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PART ONE :

WHAT IS INSTITUTIONAL OUTREACH?

1.1 Introduction

In recent years, the issue of outreach has become central to the numerous debates and deliberations in higher education institutions, both internationally and locally.

In 1997, the South African “Education White Paper: a programme for education transformation” clearly outlined the need for higher education institutions to become more responsive to societal interests and needs. In 1998, the Minister of Education made an appeal to the higher education sector to support the Ministry in meeting the challenges of the country’s reconstruction and development agenda. More specifically, though, the Minister was of the conviction that such an engagement would not only provide academics with a more critical understanding of development priorities, but also, an awareness of the need to transform curricula to meet the realistic needs of our communities.

Since then, various attempts have been made to consider the integration of outreach into the academic enterprise of higher education institutions. In 2000, a discussion document prepared collaboratively by the Joint Education Trust (JET) and the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), identified several interesting facts about outreach in higher education institutions:

- ◆ The mission statements of most higher education institutions in South Africa include community service
- ◆ Few higher education institutions in South Africa have a policy to action the community service component of their mission statement
- ◆ Most higher education institutions in South Africa engage in some form of community service

- ◆ Generally, community service initiatives within South African higher education institutions are initiated by innovative and concerned individuals and not as an institution-wide strategic response to community needs
- ◆ Few community service initiatives embrace all three traditional functions of higher education institutions, namely, teaching, research and service.

In sharp contrast to the South African scenario, higher education institutions in other parts of the world (USA, Canada and Australia) have adopted a holistic model of outreach, i.e. outreach in teaching, research and service. In essence, outreach has been institutionalised into the core activity of higher education institutions.

1.2 The University of KwaZulu-Natal and outreach – quo vadis?

The new University of KwaZulu-Natal came into being on 1 January 2004 as a result of a merger between the former Universities of Durban-Westville and Natal. Moreover, the Interim Council of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (composed of some members of the Councils of the former Universities) adopted a new Vision and Mission Statement for the University towards the end of 2003. While the vision clearly indicates that the University’s aim is to be the “premier University of African scholarship”, its mission, core values and goals articulate the central objective to be a higher education institution of social relevance. In short, the new university has committed itself and all its resources to the common good of society.

Our interest in freedom is not confined to ourselves only. We are interested in the liberation of all oppressed people in the whole of Africa and in the world as well.
–Chief Albert Luthuli

In an attempt to contextualise the vision, mission, core values and goals within the broad canvas of the management structure of the new University, the Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Malegapuru William Makgoba, decided through a broad-based consultative process, and in his own wisdom, to institutionalise a portfolio office for outreach. More importantly, he was of the view that UKZN was unique in charting the way towards a new higher education history.

All our endeavours are occurring at a time of rapid and radical change in our society, as virtually all sectors of our country – public, corporate, civic and educational – are adapting to the realities of life in a new global society, largely shaped by the information revolution. Furthermore, the changing needs of our fledgling democracy make an effective outreach system essential for the new University to fulfil its mission. Finally, Professor Makgoba believed that this collection of historical and momentous circumstances provides the new leadership of UKZN with extraordinary opportunities to enhance the engagement of the institution and its varied resources in service to society at large.

1.3 Defining outreach or community service

In order to address societal needs, universities have traditionally provided leadership in extending education beyond their campus walls. Yet our understanding and definition of what is really meant by outreach is seriously wanting. In order for the commitment of UKZN to the greater public good – through its vision, mission, values and goals – to translate into effective action, a deeper and more comprehensive conceptualisation of outreach is imperative.

While in its broadest sense, outreach is the process of extending the intellectual expertise and resources of the University through teaching, research and service, to address societal challenges

and problems, there has been variance in terminology. The Joint Education Trust’s research in this area, for example, identifies a number of terms which are used, sometimes interchangeably, to describe outreach activity or community service.

1.3.1 Some definitions

Outreach can take a number of forms, including, but not limited to, formal academic instruction, applied research, technical assistance, community-based projects, evaluation studies and policy analysis. Ideally, it should be a two-way process through which the active exchange of information with external audiences occurs in a relationship of reciprocal partnership. In essence, any higher education institution that purports to be a provider of outreach activity or community service through “civic-minded” principles enshrined in its mission, values and goals, has to be a provider of lifelong learning. It has to reach out to its diverse stakeholders, identifying problems and challenges, engaging its intellectual resources and delivering teaching and research responses to improve the quality of life of our region and country.

There are many definitions of outreach, but those outlined below seem to capture most of the components of an “integrated” model – that which captures the meaning of *mutual beneficence*.

- ◆ The University of Massachusetts, Amherst, defines its outreach dimension as follows:

“Outreach is teaching, research and service that engages the University with external constituencies. Outreach activities generate knowledge, share resources, and apply the expertise of the University of Massachusetts in ways that advance both the public good and University and unit missions.”

Hatred ever kills, love never dies, such is the vast difference between the two. What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred proves a burden in reality for it increases hatred.
–Mahatma Gandhi

◆ The Joint Education Trust defines outreach as: “Programmes linked to higher education which involve participants in activities designed to deliver social benefits to a particular community and which teach the participants to work jointly towards the achievement of the common goal ... The beneficiaries are: the recipients of the service (i.e. communities and individuals within them); the providers of the service (i.e. students and members of faculty); and the institution which launched the programme.”

◆ Campus Compact, an organisation in which colleges and universities in the United States are affiliated in pursuit of outreach, defines service learning as:

“A teaching method that combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility. Service learning programs involve students in organised community service that addresses local needs, while developing their academic skills, sense of civic responsibility, and commitment to community.”

◆ Ohio State University defines outreach/engagement as:

“A meaningful and mutually beneficial collaboration with partners in education, business, public and social service. It represents that aspect of teaching that enables learning beyond the campus walls, that aspect of research that makes what we discover useful beyond the academic community, that aspect of service that directly benefits the public.”

◆ The California State University at Dominguez Hills, USA, defines outreach as:

“Academic study linked to community service through structured reflection so that each reinforces the other. The academic study may be in any discipline or combination of fields. The community

service may be direct service to people in need, community outreach and education or policy analysis.”

This list of definitions is not exhaustive. The choice was purpose-selected to reflect the main principles of an integrated model of outreach.

1.3.2 Commonly-used terminology to describe outreach activity or community service

Voluntarism

The primary focus is on service and on the beneficiary of the service.

Community service

The primary focus is on service.

Internships

The focus is primarily on student learning rather than community service. Their purpose is to give students practical learning experience.

Field education

The primary focus is on maximising student learning with community service being an adjunct to this, with strong intentions to benefit recipients. The emphasis is placement-based: communities are placement sites for students, with relatively little attention given to addressing long-term community problems. The service is performed in addition to a student’s course work.

Experiential learning

The emphasis is on learning through action, suggesting that experience adds value to the learning process. In contrast, service learning adds value to the belief that students learn best by engaging in activities that are personally meaningful and have a positive impact on others. Its mission is different from that of experiential learning.

***Think of giving not as a duty but as a privilege.
–John D. Rockefeller Jr.***

Community-based education

This term has been widely used in health professions' education since the 1970s. The term itself places emphasis on student outcomes while attempting to integrate student outcomes with community service.

Community-based learning

This term, used by Portland State University, places emphasis on student outcomes and recognises that learning can be enhanced by community involvement, and that community members can serve as co-teachers.

Service learning

This term is widely used in the United States. It occurs when there is a balance between learning goals and service outcomes: the service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service, and the benefits to the providers and recipients are equal. However, the credit in service learning is for learning and not the service.

Academically-based service learning

This term, used by the University of Pennsylvania, locates the notion of service learning within the context of academic development and scholarship. It implies that service learning is a potential mechanism for academic development. The benefits are not only for the providers (students) and recipients (community) but also for the higher education institution in terms of its own development.

It is quite obvious from the description of terms outlined above that the concept of outreach has extremely wide connotations, and finds expression in a variety of practices with different goals and emphases. In some instances it is simply an "add-on" function, while in others it is integrated into core functions of a higher education institution where there is mutual benefit to all stakeholders.

I never worry about action, only inaction
–Sir Winston Churchill

1.4 What are the benefits of outreach for UKZN?

While it is acknowledged that, in terms of according meaning to the University's mission, goals and values, as well as aligning academic practices with the higher education and social transformation imperatives of the national legislative and policy framework, outreach needs both to be extended and more securely embedded in the academic enterprise. For this to occur, stakeholders will need to be reassured of the benefits of outreach.

Assessing the overall benefits of outreach programmes with precision is difficult at this stage, given that indicators and baseline data are lacking, and that reliable research instruments and methodologies are still being developed. However, Joint Education Trust's research as well as investigations conducted by the Center for Community Service Learning at the University of Texas at Arlington, USA, relating to the impact of outreach programmes on higher education institutions, suggest that there are indeed a variety of significant benefits for all stakeholders.

1.4.1 Student benefits

With reference to students, the studies found that the benefits generally fell into the categories of academic skills, task-related skills, and values and attitudes.

Academic skills acquired

- ◆ Students are able to understand the relevance of their academic coursework
- ◆ Students are able to acquire and apply research skills to community issues
- ◆ They develop a holistic approach towards community issues
- ◆ They are able to adapt their skills to the conditions of poverty
- ◆ Students are able to use limited technology to address community problems

- ◆ They are capable of contextualising academic studies within real life situations
- ◆ They develop a new understanding of knowledge and realise that it is not only contained in text books
- ◆ Students are able to integrate theory and practice in development
- ◆ They develop a more realistic understanding and insight into the limitations of the academic discipline.

Task-related skills acquired

- ◆ Students gain a heightened sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy by assisting in the possible resolution of community problems
- ◆ They improve their critical thinking, interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills
- ◆ They develop an understanding of “how things work in practice”
- ◆ There is an improvement in second language ability
- ◆ They develop an ability to “think on their feet”
- ◆ Students learn to work as a member of an interdisciplinary team.

Impact on values and attitudes

- ◆ The fear of community service is considerably removed and it does not become a “negative thing”
- ◆ Students experience a broadening of perspectives and develop an increased sensitivity to diversity and equity issues
- ◆ Community service participants are more likely to strengthen their commitment to promoting racial understanding and tolerance and influencing social values such as civic responsibility

A nation's culture resides in the hearts and soul of its people.
–Mahatma Gandhi

- ◆ Outreach activity sensitises students to the difficulties experienced by communities on a day-to-day basis
- ◆ Community service programmes offer students additional guidance, experience and contribute to future career choices and increased likelihood of employment
- ◆ Students develop an insight into broader socio-economic and political circumstances
- ◆ Community service improves a student's confidence, empathy, tolerance and patience
- ◆ Outreach activity sensitises students to national problems
- ◆ Community engagement assists a student to develop a sense of social consciousness.

1.4.2 Staff benefits

While there is a scarcity of literature regarding the impact of outreach programmes on academic staff, it is generally agreed that the involvement of academic staff in outreach activity, inevitably leads to new and innovative ways of reflection regarding teaching and research in their disciplines. Based on available reports and records, the benefits for academics of engaging in outreach include the following:

- ◆ Service learning programmes encourage staff to be innovative in their teaching, thus enriching the experience for both teacher and student
- ◆ Direct contact with local societal issues keeps staff connected with their local communities and provides them with data they would not otherwise access
- ◆ Outreach programmes provide opportunities for new areas of research
- ◆ Research projects conducted by students for course credits in service learning programmes are cost effective ways to facilitate research on a limited budget

- ◆ In their interaction with communities, staff frequently learn as much as they deliver, and this experience enhances their overall academic skills.

1.4.3 University benefits

Benefits to the institution are more indirect. Universities in South Africa are largely funded by the state and are, therefore, obligated through the legislative framework to be responsive to the needs of the country and the local community. In this respect:

- ◆ Outreach programmes assist in the fulfilment of the institution's mission and vision
- ◆ Community service learning increases university-community collaboration and partnerships which show the public that the university is not confined to the "ivory tower", and can be responsive to the needs of people
- ◆ Direct involvement in regional development projects through outreach initiatives may serve to strengthen institutional collaboration with the private sector and generate third-stream income
- ◆ University-community partnerships bring increased publicity to the institution and heightened visibility, and this prestige can lead to increased funding and enrolment of quality students.

1.4.4 Community benefits

The impact of higher education outreach programmes on communities cannot be assessed in general terms. Results are project specific, and individual impact reports reflecting local and international experiences abound within the walls of higher education institutions. However, some common achievements have been identified:

- ◆ Community outreach programmes involve talented, energetic and motivated individuals

who are oriented towards meeting increasing needs

- ◆ Service learning programmes promote civic responsibility, participatory democracy and a renewed sense of community
- ◆ Student and staff volunteers bring analytical and problem-solving skills to bear on community issues, and generate new ideas about organisational operations that translate into increased capacity to service clients
- ◆ Partnerships bring increased community awareness to the problems facing community organisations

1.5 Conclusion

The benefits of integrating outreach activity into the institutional ethos and core functions of our academic venture far outweigh the potential difficulties, risks and obstacles and contribute significantly to the overall good for students, staff, the institution, the communities we serve, the region, our country and the continent.

At the University of KwaZulu-Natal, there is a firm understanding that if we are to keep pace with the profound changes taking place in a knowledge-based world, then we need to be responsive to the learning needs of our society. Old models of education no longer apply – target markets need to be reviewed, structures need to be modified, programmes enriched, and pedagogical practices diversified to bring into being more dynamic modes of interchange between universities and society.

No-one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite

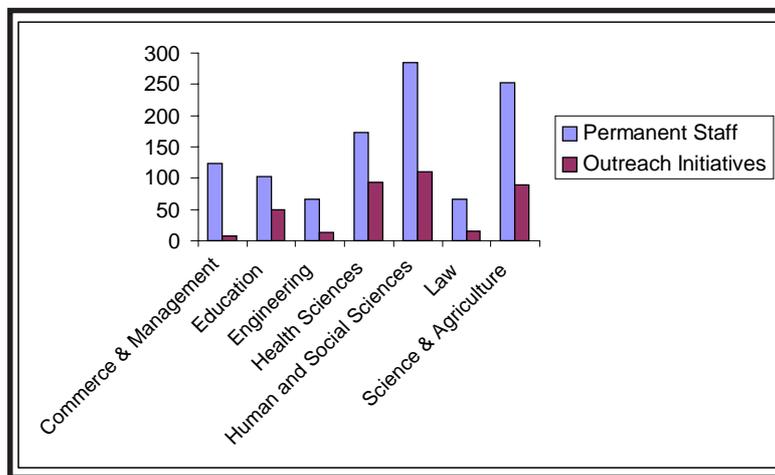
***–Nelson Mandela
Long Walk to Freedom***

PART TWO : COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

2.1 A broad overview of the University

Currently, there are 326 projects involving 169 University staff members. The majority of these (39%) are from the Pietermaritzburg campus, followed by the Westville campus (31%) and Howard College campus (22%). However, a more

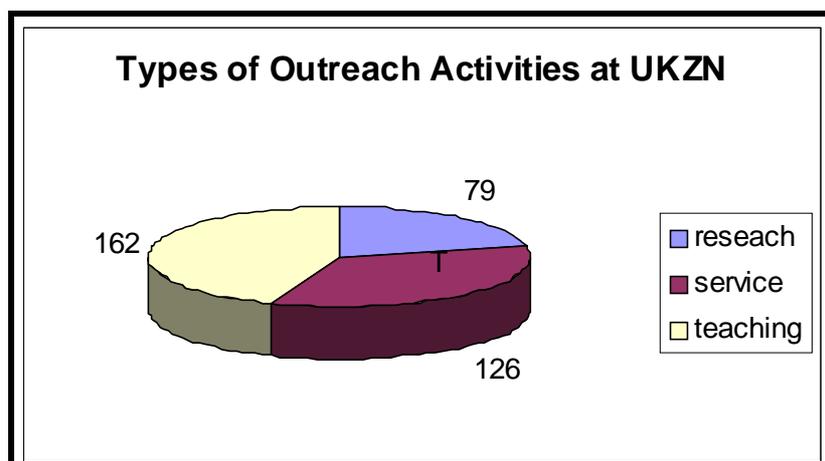
useful analysis can be obtained by looking at the Faculties rather than campuses and in analysing these figures it is important to see them reflected against the relative size of the Faculty, as the graph below illustrates:



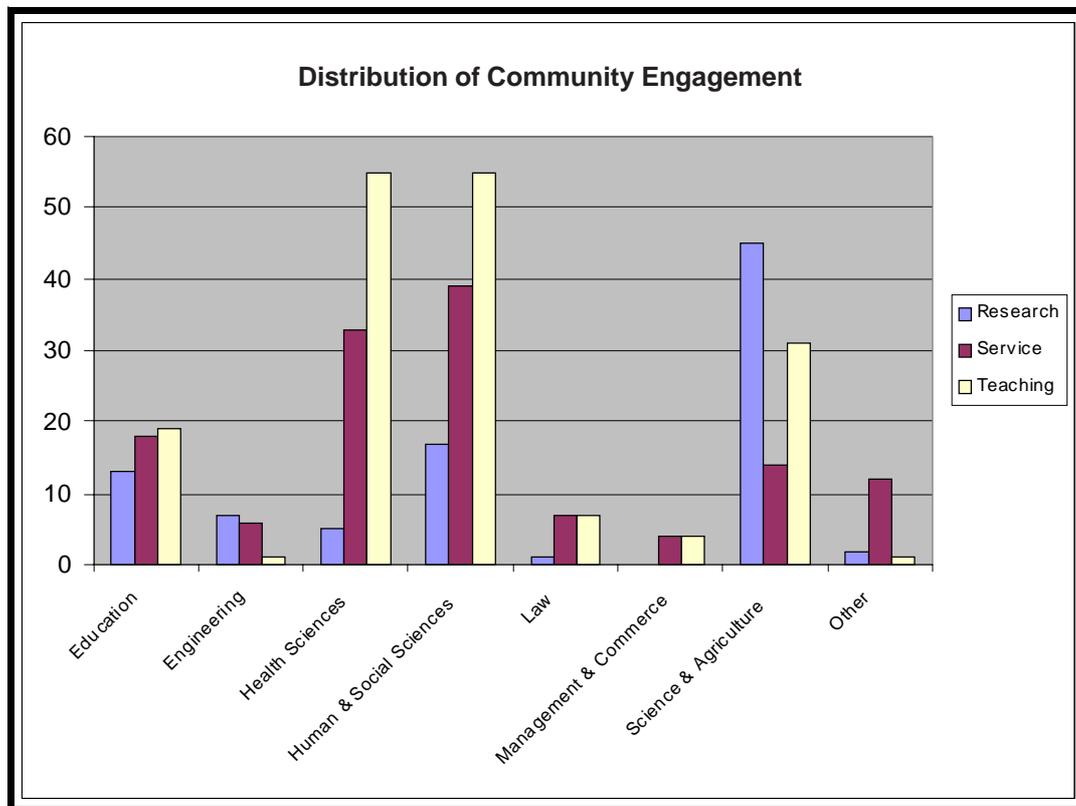
2.2 Types of engagement

The projects were grouped in three types relating to the core elements of the University's mission: research, service and teaching. The data currently indicate that these are found in the following

proportions but this may change as staff members become more aware of their contribution to outreach:



Reflecting this by Faculty presents the following picture:



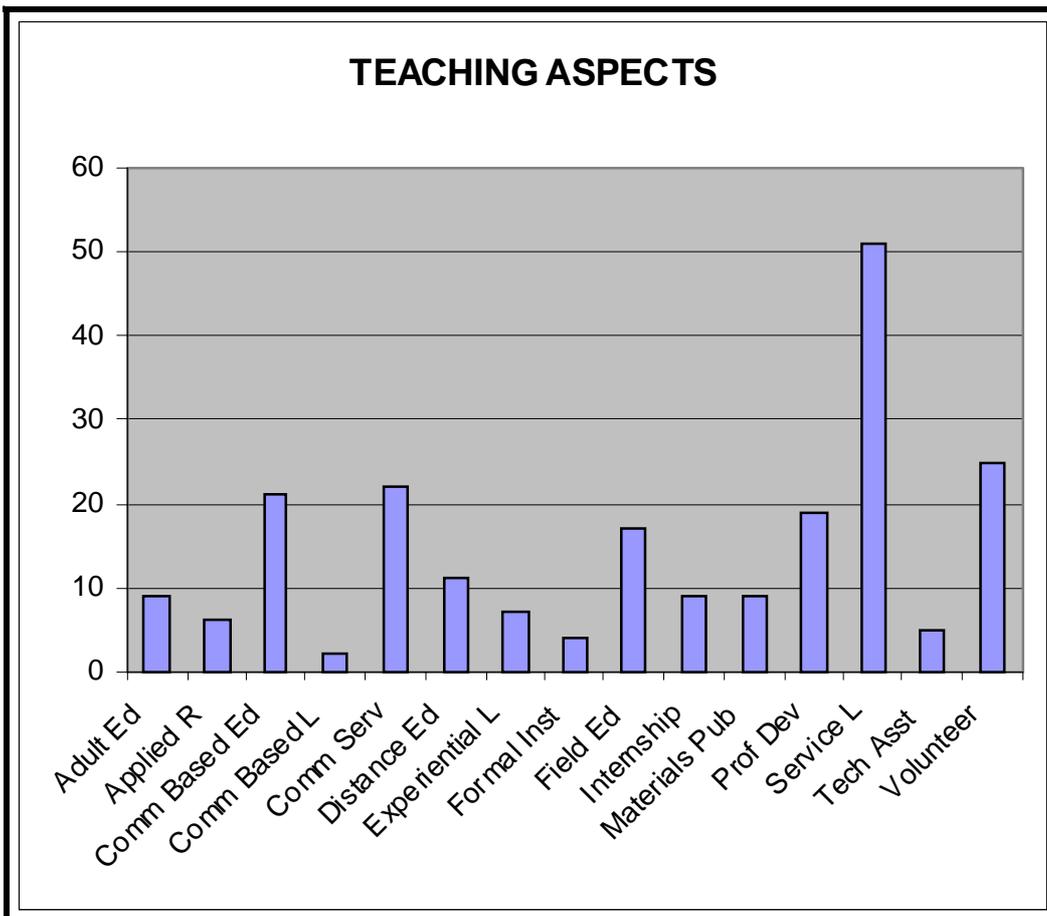
2.2.1 Teaching

The current emphasis on teaching suggests a concern within the University to ensure the programmes are relevant and context-based, with graduates having hands-on skills and experience. However, teaching is not limited to the teaching of students of the University alone. An example of how the University extends teaching far beyond

its boundaries is the adult education newspaper, produced by the Centre for Adult Education in Pietermaritzburg. A total of 55 000 copies are printed and distributed weekly. A further breakdown of the teaching activities shows the great diversity of activities.

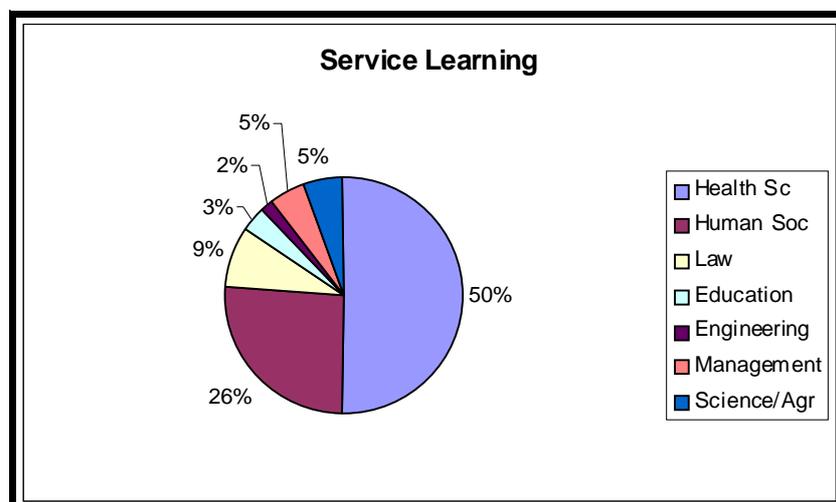
It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows achievement and who at the worst if he fails at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

–Theodore Roosevelt



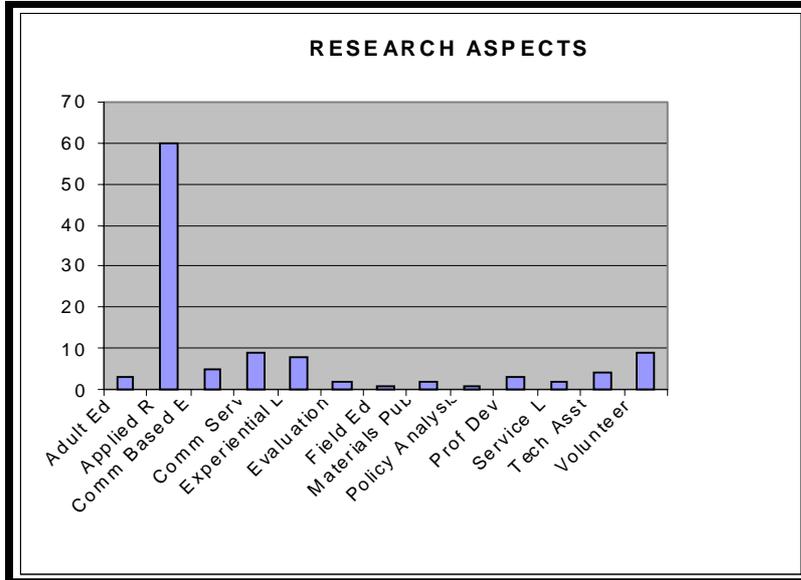
This chart shows that distance education or open learning does not account for a great many initiatives. However, the level of engagement in this sector is linked to the number of students reached in the programmes. In recent discussions the Ministry of Education indicated that these numbers are to be capped so further developments in this sector may be limited.

The chart below highlights the predominance of service learning that is primarily occurring in the Health Sciences, followed by the Human and Social Sciences. It should be noted that a clearer picture of the scope of service learning will only be evident once more data regarding the number of modules and number of students is available.



2.2.2 Research

The small numbers of projects that were identified within research seem to suggest that many academics do not see the need for their research to relate directly to or benefit the community. However, it could also be an indication that many researchers do not recognise the benefits of their work to the wider



community and see it as research rather than “community outreach”. The next phase of confirmation could see many more “researchers” submitting information related to their projects.

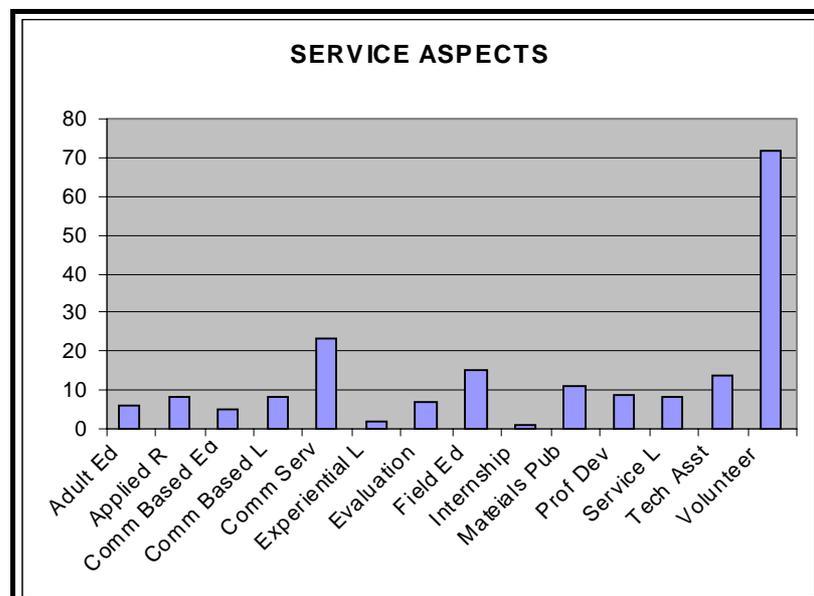
A closer analysis of types of activities linked to research shows the emphasis on applied research, which is to be expected, but it also reveals an interesting diversity.

Within the applied research alone lies a fascinating array of projects including:

- ◆ Community Based Quarrying – a five-year feasibility study for the Department of Transport whereby rural women will share in the proceeds from a gravel quarry.
- ◆ Community Based Tourism – participative research in Msinga and Kranskop.
- ◆ Sweet Potato Breeding Programme.
- ◆ Prison Theatre – participative research into the rehabilitative role of theatre with youth and women in Westville Prison.
- ◆ Self-employed Women’s Union – 10-year review of Union Activities, particularly leadership development.

2.2.3 Service

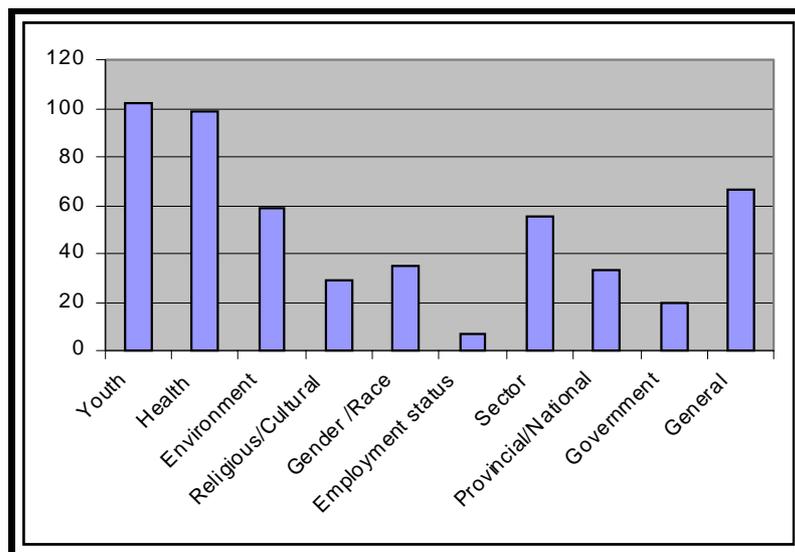
It is important to record the high level of commitment in this category which is largely unrecognised within current funding and promotion policies. It will also be useful to note, in the next phase of information gathering, the extent to which these service-oriented initiatives lead to projects that bring research and other funding into the University.



The previous chart shows the high level of volunteerism that is evident in all Faculties. Volunteer work undertaken by University staff includes membership of the National Water Advisory Council, provision of free legal advice for AIDS care cases, training of African

youngsters who are entering surf lifesaving, clearing of alien vegetation in Pigeon Valley, and extensive participation from Psychology and the Health Sciences in the Phelophepa Mobile Health Care Train.

2.3 Who benefits?



A wide range of beneficiaries were identified in the survey and some of the categories were grouped to present a more holistic picture. From the graph above it is evident that staff at the University demonstrate a high level of concern regarding young people and health. Dominating these two sectors are issues relating to HIV/AIDS, and projects to which University staff are contributing include:

- ◆ HIV/AIDS Community Intervention programme – working with isangomas and inyangas.
- ◆ Siyazama – an AIDS education project with rural women bead workers.
- ◆ Sinomlando Centre – a community-based research and development oral history, memory work project providing emotional support with bereavement counselling for AIDS orphans.

- ◆ HIVAN Veggie Garden – students work with communities to improve food supplies for communities devastated by AIDS.



Participatory methodology - identifying needs and assets of the Mbangweni community in a training workshop for the WildlandsTrust.

PART THREE :

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL'S OUTREACH PROJECTS

3.1 Introduction

Approximately 350 Outreach projects are being managed by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. These projects can be divided into 11 different categories:

- ◆ HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Health care
- ◆ Community education
- ◆ Food security
- ◆ Land tenure – democratisation
- ◆ Conservation
- ◆ Individual volunteerism
- ◆ Partnerships in industry
- ◆ Energy use
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ Law

Further projects are being planned with the vision of encompassing many more areas of development. Detailed below are just a few of the projects currently being run by the University. A comprehensive listing of the University's Outreach Programme has been compiled.

3.2 HIV/AIDS

Presently there are 24 projects which focus on HIV/AIDS, some of which include:

■ Collaborative HIV/AIDS mental health project (CHAMP)

Run under the University's Health Promotion Programme, this project is a collaborative family and community-based HIV prevention intervention. The project targets pre-adolescents and their families with the aim of strengthening the adult protective shield and improving parent-child relations with a view to delaying the onset of sexual initiation and HIV-risk behaviours in youth. The CHAMP programme was initially developed for inner-city African/American communities in the USA and has been adapted for the South African context using cartoon-based materials.

■ HIV/AIDS community intervention programme

Led by the University's Health Promotion Programme, some of the components of this project include: HIV/AIDS peer education, youth, women and schools, training of isangomas and inyangas on HIV/AIDS, the development of a referral system between traditional healers and clinics, an AIDS orphans programme, development of a hospice for critically ill AIDS patients and a community skills training centre. The programme is conducted at Mduku rural community in northern KwaZulu-Natal.

■ Treatment Action Campaign

Co-ordinated by the School of Law, the aim of this project is to campaign for greater access to medicines, including anti-retroviral treatment, for persons infected with HIV, as well as to advocate generally for the rights of people infected by the virus and their families/communities.

There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well.

–Walter Reuther

■ **Maphephetheni coping strategies**

This outreach programme is managed by the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness in support of community garden groups in Maphephetheni. The strategy is to help the community towards developing plans of action to cope with the trauma of HIV/AIDS in agricultural households.

■ **South Coast Hospice**

The South Coast Hospice cares for the terminally ill in the community, through a home-based care programme, as well as at a small in-patient facility in Port Shepstone. Patients with AIDS form an increasing proportion of the case load, whereas previously cancer was the most common reason for care. This scheme is directed by the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine.

■ **McCord/Sinikithemba and HIVAN feeding scheme**

Co-ordinated by the Campus HIV/AIDS Support Unit, food parcels are donated to a group of HIV positive individuals who are members of a support group called Sinikithemba at McCord Hospital. Each bag contains seven items, namely: samp, mealie meal, soya mince, beans, sugar and mabele porridge. The parcels complement the daily food of the patients.

3.3 Health care

There are numerous projects which fall under health care. These range from Primary Health Care and Psychology to Pharmacy and Nursing.

A lot of people are waiting for Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi to come back – but they are gone. We are it. It is up to us. It is up to you.
–Marian Wright Edelman

■ **Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital eye clinic**

Administered by the Department of Optometry, this project provides general eye testing, dispensing of spectacles and eye education to patients at the hospital. The clinic is primarily held in Umlazi and surrounding areas and conducted by staff, third- and final-year students.

■ **Veggie gardens**

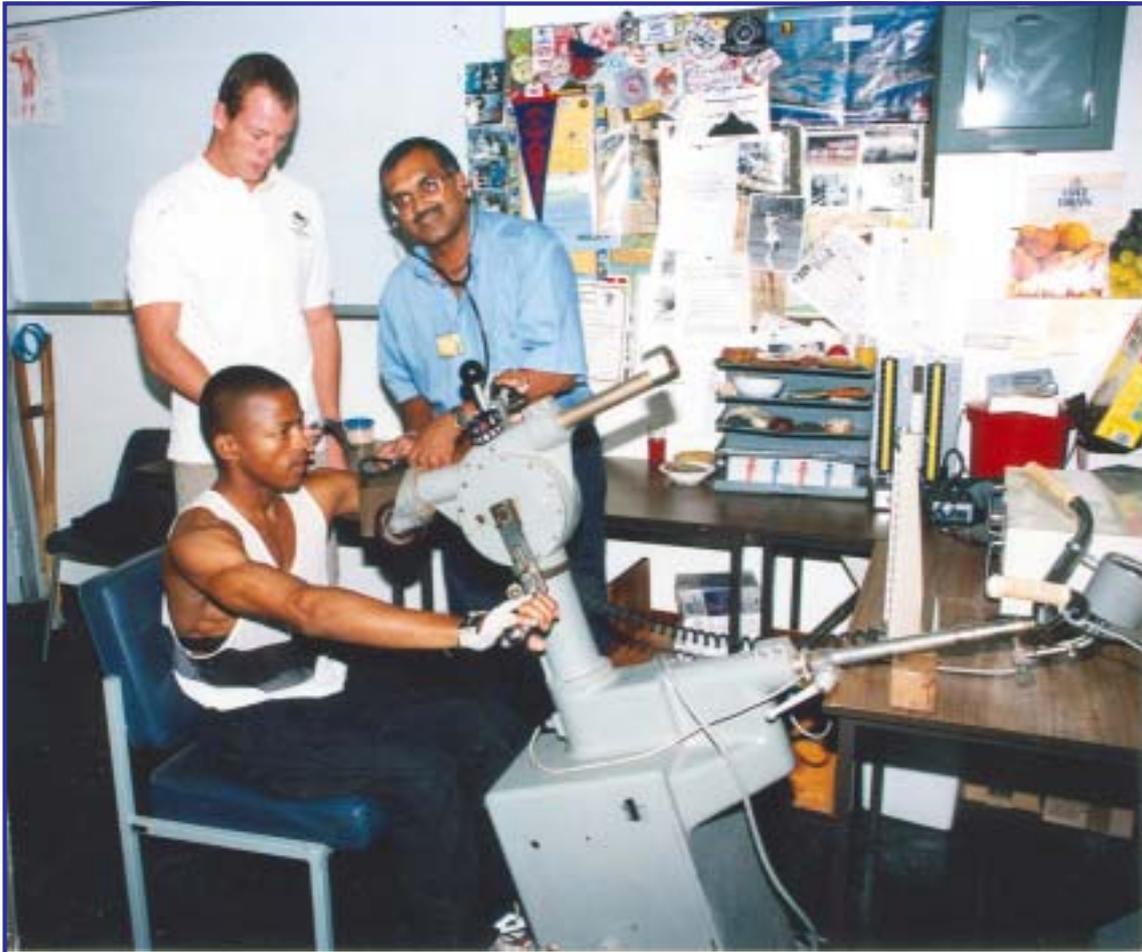
Also directed by the Campus HIV/AIDS Support Unit, this project assists community members at Sinikithemba clinic in initiating their own vegetable gardens at home. Volunteers provide the expertise and monitor the gardens on a monthly basis. Volunteers also lobby and fundraise for the projects.

■ **Orphanage care and support**

Directed by the Campus HIV/AIDS Support Unit, students volunteer to work at an orphanage caring and supporting HIV positive children. Relationships with two orphanages, namely, Ithembaletu Transit Home in Manor Gardens and Makaphuthu in Bothas Hill, have been established. Volunteers engage in a range of activities that strengthen the project so that they not only volunteer but also learn from their work.

■ **Siyazama project**

Administered by the Department of Anthropology, the project entails working with rural bead workers to disseminate information about HIV/AIDS through the use of indigenous knowledge and skills. The project seeks to combine cultural affirmation with health education, product development and socio-economic upliftment of marginal rural craftswomen.



Biokinetic experts, Prof Yoga Coopoo and Dave Maritz, help Sipho Mandla Gumbi to exercise. The Bicycle Ergometer machine has been adapted to suit disabled persons.

■ Rural district hospitals

Community-based organisations are visited by medical students in small groups in the second, third and fourth year of study, during which time the students engage with the community and implement projects that add value to that particular community. Rural district hospitals are visited by students in their final year of study, as part of their Family Medicine module. During their three weeks, students engage in all the activities of the hospital, including after-hours calls and front-line clinical care. This is done under the supervision of resident doctors. Final-year medical students spend three weeks on a rotational basis, in small groups, working as student interns in the “front line” of clinical care.

■ R P Moodley School

Biokinetic students from the Department of Sports Science regularly visit the school and work with the children, some of whom have cerebral palsy. The students are then tasked with devising relevant sports programmes for the children.

Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

SA Red Cross flying doctors



The SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service in partnership with the University of KwaZulu-Natal provides health care services to those who need it most

The SA Red Cross Flying Doctors participate in a weekly programme, in terms of which a Dentistry staff member and a student travel with other medical science students and staff to rural areas. Patients are screened and treated for pain and sepsis. Oral health education and promotion are also included as an awareness programme.

Experts from the University of KwaZulu-Natal are providing professional health care expertise as part of the “Flying Doctor and Health Outreach Service”, which is run in conjunction with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health. The Air Mercy Service provides an aircraft for flying doctors and health outreach services including the transportation of patients to hospital.

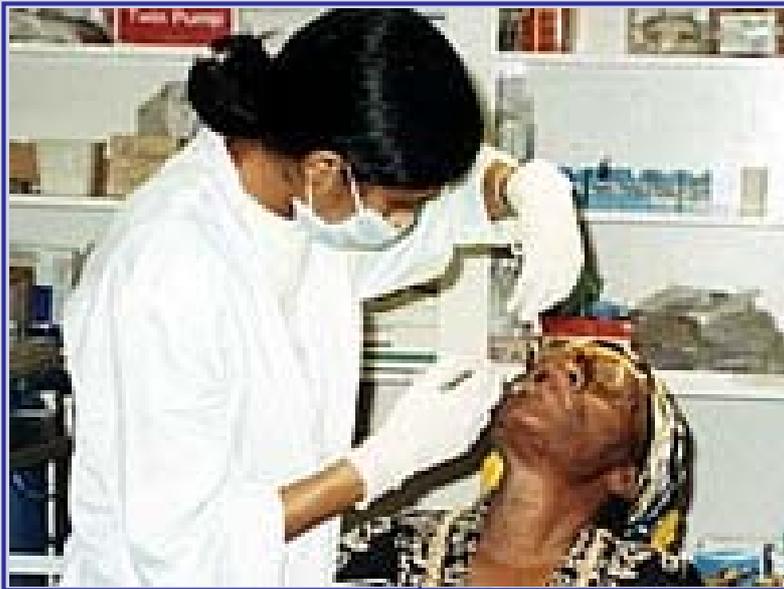
The Dental School, together with the Oral and Dental Training Hospital in Overport, is also engaged in community oral health programmes and several outreach activities which aim to strengthen the partnership between communities, the University and service providers, including the South African Red Cross Air Mercy Service.

Some of these activities include: a weekly service to the community attending St. Wendolin’s Clinic, the “Phelophepa” health train which travels to rural communities in South Africa, ad hoc health promotion exercises in schools and institutes and participation in the Red Cross Flying Ambulance Service.

The Community Oral Health Programme is intended to develop and share the vision with all partners. It also seeks to identify the needs and resources of each of the associates.

Resources are negotiated with service providers to meet the needs of the community and to prepare and assist the Faculty to train oral health workers for community needs. Through this project the curriculum is developed in both its content and process so that graduates are equipped to meet these needs.

Training and research activities of the Community Oral Health Programme are provided within the context of a comprehensive primary health care programme. Adequate



funding and sustainability of the programme is ensured. The programme also provides feedback that informs and influences the policy of service providers and Faculty of Health Sciences.

One of the founding members of the Community Oral Health Programme, Dr Hanif Laher, says that these objectives were formulated in 1991 and consolidated in 1993. The individual projects have varying levels of activity and were last reviewed in 1994/5.

Afzal Khan, manager of SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service says that the main aim is to build capacity by providing a comprehensive health care service to communities in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. "We source medical expertise of doctors, specialists and University personnel to be part of the health care service."

He confirmed that personnel from the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine recently treated 1 044 patients and performed 53 operations at Hlabisa Hospital in northern KwaZulu-Natal.

Volunteer doctors, nurses, dentists, specialists and allied health care workers convert the barest facilities into functional clinics. This includes



supporting the medical staff at rural hospitals with complicated pathology, surgery, dental work, optometry, HIV/AIDS management, primary health care, teaching and training and trauma care. The outreach team visits more than 30 hospitals in the KwaZulu-Natal province on a bi-weekly basis.

The SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service also helps to alleviate the suffering of patients with Mseleni joint disease by increasing the number of total hip replacements in this remote area of northern KwaZulu-Natal. "Another focus is the screening and treatment of people with ear, nose and throat problems, which is particularly prevalent in southern KwaZulu-Natal," said Khan.

Phelophepa health care train



Phelophepa-UKZN takes health care service to the people

From Dimbaza in the Eastern Cape to Letsetele in Limpopo Province, the Phelophepa project provides comprehensive affordable health care to more than 180 000 people in rural areas throughout South Africa. Phelophepa which means “good clean health” is a 600-ton train that winds its way around the South African countryside. On board the train, various health care professionals aided by dedicated students from leading South African universities, provide a valuable service to rural communities. The University of KwaZulu-Natal contributes to this Transnet initiative by sending students from various disciplines including Dentistry, Optometry, Pharmacy and Psychology.

The Phelophepa route is alternated every year and sponsors, apart from Transnet, include various socially conscious companies such as Roche Products (Pty) Ltd. The students live on board the train and all meals are prepared in an on-board state-of-the-art kitchen. Announcements in the form of pamphlets, posters and

public address systems are made in the community before the train arrives. The train stops for a week in each station and the beneficiaries of this service pay a small fee ranging from R5 for medicine, to R30 for tested spectacles.

Dr Mahomed Laher of UKZN’s Dental School believes that Phelophepa’s multi-pronged approach is beneficial to both the students and the community. “It is a site to train students in a rural environment that is not institutionalised. At the same time students are providing a service to the community.” The Dentistry students are placed on a roster system. This project forms part of off-site teaching and is compulsory along with other outreach activities handled by the Department.”

Vassie Naidoo, a lecturer in UKZN’s Pharmacy Department said that not all Pharmacy students get a chance to spend time in the train’s dispensing department. Approximately 22

committed students per year are selected to assist the resident pharmacist on the train over a period of time, with two post-basic pharmacist assistants working under the supervision of the pharmacist. Here, students are able to dispense all schedule drugs and provide a counseling service which allows for a more holistic approach. Generic drugs are donated and the resident pharmacist informs members of the community on all relevant information, such as dosage and contra-indications.

Dr Casandra Seethal, a senior lecturer in the Department of Optometry, maintains that the students provide a valuable service to the community. Eye care education, vision screening, diagnosis, visual assessments, dispensing and therapy outline the essential role played by the third- and final year optometry students from UKZN. Exchange students from as far a field as France, Melbourne and Sydney are also involved in this worthy initiative. An exchange student from Sydney, Mirvette Ghobrial, commented that the experience on the train was unforgettable. “The work experience, although it was hard at first to get used to the demands of it, proved a great learning experience. The pathology in particular that I saw was of great interest. I would love to come back one day and do more volunteer work on the train.”

Seethal believes that the Phelophepa Eye Clinic has created awareness on eye care and has made eye care accessible and affordable. It has reduced the prevalence of avoidable blindness and allowed people from indigent communities to be visually functional.

Lisa Dales, a Psychology intern, said that one-on-one counseling and referrals to social workers or psychologists are made to community members. Students also go out into the community and conduct workshops at schools on topical issues such as HIV/AIDS awareness, sexuality awareness, study skills, stress management and motivation. Lisa says that witnessing the optometry students dispensing glasses was especially memorable. “When community members receive their glasses, they’re so happy; they keep taking them off and putting

them on again. They are so humble and even though the glasses look prehistoric they are happy to see a tree clearly for the first time in years!”

Lisa also commends the fact that employment is also created within the communities that are visited. Translators form an integral part of the casual workers that are employed for the duration of the stay.

Elsa Bernon, a Psychology student/intern, said that it was hard to return to normal life after being on the train. She was shocked that some people live with diabetes for over 20 years and only discover they are afflicted with the disease when they visit the train.

Thulani Vazi, another student in Psychology, believes that the project allows learners at rural schools to address issues that they ordinarily would be ashamed to broach. He is especially passionate about the project as he has spent time in rural areas and can therefore empathise with the situation these people find themselves in. Carol Mitchell, a member of staff, said that the discipline of Psychology has been involved in this project for the past eight years. Mitchell also points out that the pivotal role the Psychology School plays is that they prepare students and facilitate their future involvement in community outreach projects.

Delivering primary health care to more than 180 000 individuals annually, the Phelophepa project represents a capital outlay of approximately R15 million with a monthly expenditure of R1,5 million. The train runs for 36 weeks every year and R20 000 is spent feeding the train’s volunteers every week.

It is imperative that outreach projects like the Phelophepa train continue to be supported by institutions of higher learning. This is especially relevant as the University’s mission statement prioritises critical engagement with society. With universities being rich in human resources and possessing dedicated and socially conscious staff and students, collaborations with local and international companies provide much needed support to the country’s primary health care needs.

■ Centre for Applied Psychology

The Centre for Applied Psychology offers therapeutic assessments and interventions in the management of a wide range of psychological problems, including depression, anxiety, vocational concerns, trauma debriefing, relationship and marital difficulties. Activities target individual clients, groups, communities, and/or organisations.

■ WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Development

During the 1990s, the World Health Organisation identified the School of Nursing as a centre of excellence with the mandate to develop undergraduate nursing and midwifery education and nursing research. In this regard, the School of Nursing has a series of ongoing activities which include: participation in promoting the integration of adolescent health in nursing and midwifery curricula, the development of guidelines on the concept of professional competency, the development of guidelines for pre-registration nursing and midwifery education in Africa.

3.4 Community education

Community education is an important facet of the University's outreach programmes and is practised in a variety of subjects including maths, languages and health care.

■ Mathematics extension programme

Managed by the Department of Mathematical Sciences, high school learners who enjoy maths can explore the subject beyond the high school syllabus in a community of maths enthusiasts. The programme also provides valuable learning tools in preparation for the annual Maths Olympiad.

■ Little Elephant Training Centre for Early Education

Little Elephant Training Centre for Early Education (LETCEE) is a non-governmental organisation based in Greytown that works in the field of Early Childhood Development (ECD). It runs a pre-school, trains ECD educators and is part of a provincial programme that links ECD and community development in rural areas.

■ English language courses

Led by the School of Language, Literature and Linguistics (Applied Language Studies), The Language Centre was established in order to respond to the need for English language improvement for international students on campus. It has since expanded to include courses on Business English for non-English speakers in the workplace, and other language courses such as German and Zulu. It also offers translation and consultation services on language issues to the general public.

■ Teaching of creative writing in Westville Prison

This project involves members of English Studies teaching creative writing in Westville Prison to selected Medium B, juvenile, and women prisoners in conjunction with the Poetry Africa (poetry workshops) and Time of the Writer (prose fiction workshops) Festivals.

Never forget that the purpose for which a man lives is the improvement of the man himself, so that he may go out of this world having, in his great sphere or his small one, done some little good for his fellow creatures and laboured a little to diminish the sin and sorrow that are in the world.

–W.E. Gladstone

Learn with Echo

Every week more than 250 000 people in Pietermaritzburg and surrounding areas are beneficiaries of a newspaper literacy project aimed at encouraging different generations to read and share their skills and experience. “Learn with Echo” is a project of the Centre for Adult Education (CAE), based at the School of Education, Training and Development, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

About 50 000 copies of “Learn with Echo” are distributed through *Echo* – a weekly supplement published by *The Witness* newspaper. *Echo* is also available freely in shops, restaurants, community centres and libraries in the Midlands. Some 3 000 copies are sent directly to people on the CAE database. “Learn with Echo” is published throughout the year.



LEARNING WITH ECHO: Adult learners from KwaQanda in Pietermaritzburg engage with health issues in *Learn with Echo*.

Produced weekly, it consists of four pages of learning material aimed at adults. Project Co-ordinator Sandra Land said that the aim of the supplement is to help people with little education, “make their voices heard”.

Land said: “A central focus for the supplement during recent years has been education for democracy.” This includes voter education and information about the systems and structures of government.

According to Land, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are used as a starting point to examine issues confronting ordinary people in daily life. The information aims to inform people about important political developments, and to stimulate critical appreciation of public services. The supplement also aims at empowering readers in making their voices heard and publicises practical ways in which people can take the initiative in improving the quality of life in their own communities.

“Learn with Echo” also features “human interest” stories from everyday life, health education (particularly HIV/AIDS), current affairs, life skills and writing from adult learners in literacy groups. Echo staff work regularly with other organisations that are active in the region, often producing articles on current topics. These links are vital in gaining information and making the supplement a resource that serves the needs of many.

Zanele Buthelezi, the materials’ developer, said: “Learn with Echo has a huge positive impact on our communities.” Buthelezi emphasised that although developing English literacy amongst readers is an important goal of the project, “recognising the importance of mother tongue literacy, and recognising and supporting Zulu as a language of learning remains a key value”.

“Learn with Echo” also provides entertainment, in the form of the ever popular Mkhize stories. Mkhize is a character who appears in a four-frame picture story, in the comic tradition. The text is bilingual (isiZulu and English) and the dual language approach means that the material can be used in several different ways and at different levels in the ABET situation.

The picture story is always accompanied by a language activity. Mkhize has almost attained

the status of a folk hero in the Midlands. His hilarious, over-the-top exploits are legendary. “I just draw Mkhize like a real person,” said the artist behind Mkhize, Kathy Arbuckle. Arbuckle also develops the material that complements Mkhize. “We believe that Mkhize really encourages the practice of reading for enjoyment, and that many people who read nothing else make a point of reading the Mkhize story each week,” she said.

Three books of collected Mkhize stories have been published. The first two, *UMkhize wase Mgungundlovu* (Mkhize of Maritzburg) and *UMkhize namaselula* (Mkhize and the cell phones) are available from CAE.

“Learn with Echo” was the brainchild of the former Director of CAE Professor John Aitchison who had a vision of families and friends sitting together in their homes reading an educational newspaper.

Aitchison shared his ideas and found support from Khaba Mkhize, a former editor of *The Witness/Echo*. A partnership was formed between CAE, *The Witness/Echo* supplement, and Thembaletu Community Education Centre. The first edition appeared in September, 1990.

In 1999 “Learn with Echo” received the provincial and national Adult Learners’ Week awards for the ABET Author/Publisher category.

The Finland Embassy sponsors “Learn with Echo” to the tune of R300 000. The Witness Newspaper and Printing Company provides printing and distribution at no cost.

Projects *Siyagijima* and *Dudlu Ntombi*



Siyagijima - children in action performing dance and drama



Dudlu Ntombi - township girls involved in drama and dance

Siyagijima or “we are moving” is a contemporary dance project initiated by the Flatfoot Dance Company which is based in the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s, Drama and Performance Studies Programme. Partially under the artistic direction of Lliane Loots, *Siyagijima* uses drama and dance to develop children and young adults from KwaMashu, inspiring them to broaden their horizons. The project uses dance education to instil confidence and a sense of purpose. The venture, which has been running for over three years, benefits KwaMashu youth between the ages of six and 18 years.

Also directed by the Department of Drama And Performance Studies, Project *Dudlu Ntombi* works with young girls in the township of KwaMashu. A spin-off of *Siyagijima*, the project uses drama and dance to facilitate

exchange, learning and dialogue around the rights of the girl-child.

Dudlu Ntombi is a traditional Zulu compliment paid to young girls who possess inner beauty, strength and are deserving of respect by members of their community.

Other issues which are explored include sexuality and HIV/AIDS. The project currently involves 65 girls ranging in age from six to 17 years. The project is facilitated by dancers and teachers from the Flatfoot Dance Company.

Siyagijima is directed by company member Sphelele Nzama and was initiated in 2002 when the family and friends of two of the Flatfoot Dance Company dancers from KwaMashu went to watch them perform. The dancers were so enthusiastic about what they had seen that they

prompted the company to start this energetic and promise-filled project. Loots said: “The skills that these kids learn could one day help them to perform professionally within the Flatfoot Dance Company. Meanwhile, it provides something concrete for them to do. It creates within them a dedication and an awareness of time commitments, the ability to concentrate and enough confidence to allow them to speak-up.”

According to Loots, the participants of *Siyagijima* were enthusiastic and approached the dance classes voraciously. Initially the facilitators noticed the girls often hung back, afraid to take the limelight. After establishing a rapport with the girls, they discovered that many had experienced incidents of abuse. This prompted the facilitators to develop a project aimed exclusively at girls, which would aim to teach them about their rights and needs.

Loots remarked: “*Dudlu Ntombi* uses dance and drama as a methodology to teach girls about sensitive issues which they are uncomfortable with. This includes HIV/AIDS and virginity testing. It is a rare opportunity for them to be aware of themselves, and to speak out about issues directly related to them.”

The boys who attended *Siyagijima* soon became envious of the girls who attended *Dudlu Ntombi*. It has become apparent that a similar project exclusively for boys should be set up as they have also come forward with a host of extraordinary questions. Loots said they ask questions like, “What does it mean to rape?” and “How do you catch AIDS?” According to

Loots, it stands to reason that the boys need a space of their own, where issues like these can be addressed. This would serve as an invaluable and immeasurable contribution to the community in the long term.

Whilst *Siyagijima* is self-funded, the Flatfoot Dance Company does receive funding from the National Arts Council and the Arts and Culture Trust. *Dudlu Ntombi* is funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy to the tune of R80 000 for a one-year pilot project. Occasionally students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Drama and Performance Studies Programme give performances for the beneficiaries of these projects. The teachers, including Loots, are professional dancers from the Flatfoot Dance Company.

“We hope the girls educate one another; we want them to be empowered and hope that eventually they will be able to run similar projects, creating a ripple effect. This will take a long time as the girls are rather traumatized,” said Loots.

The *Siyagijima* project involves approximately 100 young adults. There are no fees, and the only stipulation is that participants need to commit to attending every class. The project has had an impact on the community as a whole, according to Loots. “At first, when the kids had performances, no parents came. Three years down the line the Sports Hall in KwaMashu is packed. More kids arrive all the time and are willing to make a commitment to dance and their future.”

■ Sweet Willow cricket

This capacity-building project focuses on three areas of development: the training of scorers, umpires and coaches; coaching of learners and, the event management of school cricket games in the Black African areas of Sweetwaters and Willowfontain. The programme is ideal for quick mass participation and is the first introduction for many to the world of organised sport.



Above and Left: Sweet Willow Cricket Development in Sweetwaters and Willowfontain townships.

*If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain.
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest gain,
I shall not live in vain.*

–Emily Dickinson

■ Chemistry practical demonstrations for schools

This programme serves to teach the Grade 11 and 12 Inorganic Chemistry syllabus to students from schools in and around the Durban area where a severe lack of laboratory facilities prevail. Schools visit the Department and learners are given a detailed demonstration of their practical Inorganic syllabus. A set of notes with general information and basic questions based on the sections covered, compiled by academic staff in the Department, are distributed to the teachers concerned.

■ Jula maths and science educator development project

The Jula Project was a major three-year development plan funded by the Carnegie Corporation through the University's Development Foundation. The project included the running of

six vacation institutes for 300 to 400 educators. The project promoted a unique diagnostic approach which aimed to provide educators with the skills to understand why problems arise in learning particular mathematical and scientific concepts. The project was dubbed *Jula* which is an isiZulu word meaning "to go deeper", which is exactly what the project encouraged educators to do.

Anticipate charity by preventing poverty: assist the reduced fellow man, either by a considerable gift or a sum of money or by teaching him a trade or by putting him in the way of business so that he may earn an honest livelihood and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding out his hand for charity. This is the highest step and summit of charity's golden ladder.

–Maimonides

Women's Handbook



HOLDING ON: Pioneers of the Women's Handbook are seen with some beneficiaries. They hope to raise more awareness when they launch the second edition of the book soon.

The Centre for Adult Education (CAE) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Pietermaritzburg campus has championed an innovative community service – *The Women's Handbook*.

Produced by the Centre for Adult Education, together with the Midland's Women's Group and their National Commission on Gender Equality, the handbook is intended for use by women living in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and includes information about rights and services.

The handbook was created using a participatory process, with workshops being held initially "to identify issues of concern to women which they

wished to have included in the handbook," recalled Anne Harley, the research and development co-ordinator of the CAE. "The development of the handbook involved a large team of workshop facilitators, fieldworkers, researchers, writers, editors, illustrators and layout specialists".

First launched in 1998, the handbook was the winner of the former University of Natal's Book Prize in 2000. More than 1 000 English and 10 000 isiZulu copies were printed and distributed free of charge to women in the Midlands. It was written at a level that would allow a woman with seven years of formal education to be able to read it.

According to the Acting Co-ordinator of the Midlands Women's Group Thobekile Maphumulo: "The handbook provides practical information for addressing key issues and problems identified by women. It contains general information, information on women's rights, the facilities available to them, and the contact details of officials and local representatives who have a responsibility to ensure that their rights are upheld."

"The handbook takes seriously the proposition that rights are empty unless people have knowledge of them and the capacity to claim them," emphasised Harley.

"Many women were not certain of their new rights; and if they were, they often did not know how to go about claiming them. The project partners thus believed that there was a great need for such information to be disseminated to women at a local level," added Harley.

Through financial help from the Swedish International Development Agency, the first book saw the light of day. And through funding from the Mott Foundation, evaluation workshops to determine the usefulness of the handbook and its impact on improving the lot of women, were held.

In May 2002, the CAE and the Midlands Women's Group conducted an impact assessment through a series of focus groups with women all over the area, to ascertain if they had accessed the handbook and used it. Evidence suggested that women had used the handbook for a range of activities, including accessing the child support grant and social pension, amongst others.

The revised edition (to be published in November) is an expanded version of the earlier handbook. Maphumulo said it became necessary to revise the handbook because of the developmental changes in local government and legislative policies affecting women. The revised handbook includes information on integrated development plans, anti-retroviral drugs, talking about sex with teenagers, agriculture, and issues of school governance.

The revision process is funded by the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation, Office of the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, the Richmond Local Council and the European Union's Foundation for Human Rights.

3.5 Food security

Ford Foundation food security project



Doctoral student Mangani Katundu, Dr Sheryl Hendriks (Katundu's supervisor), Siphon Zungu (assistant) and Malusi Ramashala (MScAgric student)

This transdisciplinary project, under the auspices of the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness, aims to assist small-holder farmers to gain organic certification in South Africa. This is done with a view to assisting these farmers in making strategic farm and market decisions about farm profitability, expanded and diversified production, collective action and institutional arrangements, organic supply chain management, new product markets, agronomic production potential and alternative markets.

The Ford Foundation is funding the transdisciplinary, participatory action research project that seeks to explore the potential for transition into certified organic small holder production.

Together with participating farmers, the project investigates the potential for food security and sustainable livelihoods from profitable marketing of organic products and facilitating exploration of the agro-ecological potential.

The investigation of production and marketing of organic crops also requires input from experts from a variety of traditional disciplines and the knowledge and experience of smallholders themselves. Staff members have described the interaction afforded by the project as invaluable. The grant is said to have strengthened trans-disciplinary food security research and collaboration at the University.

A key element of this project is co-researching with farmers to investigate problems identified



Mrs Mirriam Mkhize inspects her Amadumbe garden in Embo in Umbumbulu. She is a member of Ezemvelo Farmers' Organisation

by farmers. While it is proposed that organic agriculture is akin to traditional African agricultural practices, it is not known if small-scale farmers are able to comply fully with organic certification requirements and demands in both production and marketing.

Seven international student scholarships are funded through the project, which started in February 2004 and runs until August 2005.

The largest part of the project is based at the village of Embo in Umbumbulu with the Ezemvelo Farmer's Organisation members who are the first group of smallholder farmers to gain organic certification in South Africa. The project builds on research initiated by the University's Dr Albert Modi, a project team member, who was instrumental in the establishment of the Ezemvelo Farmer's Organisation (EFO) and its certification as organic producers. Mr T. Mabhida (a founder member of Ezemvelo Farmers Organisation)

and Mrs Mirriam Mkhize acknowledged the role Dr Modi has played in establishing a trading relationship and an opportunity to sell their produce. Both farmers agreed that they cannot use pesticides and chemical fertilizers. To feed the soil they can only use manure and compost. They are aware that if they ignored this, the value of their produce would be lowered and as a result it would no longer be considered for organic market.

Also in the field of food security, Masters candidate, Nathan Phiri, is investigating the agronomic potential and seed quality of three species of wild mustard.

Zephania Moyo is doing a PhD study looking at the quality of a Zulu potato produced by the Ezemvelo Farmers' Organisation. Normally seed producers get nuclear seed from a breeder every three years. He wants to find out if the quality of the seed deteriorates with the number of times it is recycled. Talking to the farmers,



Mangani Katundu, Sipho Zungu and Malusi Ramashala sorting potatoes at Embo in Umbumbulu (south of Durban)

he says, he discovered that they have used the seed for over 50 years. Some cannot even remember how the seed was acquired as they took over from their parents.

Lynn Stefano and six volunteers from Ezemvelo Farmers' Organisation are investigating the organisation's agricultural knowledge and information system, with the aim of improving the system to meet farmers' need for new information.

Doctoral student Mangani Katundu is investigating whether sequential harvesting affects the quality of organic potatoes and influences the income potential for members of Ezemvelo Farmers' Organisation. Working with a co-research team of organic farmers, Katundu is sorting potatoes, evaluating the quality and recording results from fortnightly inspections of the traditional storage facility on one of the three farms included in the project.

Other students conducting research on farm profitability, institutional arrangements and

alternatives in the organic market chain include Maggi Lwayo, Lawrence Gadzikwa, and Tinashe Mushayanyama (respectively) whose interactions with the farmers will begin in October this year as they begin the field work for their studies.

Staff member Joyce Thamaga-Chitja's PhD project will include two additional farmer's groups at Muden and Centocow later this year with an active exploration of production constraints and investigation of alternative crops for commercialisation.

While farmers are currently generating incomes from organic production, a survey will be conducted among 200 household members of the Ezemvelo Farmers Organisation to examine whether these households are more food secure, their farming profitable and whether the income generated through their activities can spur local economic growth. Participants will be randomly selected from the tribal wards.

■ Value-adding through processing of agricultural products and subsequent marketing

Through this project the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness assists small business development through the marketing of agricultural products in the informal market. This entails selecting farmer groups serviced by the Department of Agriculture, investigating and developing the quality of their products, identifying management and marketing strategies and linking production groups to potential markets.

3.6 Land tenure – democratisation

■ Institutional innovations to improve equity-sharing under privatisation and farm restructuring

The relative success of farm worker equity-sharing schemes (FWES) in the Western Cape Province prompted the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness to conduct in-depth case studies of these joint ventures aimed at identifying “best institutional practices” for land reform projects involving co-ownership. Now approaching the end of its third and final year, this research project – sponsored by the USA Agency for International Development – adapted and applied best practice to two experimental projects in KwaZulu-Natal. Since then, the experimental projects have been instrumental in establishing precedents and procedures for equity-sharing schemes in the province.

Don't waste life in doubts and fears; spend yourself on the work before you, well assured that the right performance of this hour's duties will be the best preparation for the hours and ages that will follow it.

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

3.7 Conservation

■ Expert advice to Ethekwini Municipality

Managed by the School of Biological and Conservation Sciences, this project aims to contribute scientific information on the sustainable management of estuaries in the Ethekwini municipality. This currently includes aspects of development and rehabilitation of systems that have been heavily affected by sewage discharges, freshwater impoundments/abstractions and flood plain encroachment.

■ Ongoye resource use

Run by the School of Ecology and Conservation, the broad objectives of the study are to establish the current levels of use of natural resources from the Ongoye Forest Reserve, and what the future trends in this use will be; to determine the resilience of the resource base to this use and whether the harvesting levels are sustainable; to determine the importance of natural products to the local economy; and to assist the development of community-based environmental management policies aimed at social and environmental sustainability.

■ KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute

Led by the School of Animal and Poultry Science, the KZN Poultry Institute is an organisation that assists poultry farmers with their veterinary concerns, the training of prospective poultry managers and with poultry research. The emphasis of this project is on training and as such, a management school has been constructed on the University research farm, consisting of hands-on training facilities and accommodation for 20 students.

■ **Wildlands Trust: exploring alternative livelihoods**

Directed by the School of Education and Training, various options for land use are explored through action research committees in Maputoland. This process has subsequently resulted in the establishment of two community conservation areas as well as partnerships with other organisations interested in conservation.

■ **Ancient olympia and the Olympic Games**

Spearheaded by the School of Language, Culture and Communication, the aim of this project was to develop interest in the community at large in the nature of the ancient Olympic Games and in various facets of ancient Greek culture. Illustrated lectures were made available to interested groups and talks were given to various schools and other organisations in the Pietermaritzburg area (e.g. the Minerva Club).

3.8 Individual volunteerism

■ **Human resources training for radio station**

The staff at Hindvani, a community-based radio station, are voluntary workers who provide a service to the community. The success of the radio station depends on the extent to which the staff work together to accomplish the set goals of the station and to fulfil the community's demands. The School of Human Resource Management conducted team building sessions with the voluntary staff and undertook practical application sessions to facilitate effective HR relations and effective communication. Valuable conflict management techniques were also practised.

■ **Self-employed Women's Union**

Having had a longstanding relationship with this community-based organisation, the School of Development Studies became involved in the project with the aim of critically assessing the activities and achievements of the Self-employed Women's Union from inception in 1994 to date. The community that currently benefits from this association includes largely African, self-employed women in the informal economy.

3.9 Partnerships in industry

Vibration research and testing centre



TESTING: (L to R) Roshan Ramseook, Pravesh Moodley (VRTC co-ordinator) and Sipiwe Ndzoyiya perform some tests at the VRTC, the only testing centre of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere

The University of KwaZulu-Natal in co-operation with ESKOM and the National Research Foundation (NRF) through THRIP (Technology and Human Resources For Industry Programme) has developed an industry-focused programme for mechanical engineers in the field of transmission conductor mechanical oscillations. The programme in the Vibration Research and Testing Centre (VRTC) has been designed in conjunction with ESKOM to ensure that there is a balance between academia and industry interests.

The Centre, which is located on the Westville campus of the University, is a current hive of research activity into the minimisation of

mechanical oscillation – this can solve the transmission riddle that has eluded scientists for many years.

Housed in a 95-metre long building, the Centre is one of only four in the world and the only such facility in the Southern Hemisphere. “The main objective of the VRTC is to create regional capacity building in vibration technology, through research, postgraduate training and professional development programmes,” said the UKZN’s Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Professor Nelson Ijumba.

A second-year Mechanical Engineering masters student, Sipiwe Ndzoyiya (26) of Chesterville

Township, West of Durban, explains that mechanical oscillation occurs when wind-induced conductors vibrate up and down at small amplitudes. This unwarranted vibration reduces the life span of conductors from 50 years to 10. This costs Eskom millions of rands every year, thereby pushing up the cost of producing energy.

Eskom currently has more than 3,6 billion worth of conductors installed on its overhead transmission network. Ndzoyiya's research project, "Optimal placement of spacer dampers on transmission lines", aims to formulate a mathematical model in order to get the right positioning of spacer dampers.

"The result of this project, if successful, will improve service delivery and reduce the cost of maintaining transmission lines," said Ndzoyiya.

On the importance of the VRTC, he said: "The practical component of my research will not be possible without the vibration centre."

Another student, first-year Mechanical Engineering masters student Roshan Ramseook (26) of Mauritius, believes that more students must be encouraged to get involved in vibration research and testing. Ramseook will soon join Ndzoyiya at the Centre to conduct tests on damper performance criteria. His research project looks at the damper characteristics in order to develop damper performance standards.

Speaking at the Centre's official opening earlier this year, Jacob Maroga, the managing director of Eskom Transmission, said: "Eskom remains committed to supporting academic institutions and sees the need for industry and academia to

work together towards building a highly skilled nation. It is also committed to assisting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) through acting as a catalyst for delivering cross-border physical infrastructure." Maroga said Eskom's partnership with the University aims to meet the intellectual capacity needs of industry and, "is not charity".

Part of this infrastructure will be the development of transmission line ties into Africa. The skills needed for this development are in the field of conductor mechanical oscillations.

The Centre also has a large role to play in the manufacturing sector. Manufacturers of vibration control devices have no local means of testing and researching new and improved products. The programme that has been developed is very practical in nature and offers mechanical engineers a unique opportunity to fulfil industry needs.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal in co-operation with Eskom and the National Research Foundation (NRF) will work together to develop an industry-focused masters programme for mechanical engineers in the field of transmission conductor mechanical oscillations.

The interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba, commented that the University was privileged to be the custodian of the VRTC because "it will enhance the country's capacity for service delivery and contribute towards economic upliftment and development throughout the African region".

■ **School bus hoist for disabled students**

The R P Moodley School in Clare Estate caters for pupils with disabilities. Getting the pupils on and off buses at home and at the school is problematic. A project is being carried out to design a hoist for the school buses to facilitate easy access to and from the buses. A practical system has been designed and built. Funds are now being sought to investigate building the system with lighter materials, and to improve on the electronics.

■ **Egumatane village/school project**

Handled by Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies, the aim of the project has been to help with infrastructural improvements to the village of Egumatane in southern KwaZulu-Natal. The project raised a large grant from the government of Ireland with which a primary school has been constructed. The aim of the project is to ensure the smooth running of this school as well as to seek to improve and/or introduce other facilities for this village

3.10 Energy usage

■ **Renewable energy projects**

A number of projects have been conducted in rural areas of the province, where photovoltaic panels to generate electricity have been installed. Some of these areas include Mkuze, Port Shepstone, Maphephetheni, Durban and the Midlands. Impact assessments on development and lifestyle changes have been conducted on a variety of energy technologies: PV panels, solar water heaters, solar crop drying, solar cookers, biogas methane systems on domestic and community situations, as well as basic energy audits and energy usage comparisons within communities. This project has accentuated the roles of gender and economic development.

3.11 Ethics

■ **South African Research Ethics Training Initiative (SARETI)**

SARETI – the South African Research Ethics Training Initiative – is a research ethics training programme funded by a grant from the Fogarty International Center and the USA National Institutes of Health. SARETI provides masters-level training in research ethics and non-degree training for members of African Research Ethics Committees, researchers and other stakeholders. The SARETI curriculum is multi-disciplinary, combining skills and resources from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the University of Pretoria. SARETI aims to provide world-class training in research ethics relevant to the health and research needs of the African continent, and will promote and foster African scholarship in research ethics.

■ **Ethekwini policy responses to the informal economy**

The School of Development Studies has a long-standing relationship with the eThekweni Municipality. In 2000, Professor Francie Lund and Ms Caroline Skinner assisted the city in developing an informal economy policy. Since then Ms Skinner has assisted the municipality in implementing this policy. In June 2004, she contributed the informal economy chapter to the city's five-year economic development strategy.

*Never mistake knowledge for wisdom.
One helps you make a living:
the other helps you make a life
– Sandra Carey*

3.12 Law

■ Campus Law Clinics

The Campus Law Clinics aim to achieve the following: Increasing access to justice through outreach programmes aimed at providing free legal services to indigent persons and communities; increasing access to the profession; training law students in the clinical method and; advocating in the interest of the public.

■ Street Law: South Africa/Centre for Socio-legal Studies(CSLS)

This project teaches school children, school teachers, prisoners, trade unions, community groups about law, human rights, democracy and HIV/AIDS and the law.

■ Phoenix working committee and Phoenix community centre

These projects are involved in supporting and empowering community members in tackling their civic problems, assisting with applications for welfare services, participation in civic decision-making, and self-help and income-generating projects. The University's outreach involvement takes the form of legal advice, community education on issues of relevance, and facilitating and developing community structures.