordinary South Africans to participate in policy implementation and make sure that his government is accountable. He must also make sure that those who criticise government do not become the enemies of the state like we have seen in the previous regime."

- Sabelo Nyuswa

Picture: Sabelo Nyuswa

# Promoting food security

A workshop on “Measuring and Monitoring Food Security” hosted by UKZN’s Africa Centre for Food Security (ACFS) was attended by delegates from across the African Continent.

The aim of the workshop was to explore a range of food security measurement and monitoring approaches and tools available to assist in country stocktaking, analysis and monitoring of household food security relevant to the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP)’s Pillar 3 and suggest the most appropriate measures for monitoring progress on Pillar 3 at country level.

The ACFS is the African Union/ New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)’s lead institution for the CAADP. The ACFS collaborates with the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Relief in the Sahel (CILSS) in West Africa on the CAADP Pillar 3.

The ACFS is actively expanding and has established networks of regional institutions to support the CAADP Country Round Table processes whereby country priorities for investment and programming are established.

Presenting at the workshop NEPAD’s Food and Nutrition Adviser, Ms Boitshupo (Bibi) Giyose said, “This workshop is an important milestone as we move forward in making sure that we implement the CAADP pillars... we are optimistic that this workshop will come with solutions in whatever problems we might have. We are also interested in making sure that the issue of food security is taken seriously around the African continent.”

Speaking after the completion of the workshop, ACFS Director and Head of the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness, Professor Sheryl Hendriks said: “We reached a huge milestone. Never before have we had indicators to



Delegates at the workshop on Measuring and Monitoring Food Security.

set targets and measure progress towards them. The participants worked very hard to reach a consensus on a set of indicators to measure and track progress towards addressing hunger through

CAADP’s agricultural growth agenda. This is the first for CAADP, the continent and the world. The recommendations will be presented at a NEPAD continental and international meeting.

We also identified capacity gaps that the participating universities will address through collaborations led by us.”

- Sabelo Nyuswa

Picture: Sabelo Nyuswa

## Dean of Law makes history



Picture: Supplied

Professor Managay Reddi.

FOR the first time in its history, the Faculty of Law at UKZN has appointed a woman as its Dean. Taking on the reigns for the next five years is Professor Managay Reddi who was officially appointed in April.

Priorities for Professor Reddi in her new role include entrenching the Faculty’s position as a leader in research output and ensuring that the Faculty becomes the faculty of first choice for prospective law students. Staff development is also high on her agenda.

To this end the Mentoring and Research Incentive Programme, unique to the Law Faculty, designed to equip staff with skills relevant to being excellent legal academics has been implemented. Young academics currently reading for their doctoral degrees have benefitted from the programme which offers modules designed to improve the skills of emerging researchers.

Professor Reddi said: “My appointment as head of one of the leading faculties at UKZN is an enormous challenge. I’m really pleased by the University’s confidence in making this appointment. I am therefore determined not to disappoint all those who have shown confidence in my ability to do this job.”

Professor Reddi who considers the success of both staff and students as the greatest rewards of her job believes it important for Deans to actively participate in Faculty academic programmes. She plans to continue lecturing at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as she believes this provides an opportunity to both keep in touch with staff and students and to teach which she enjoys doing.

Drawing her inspiration from the achievements of Chief Justice Pius Langa and other black legal professionals who have succeeded in their careers despite challenging circumstances, Professor Reddi advised law graduates entering the profession to carry out their jobs with integrity. This she said would bring them the “greatest rewards” both personally and professionally.

To current students she emphasised the importance of developing their language and analytical skills through extensive reading. “Law students must understand that their laboratory is the library,” she said.

Professor Reddi who considers obtaining her LL.D in Law at UKZN in 1999 as her greatest career success has research articles in the area of Criminal Law and Procedure published in a number of journals including the *South African Law Journal* and the *South African Journal of Criminal Justice*.

- Neesha Maharaj

## Law Mentorship Programme

TO help first year law students adapt to the complexities of university life, the Law Student Council at UKZN has introduced a new mentorship programme.

Leading law firm Deney’s Reitz has sponsored the Law Council Mentorship Programme run by third and fourth year law students who help students adapt to their new learning environment.

Since its inception last semester, the Programme through its 25 mentors has assisted 50 first year law students. This initiative supports students by first resolving social challenges they face before assisting with academic difficulties they may encounter. Mentors spend three hours a week with students who seek help.

Acting President of the Council, Mr Khulekani Dumisa and one of the Co-ordinators of the Programme said while the Council was aware of other mentorship programmes offering assistance to students, it identified a need for a separate student-centred programme focusing on law students.

“We wanted to introduce a less formal project which focused on the social issues affecting the lives of new students. Once they adapt on a social level they are likely to improve academically,” he said.

According to Mr Dumisa the mentorship programme has over the past months delved into the “real” challenges students face. For example accessing resources for their academic work may be a daunting task for students leaving high school and entering a tertiary environment, he said.

First year law students who turn to mentors for assistance may at times be advised to seek professional counselling depending on the seriousness of the problems they encounter. Common problems new students face include those relating to peer pressure, poor academic performance and adapting to a new academic environment.

One approach to assisting students was creating awareness of social activities within the University community as a means to de-stress.

Mr Dumisa hoped this programme encouraged students in other disciplines to implement similar initiatives within their Faculties.

- Neesha Maharaj

# Haemophilia health

The Novo Nordisk Haemophilia Foundation project was launched at a function at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine on 16 April. Attended by Department of Health officials, Haemophilia Foundation members, academics, clinicians as well as patients living with haemophilia, the launch was a milestone in the improvement of health care for haemophiliacs in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Haemophilia is a genetic disorder that impairs the body's ability to prevent blood clotting. The effects of this disorder are manifested in males whilst the carriers are female. In KwaZulu-Natal there are 300 patients living with haemophilia, the largest population in the

country. There is currently only one comprehensive treatment centre in the province, based at the King Edward VIII hospital in Durban.

Co-ordinator of the Project, Dr Rajendra Thejpal said: "Two comprehensive health care centres will be established in Grey's as well as in Ngwelezana Hospitals. Patients will receive multi-disciplinary care by a team of experts. This will result in early diagnosis closer to the homes of patients."

Some of the benefits of the Haemophilia Project will be to take expert health care services into the communities, to create patient awareness, to improve the expertise of a range of health care professionals (physiotherapists,

orthopaedics, nurses, paediatricians, general practitioners, dentists) that treat haemophiliacs and to consolidate comprehensive health care for all patients living with haemophilia.

Dr SSS Buthelezi, General Manager of Priority Health Programmes in the Department of Health said, "The Novo Nordisk Haemophilia Project is one of many prestigious projects launched by the University of KwaZulu-Natal and indicates its commitment to the community. The province of KwaZulu-Natal has the largest uninsured patient population and hence the Department of Health is grateful for the assistance from UKZN and its global partners both to improve health care and to strengthen the resources at hospitals."

An esteemed South African advocate of Haemophilia is Mr Bradley Rayner, Chairperson of the South African Haemophilia Foundation. Diagnosed with haemophilia at the age of three months, Mr Rayner encouraged all patients at the launch to get involved in treatment care. He said, "The patients, private and public sector all need to participate together to ensure improved health care for all haemophiliacs."

- MaryAnn Francis



Professor VB Jogesaar, Head of the Department of Haematology at UKZN; Dr Rajendra Thejpal, Haemophilia Project Co-ordinator and Sister Phumi Nkosi, Senior Professional Nurse in Haemophilia at the King Edward VIII hospital at the launch of the Project.

## Strengthening ties

THE Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and the Head of School of Public Health from the University of Eduardo Mondlane (UEM) in Maputo, Mozambique visited the College of Health Sciences at the end of March.

The purpose of the visit was to strengthen an ongoing collaboration with UEM and the College. Dr Ismail Mamudo, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Dr Baltazar Chilunde, Head of the School of Public Health hoped that this visit will enable the growth of research capacity at UEM.

The collaboration is focused on developing course-work Research Masters Degrees open to all health professionals at UEM and building the research support systems in the University.

- Leana Uys



(l-r) Dr Fatima Suleman, Head of School: Pharmacy and Pharmacology; Dr Ismail Mamudo, Dean: Faculty of Medicine, UEM; Professor Leana Uys, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Health Sciences; Dr Baltazar Chilunde, Head of School: Public Health, UEM; Professor Sabiha Essack, Dean: Faculty of Health Sciences; and Dr Lyn Middleton, Project Leader; at a Curriculum Workshop on 24 March.

## Mxenge Memorial Lecture



Picture: Xoliswa Zulu

From left: Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities, Professor Fikile Mazibuko; Mr Mbasa Mxenge, his aunt Nontobeko Mkhize, Professor Managay Reddi, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Chief Justice Pius Langa.

*South Africa as a Maturing Democracy* was the title of Chief Justice Pius Langa's presentation at the seventh Victoria and Griffiths Mxenge Memorial Lecture at the Howard College Theatre.

Chief Justice Langa said he chose the topic because it was important, from time to time, to stop and assess how well or how badly "we are doing".

"We are at the cusp of a remarkable and perhaps entirely necessary moment in the development of this democratic state and its institutions. We are, at once, engaged in defining those things most important to the nation, forging new ground in granting socio-economic rights protection and improving political participation and, at the same time, in this global village, attempting to define our place in the world."

Chief Justice Langa said South Africa had the opportunity to be a state capable of achieving real development and also to contribute to the development and well-being of the global community.

"Democracy is not static but dynamic. It grows and it deepens and, yes, it matures. In keeping with our understanding of the ideals of the Constitution, we have sought to maximise and not dwarf the character of our democracy. Thus we say that it is not sufficient for citizens to exercise their right to vote. They must also, in various ways, be involved in governance and decision-making wherever that is called for," he said.

South Africa's democracy demanded of its people that they constantly sought to develop and strengthen the structures that support democracy to enable them to be of better and more efficient service to their communities.

A mature democracy was one that made the eradication of poverty and disease a priority and thus used its resources wisely to eradicate inequalities inherent in South African lives and suffering – in particular, of those who found themselves most vulnerable and marginalised.

"Democracy is about gaining rights and fulfilling responsibilities. Our ascendance to being a mature democracy requires a feat no more than the continued participation by all in the democratic project. That is what I believe our pioneers would be telling us today. As both Victoria and Griffiths Mxenge would have said: 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it'."

An Honorary Doctorate of Law was conferred on the Chief Justice on 24 April.

- Xoliswa Zulu

## MNET EDiT Award

The film making talents of two UKZN students have been recognised by M-NET. Mr Lee Garakara and Mr Tom Hart bagged two awards for the short film *Voice of our Forefathers* in the MNET EDiT competition.

Merging animation and real life images Mr Hart, a Masters in Development Communication student produced a ten minute film on the lives of the San community in Platfontein, Kimberley. Drawing on the animation skills of Mr Garakara, a Masters in Fine Arts

students, the film revolves around the relationship between a grandfather and his grandson who narrates the tale of the stars' origins.

Mr Hart was awarded in the category Best Cinematography and received R5 000 while Mr Garakara scooped the Best Animation Award together with a R10 000 prize. The M-NET EDiT competition tests the film making capabilities of up-and-coming film makers through the provision of funding to produce their own short film annually.

Inspiration for the movie stems from Mr Hart's travails into Platfontein where he is researching relations between community radio stations and the local !Xu and Khwe clans for his master's dissertation.

Speaking of the film's success, Mr Hart said the combined efforts of a great post-production crew, on-location team and the San community made *Voice of Our Forefathers* a winning film.

"It's great that my film has won two awards. This is the first time I directed the use of animation in a movie – an indication that I have skills that could be used in the film industry," said Mr Hart.

Mr Hart who in the past produced a film *Behind the Walls* hoped his latest success would bring new film production opportunities his way.

Creating animation for a film was a first for Mr Garakara who adapted a cell animation technique which ran over 2, 5 minutes.

"Working on this film has been an enriching and challenging experience for me. Animation is a lot of hard work and I was allocated a short space of time to produce the footage. Winning is something I did not expect. Being recognised for my contribution is an indication of the quality of my work," said Mr Garakara.

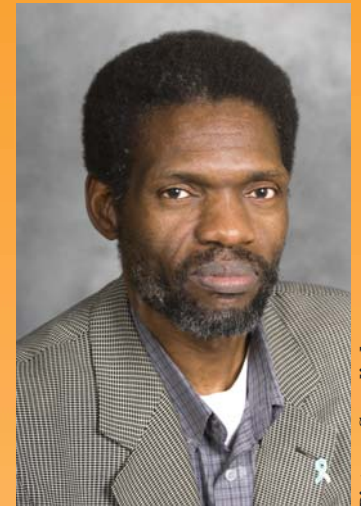
- Neesha Maharaj



Mr Lee Garakara and Mr Tom Hart with their Awards.

## Sidney Chipman Award

THE outgoing Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Professor RE Mhlanga left the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine on a high note this April. He received the Sidney S Chipman Award by the Gillings School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina in the United States for his contributions to maternal and children's health.



Professor RE Mhlanga.

Awarded for the first time to an academic at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, the Sidney S Chipman Award annually acknowledges graduates of the University of North Carolina Maternal and Child Health Training Programme who have taken a keen interest in promoting human welfare through the provision of health care.

Contributions made while working at the National Department of Health as its Director and later Chief Director for Maternal, Women and Child's Health since 1995 before taking on an academic role at the NRMSM in 2004 led to his latest accolade. Professor Mhlanga attributes his latest success to his involvement in several health initiatives in South Africa including the National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa, National Committee for Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths (NCCEMD), the Biomedical Research Ethics Committee with the NRMSM and the implementation of the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act in South Africa.

He also worked with UN agencies such as the World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNESCO, and non-governmental organisations such as Ipas and IPPF. He has been an invited speaker on reproductive health and rights at many conferences in many countries.

Professor Mhlanga who is set to take on the position of Cluster Manager: Hospital Services at the National Department of Health said the reason he joined academia was a need to participate in the training of health professionals responsible for the provision of health care to both women and children.

"While working for the National Department of Health I was made aware of the injuries women sustained at the hands of doctors who were not prepared enough for their work environments. I wanted to contribute to their training and I wanted to determine the level of service delivery in a teaching environment. This I believe would lead to improvement of life in South Africa," said Professor Mhlanga.

Sharing the view that the welfare of the nation depended on the welfare of its women and children, Professor Mhlanga said receiving the Award spurred him to continue his work in the area of women's health.

"I am honoured and humbled to be awarded the Sidney S Chipman Award, following many other highly placed graduates of the School of Public Health. The well-being of women and children will continue to be priority in my life and work," he added.

To academics and students interested in specialising in women and children's health, Professor Mhlanga advised them to be responsive to their (women and children) needs at a community level.

His articles have been published in the journals *Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology* and the *South African Health Review*.

- Neesha Maharaj

## Recognition Award

THE Minara Chamber of Commerce bestowed a Recognition Award on Associate Professor in the School of Management Studies Professor Shahida Cassim on 15 April for her individual achievements and contribution to community work.

"It is an honour to be recognised for the work I do for the community although voluntary work is undertaken without any expectation of reward," she said.

Professor Cassim is passionate about marketing and entrepreneurship. She teaches, consults and conducts research in the fields of marketing to children and various

aspects of entrepreneurship and economic development.

Her practical experience includes consulting to a variety of businesses, ranging from medium to large, corporates to non-profit organisations in a variety of strategic and marketing assignments.

She spearheaded the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the then University of Natal and has undertaken research focusing on entrepreneurship education, business incubation and small firm finance.

The Minara Chamber of Commerce was formed in May 2000 to represent and assist South African

Muslim businesses and entrepreneurs. The Chamber's activities and objectives are based on the need to provide a formal voice and guiding vision for Muslim Business.

The Vice-president of the Minara Chamber of Commerce, Mr Solly Suleman said:

"The Chamber embarked on the Recognition Awards to honour persons, such as Professor Cassim, whose successes and progress are an inspiration to our country and to our community. Highlighting her contribution serves as an example to the younger generation and sets a goal for others to emulate."

- Sabelo Nyuswa

# MACAIDS Fellowship

The award of the MACAIDS Fellowship to a Masters in Education Psychology student at UKZN will make education in HIV and AIDS a possibility for two rural schools in the province this July.

Ms Thoko Mnisi who lectures part-time at the Faculty of Education will implement her plan in addressing the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS to the community of Vulindlela through the promotion of the digital medium. The MACAIDS Fellowship is awarded by the HIV Centre for Clinical and Behavioural Studies Centre at the University of Columbia in New York to women who've proven their mettle as leaders in AIDS awareness campaigns.

Targeting teachers at the selected schools, Ms Mnisi will advocate the importance of visual material as a tool in combating the prevalent stigma attached to the disease.

The ten month pilot project is based on research she has undertaken for her master's degree which focuses on *Exploring the use of Digital Archives with Rural School Educators in Addressing the issues of HIV Stigma*. This research analyses the effectiveness of photographs depicting HIV and AIDS, taken by grade eight and nine learners, as a means to overcome stigma. Working on a NRF (National Research Foundation) funded digitization programme known as Digitization: Giving Life to Visual Data to Save Lives inspired both Ms Mnisi's

choice in research and programme for Vulindlela.

As a recipient of the MACAIDS Fellowship, Ms Mnisi will undergo a six-week training programme in May by representatives from the Human Sciences Research Council and the University of Columbia.

With a 20 year history of advocating against HIV and AIDS stigma Ms Mnisi said she was grateful to be awarded the Fellowship.

"Although I have been involved in HIV/AIDS education since 1988 this opportunity will enhance my vision in creating awareness on the pandemic," she said.

Ms Mnisi hoped the pilot project in Vulindlela will bridge both the digital and gender divide in AIDS education and her messages against stigma would trickle down to the surrounding community.

Her supervisor, Professor Naydene de Lange said Ms Mnisi has produced excellent work in developing a digital archive which she planned on using in the rural schools in addressing HIV and AIDS education.

- Neesha Maharaj

# A world of opportunity



Mr Thabo Msibi.

Picture: Normah Zondo

DEDICATION to social justice issues and hard work have been instrumental in Mr Thabo Msibi's string of academic successes. The lecturer at the School of Education Studies at UKZN is the recipient of four academic awards including the prestigious Gates Cambridge Scholarship, the Commonwealth Split Site Scholarship, the NRF (National Research Foundation) Prestige Scholarship and the MACAIDS Fund Fellowship.

Accepting the Gates Cambridge Scholarship will provide Mr Msibi an opportunity to pursue his PhD in Education over the next three years at the Cambridge University in England. The Commonwealth Split Site Scholarship makes provisions for him to follow doctoral studies at the University of Warwick also in England.

The Gates Cambridge Trust set up by Melinda and Bill Gates in 2000 funds the postgraduate studies of individuals who excel academically and have taken a leadership role in community upliftment. Prospective postgraduate students who apply for the scholarship are rated by the relevant faculties at Cambridge University.

Passionate about social justice issues, Mr Msibi will embark on research concerning the sexual orientation of African male teachers and determine the level of homophobia which exists within the school setting. He plans to seek answers on the issue through a study titled: *The Sexualities of African Male Teachers in Rural and Township Schools*.

He said: "South Africa is a society that is still rife with homophobia, very often normalised through day to day discourse. Although the South African constitution is explicit about the right to sexual orientation, very often, in practice, this right is not recognised.

"I wish to understand the experiences and identities of African male teachers who may be deemed sexually 'deviant'. I want to understand both their experiences in their living (township and rural) contexts as well as their day-to-day classroom practice. It's my hope that the study will open discussions which are often taboo in South Africa," said Mr Msibi.

The lecturer in Curriculum Studies and HIV/AIDS described his latest academic success as a blessing. Mr Msibi said he was grateful that a leading university recognised him as a prospective Gates Cambridge Scholar who would have the opportunity to be "lectured by some of the best thinkers in the world."

Mr Msibi who completed his Master's in Education degree through Columbia University in New York last year aspires to fill a leadership role in education when he returns to South Africa in the hope of providing quality education to children.

- Neesha Maharaj



Ms Thoko Mnisi, recipient of the MACAIDS Fellowship (left) with Professor Naydene de Lange, Associate Professor at the School of Educational Studies.

Picture: Supplied

## Spotlight on science education

A BOOK written and edited by UKZN academics exploring relevant approaches to teaching science in developing countries was recently published by Sense Publishers.

Dr Rubby Dhunpath, the Director of Projects at the University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) edited *Learner Centred Science Education*, a book written by the late Professor Cliff Malcolm, a former professor of Science education at UKZN.

Comprising 50 chapters the book is a rich narrative of Professor Malcom's explorations into rural communities in his bid to understand the nature and purposes of science education for a society in transition and the role of science education in promoting a more humane and just society.

An ideal read for science educators, curriculum policy makers, teachers and development agencies, the book offers crucial insights into scientific knowledge acquired at

schools and how this is sometimes in conflict with the scientific knowledge that reside within communities.

One of their collective concerns that led to Professor Malcom, a lecturer in Science Education before his retirement in 2007, collaborating with Dr Dhunpath on the book in 2005, was the persistent declining performance of learners in science and mathematics.

"We cannot begin to address issues of performance in examinations without first understanding the inescapable influence of localised contexts and indigenous cultures on knowledge acquisition. Our quest for a relevant science must be underpinned by a re-definition of scientific literacy that takes into account divergent ways of knowing," said Dr Dhunpath.

Referring to the publication as Professor Malcom's "richest legacy to the African continent", Dr Dhunpath said editing the book had given him a deeper theoretical and

philosophical understanding of a variety of science curriculum issues.

"I do not have a formal Science background, so the book influenced me in multiple ways. It has made me acutely aware of the hazards and limitations of appropriating an essentially western curriculum where learners are invariably distanced from their experiences, their prior knowledge and their ways of knowing, while Western science is presented as superior, legitimate and universal."

According to Dr Dhunpath the book brings to the fore difficult questions surrounding the socio-cultural factors that influence the science curriculum. He said one questioned whether the current science curriculum took into account the different learning styles of diverse cultures, and raised questions about whose interests the curriculum served and whether it responded to the needs of the people of Africa.

- Neesha Maharaj

## Badminton champ flies high

UKZN sports woman of the year, Miss Kerry-Lee Harrington, who has just returned with a silver medal from the All Africa Championships in Kenya, will soon be jetting off to China for the Sudirman Championships.

The Sudirman International championship is the most prominent badminton competition in

the world and is approved by the International Badminton Federation (IBF).

The 23-year-old badminton star is ranked number two in the ladies single badminton side in South Africa and is also ranked number two in the mixed doubles.

"It was a good feeling to receive a silver medal considering that I am

not good in doubles. This has motivated me to do even better when I am playing in the doubles. The tournament was tough but I am happy that team South Africa came back with a gold medal overall," she said.

"I don't have good memories about China but I can tell you now that I will do a lot better this time. My preparations have gone very well and I am looking forward to the tournament. It is always nice to compete with international athletes because you get a lot of exposure," she said.

The first championship was held in Indonesia in 1989 and thereafter every other year. It is a memorial to the late Dick Sudirman and the cup known as 'Sudirman Cup' is presented to the winners of the World Mixed Team Championship.

- Sabelo Nyuswa



Miss Kerry-Lee Harrington in action.

## Passing on computer skills

UKZN's School of Information Systems and Technology (IS&T) has recently been awarded a contract by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to equip the province's educators with basic computer skills. This would mean that out of the province's 86 000 high and primary school educators, 70 percent will be taught by the University. The University has already trained 700 educators.

The skills that educators will be taught will include basic computer skills such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Email and the Internet.

Department of Education Deputy Chief Education Specialist, Mr Thami Nkabinde, said the University was chosen because it has the facilities, the infrastructure and the expertise. It is also an opportunity for the University to give back and re-skill the community.

He said: "We are educating the educator, closing the digital gap and developing the skills base of the nation. Once they are equipped, they will be able to impart their knowledge to their learners. They will also impart their knowledge to develop the province's economy and the skills-base of the nation and we do believe that the University can make a difference in this regard

because it has the facilities and the capacity to train."

Professor Manoj Maharaj, Head of School of IS&T stated that this initiative is an integral part of the School's strategy of being a leading School of Information Systems in the country while still being actively involved within the community.

He added that the training was just the beginning of a series of interventions that will be undertaken to provide the KwaZulu-Natal community with affordable and high quality training in Information and Communications Technologies. A comprehensive Java training programme is also scheduled to start at the School soon.

Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies, Professor Lesley Stainbank said: "The Faculty of Management Studies is happy to be on board with the project as it will raise the profile of the Faculty within the schools of the Department of Education and it allows the Faculty to give back to the community. We want to strengthen our contacts with the secondary schools in order to ensure that learners see UKZN, and especially the Faculty of Management Studies, as the Faculty of choice when one day they decide to study at a tertiary institution."

Mr Bongani Mwelase, a Geography Advisor for the Pinetown area who monitors grades 10 through 12, said he felt more confident about using a computer.

He said: "The lessons have been perfect. I didn't realise that most of the province's educators were lacking in computer skills, but these lessons have been an eye opener. Previously my duties were to type and print and now I have learnt many other skills. From here, educators will return to their clusters and work with other educators who will then pass on the skills to their pupils."

Primary School teacher, Ms Zodwa Mbambo, said she was extremely happy with her new-found skills.

"Previously I could not use a computer, but because of these lessons, I have been able to set up an email address, I can search the internet and I can use various Microsoft applications. I will now be able to set my own tests and record marks electronically, which will make things much easier. And I feel confident enough to pass on the skills that I have learnt to my pupils and fellow educators."

- Xoliswa Zulu

## Book launch

POLITICAL activists and people who made a significant contribution to the struggle against apartheid gathered at the launch of Mr Mewa Ramgobin's book, *Prisms of Light "Within my Memory"* on the Howard College campus on 8 April.

Guests included the KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Mr Sbu Ndebele; MEC for Finance and Economic Development, Dr Zweli Mkhize; Professor Hoosen Coovadia, Director in the Durban Branch of the Reproductive Health Research Unit; and Mr Willis Mchunu, Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature.

Mr Ramgobin said that *Prisms of Light* was an attempt to provoke discussions and dialogue.

"I was particularly observant of the things that mattered and will matter in our life. I wanted to share the truths that I have gone through in my life. We must say that apartheid united us as one nation whether it was NIC, ANC or UDF. Looking at the challenges we face today, we need to examine ourselves as to what is it that we do and ought to be doing as liberated people. We are accountable to all the stalwarts who lost their lives. What are

we going to do as liberated people?"

Pro-Vice-Chancellor: Corporate Relations Professor Dasarath Chetty said that it was appropriate to launch the book at UKZN. "We want to ensure that UKZN becomes a university that is relevant to society," he said.

In his address Dr Mkhize said: "Our struggle is very inspiring because it involved a lot of people who fought against the most powerful regime and succeeded. The history will not be written in one book but in the memories of many people.

"The memories should not be allowed to fade away. It should be recorded for our children to know what we did so that they don't deviate from that vision. This launch is paying tribute to many unsung heroes. It's important for us to look back and say these stories need to be told".

Premier Ndebele noted: "...Less is written by the people who have struggled. The launch of *Prisms of Light* is a call for most of us to start recording history."

- Thembeke Dlungwane



KwaZulu-Natal Premier Mr Sbu Ndebele congratulates Mr Mewa Ramgobin at the launch of the book *Prisms of Light "Within my Memory"*.

Photo: Albert Hirasen



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