



SOL PLAATJE  
UNIVERSITY

NOV 2020

# e-BRIEF



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MESSAGES FROM  
**HEADS OF  
SCHOOLS**



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Contributions, comments and suggestions are welcome and these can be sent to [mosima.mehlape@spu.ac.za](mailto:mosima.mehlape@spu.ac.za).

The next edition is due out in February 2021.

Editor: Mosima Mehlape

SOL PLAATJE  
UNIVERSITY

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY



I did not expect to begin my tenure at SPU in the midst of a national lockdown or to have the agenda of my first eight months dictated by a global crisis. I have however endeavoured to keep my eye on my main objectives as articulated to Council and during my public presentations in the last two months.

By necessity, we had to move at a slower pace than what I wanted; while steering the University on the right course during this crisis. I have been successful in achieving both outcomes of concluding the academic year within the 2020 calendar year, and at the same time keeping the campus as safe as possible. I could not have done this without the full support of the Senior Management Team and the rest of the University community.

*SPU stands out as one of a handful  
of institutions in the higher  
education sector that have  
managed this very difficult year  
with a reasonable degree of success.*

I want to applaud you, both our students and staff, for your commitment and consistent efforts to complete the academic year in 2020.

We were catapulted into the online teaching and learning realm, and some found the move challenging and often frustrating. However, you did not give up. With grit and determination, you forged on and we are therefore almost at the end of this long journey. What you have achieved in this year has forever changed our perceptions about what we can do and what we will do in the future.

It has also become apparent that our students have adapted well to the online learning environment and have found ways to be self-motivated and self-directed. The results from the mid-year assessments were encouraging and show that students are engaging with the work in their own and meaningful ways. I look forward to seeing much the same, or even better results, in the end-of-year assessments.

As we near the end of this year we are also planning for the next year. There are still many uncertainties as we move into 2021, but with hindsight comes better foresight. We know that our plans for 2021 have to be flexible because of the uncertainty around the trajectory of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We must therefore recognise that flexibility in uncertain times will become the norm rather than the exception.

**I ONCE AGAIN THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR RESILIENCE IN 2020 AND  
WISH YOU ALL A SAFE, HEALTHY  
AND PEACEFUL BREAK IN  
DECEMBER. I LOOK FORWARD  
TO WELCOMING YOU BACK IN  
JANUARY 2021.**

## REFLECTIONS: THE ADVENT OF THE PWP2020

A key role of the Student Affairs department is to support students' academic success by providing support to students to ensure that they excel academically and that they thrive as individuals at SPU.

As the novel coronavirus forced universities to pivot from a traditional on-campus experience to a modality of remote learning, the Student Affairs department had to reimagine and reconfigure how to continue supporting students in ways that still met the needs of students.

A major innovation that took place in the Student Affairs department during the national lockdown was the advent of the Psychosocial Wellness Programme 2020 (PWP2020). This programme was developed to effectively respond to student's psychosocial needs and their experiences through support from trained mentors.

The initiative provides structured support that enables students to become resilient, independent, self-directed and interdependent.

The aim of the PWP2020 is to provide psychosocial and wellbeing support through personalised communication, peer support within a specified group, awareness raising of available resources and support, and to refer students to the appropriate place where they can get the right support.

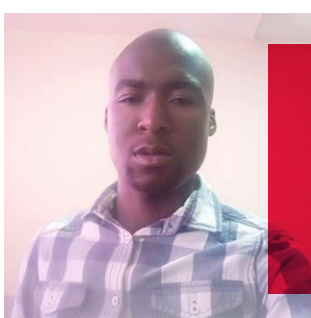
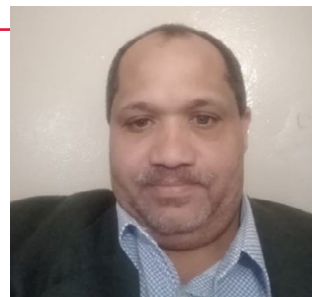
Today, months after the COVID-19 crisis began – this programme, amongst other departmental initiatives, is charting a path forward in making changes that enhance the SPU student's learning experience.

**We asked PWP2020 mentors and student recipients to reflect and share their experiences of this programme. This is what they had to say:**

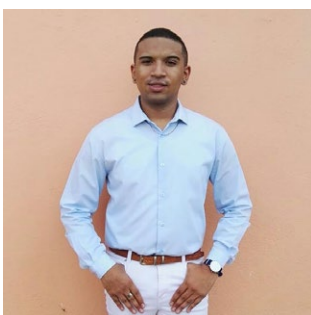


"SPU cares about the psychosocial wellness and welfare of students. The PWP2020 deals with student's psychosocial wellbeing that enable them to succeed in their studies at SPU. Attention is given to students as far as their psychosocial needs are concerned. I have met many mentees in the sessions and it is just incredible. I have taught in many universities and not even one has a unique programme like this. SPU students you are the luckiest." **Mr Nyawo Gummy Gumede** - PWP2020 Mentor

"I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to have been part of a support mechanism aimed to address students wellbeing. Just checking up and being able to address or refer some of their challenges has been very rewarding during this time of uncertainty. As a recent graduate myself, I vowed to fully support the programme by assisting where I could to ensure that the programme is completed successfully. I will continue to advocate for the continuation of the programme and hope to do more to ensure that every student eventually participates in the programme." **Mr Nolan van der Merwe** - PWP2020 Mentor



"The 2020 academic year came into a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Drained and ready to despair, the PWP2020 came to my rescue. The module offered me a remedy for my own psychosocial wellbeing. Emotionally, physically, socially, intellectually and spiritually I benefited from its curative remedies. I am now a positive, confident and holistic being thanks to the PWP2020 module. Thank you SPU for showing courtesy in this manner." **Sydney Sikhumbuzo Ngobeni** - First-year BEd student



"Speaking from a third-year Education student's perspective, when online education was implemented I felt pressured because we were bombarded with new resources that we had to adapt to. The programme developed a platform that showed us the importance of wellbeing. There is a quote that goes "When days are dark friends are few" however with the PWP2020 programme this quote is not applicable because the mentors in this programme reach out to you as an individual when it feels as though you fighting a losing battle. This programme has affirmed that indeed "A person is a person through other persons" (UBUNTU). Thank you so much to everyone who plays a role in this programme. #United we shall stand." **Jayden Austen Prinsloo** - Third-year BEd student

"I have always been closed in and not open to having someone to rely on because I was so used to being "strong", but my experience with the programme has been incredible. It has been an eye-opening journey. I learnt to admit when I need help and that there are multiple tools that I can use to navigate not only my academics, but also my social, mental and physical health. I am grateful for the programme and hopeful that this is only the start of great things for the university." **Gugulethu Angel Mbinga** - Second-year BEd student





## 2020 WAS A MESS BUT...

The best stories in life are like a string of pearls. For each life event the story is polished and lovely to behold.

However, it is the string of events carefully joined together that gives the whole story meaning and purpose. When apart, the pearls are lovely, but threaded together they become more.

This is how we look back at 2020. COVID-19 is merely a pearl scattered from others that may have bought about with it other pearls. But when these are polished and are strung together, they embellish 2020.

2020 was a mess. We were challenged, life had to change. What

we had planned for the year had to change.

In this piece we admit to 2020 being a difficult year but even with this, we took something away from it.

We challenged the SPU community to follow suit and confess to 2020 being a mess but instead of focusing on the negative, forced them to find one or two (or more) positives that they will close off the year with by asking them to finish off the sentence "Twenty-twenty was a mess but..."

# 2020 WAS A MESS BUT...

**2020 was a mess but** 2021 will be an excellent year because we're looking forward to only great things to come in the new year.  
**Clint Adams**  
- Senior Manager: Financial Operations

**2020 was a mess but** family were brought together and joined as one. If you haven't learnt anything from 2020 then you will struggle to face obstacles in life.  
**Thuso Masitwe** - Security

**2020 was a mess but** it provided us with a lot of learning opportunities; it forced us to learn new technology as we had to work remotely. We had to learn to be comfortable with online tools.  
**Emmunuel Mandlankosi Sithole**  
- Librarian Cataloguing Metadata

**2020 was a mess but** we survived. No one in my family was infected with COVID-19 therefore God is great. We now pray for a prosperous year ahead.  
**Evelyn Senge** - Cleaner

**2020 was a mess but** it taught us great ways of engaging with technology which would have taken us years and years to adapt to. We were propelled into new technology that is really working great for us now.  
**Dr Foreman Bandama** - Lecturer: Archaeology

**2020 was a mess but** great things happen in messes, it all depends on your perspective. How do you look at 2020? Sometimes storms come to clear out the path so that great things can blossom.  
**Didimalang Ratikoane**  
- Officer: Project Accounting

**2020 was a mess but** I learnt a lot about myself and learnt that I could handle pressure that came with online learning whilst keeping up with my schoolwork.  
**Velile Simon Motlhabeng**  
- ICT student

**2020 was a mess but** it taught us a lot with regards to our finances and spending money wisely. We also learnt the value of looking after one another and spent time with our families. It taught us a lot irrespective of the damage it caused.  
**Tsebo Mohuludi** - BA student

**2020 was a mess but** we learnt a lot. We learnt that the impossible is possible. We learnt a lot about technology and that it's quite simple to learn and teach online. Students also realised what they're capable of because they didn't think they can do it but they did it with distinctions - and excelled beyond the circumstances.  
**Dr Eleanor Addinall** - Lecturer: Psychology

It is evident from these quotes that 2020 has meaning and purpose when the adverse is strung with the favourable because apart these would have no meaning and purpose. Threaded together, we take with it a story never to be forgotten and will forever stand out as the best story of our lives.

## VICE-CHANCELLOR'S FIRST ADDRESS TO ALUMNI

On 17 September 2020, the Vice-Chancellor (VC), Professor Andrew Crouch, convened a virtual meeting with SPU alumni that graduated between 2015 and 2019.

This interactive meeting was a momentous occasion for the University as it cemented its very first engagement between the alumni and alma mater.

In his presentation titled SPU – A University for the Province, Professor Crouch emphasised that alumni play a vital role within the institution. He thus requested that they be actively involved in collaborating and partnering with their alma mater on its various initiatives.

*Apart from the University's vision and mission, its future enrolment plans and its response to COVID-19,*

——— *Professor Crouch shared details about* ———  
*the University's alignment to the Africa Agenda 2063 and the National Development Plan 2030.*

He committed himself to forging SPU into a 21st century institution that not only leads the way in humanizing higher education but to also be an institution that prepares graduates for the Fourth Industrial Revolution through learning that is flexible, completed through short courses and programmes that are market relevant.

**The VC also shared exciting news about upcoming projects that the University will implement and attendees were given a platform to engage with the VC during a question and answer session.**



## DR TENDAI MUSVUUGWA GUEST SPEAKER AT INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR WOMEN IN ECOLOGY

Professor Joel Ralston from Saint Mary's College in the United States of America, hosts an annual webinar series titled Women in Ecology.

This webinar features female lecturers from around the globe who work in various sectors of ecology that come together with the key purpose of sharing diverse perspectives on ecology.

Dr Tendai Musvuugwa was selected as one of 14 guest speakers to present at this esteemed international event. Dr Musvuugwa's presentation titled "Biodiversity and ecology of Ophiostomatoid fungi in the Cape Floristic Region" took place on 28 September 2020.

The presentation focused on an important group of micro fungi (Ophiostomatoid fungi) which in some cases have been responsible for well-known deadly diseases on trees. Although this group of fungi has been widely studied in the northern hemisphere, the same has not been studied in the southern hemisphere, including South Africa. Her presentation thus focused on the diversity of this fungi and its ecology in a South African biodiversity hotspot, the Cape Floristic Region.



**Highlights of this research include the discovery, description and naming of a new fungal species belonging to this group from the Cape Floristic Region as well as highlighting those species, which were found to be pathogenic to some of South Africa's indigenous trees.**



"This is a great honour for Dr Musvuugwa and the department of Biological and Agricultural Sciences is proud to have her be invited as a guest speaker at this international forum for women in ecology," said head of department Dr Doug Harebottle.

## FORMER SRC PRESIDENT APPOINTED AS DEPUTY CHEF DE MISSIONS

The former SPU SRC President, Mr Thabo Moilwa, was appointed by University Sports South Africa (USSA) as the Deputy Chef de Missions of the South African delegation that will represent the country at the 31st World University Summer Games to be held in Chengdu, China in August 2021.

In a brief sit down with Mr Moilwa, he defined the term 'Deputy Chef de Missions' and said that "The term simply means a Deputy Head of delegation who is responsible for overseeing the team's travel logistics and sits on the disciplinary and events committees of team South Africa. I also coordinate the medical team."

*"My dream is to see Sol Plaatje University  
being represented at the Olympic Games  
by our student athletes soon.*

*Construction on our sports ground  
will soon be completed and hopefully this will  
attract top student athletes," said Mr Moilwa.*

Currently preparations for the competition have halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic however Moilwa remains optimistic as he believes that an athlete does not wait to be told to train, athletes take the initiative to ensure that they remain in good health and perform at the required fitness level required for elite athletes.



**SPU WISHES MOILWA THE BEST IN  
THIS IMPORTANT ROLE WHERE HE  
WILL NOT ONLY FLY THE SOUTH  
AFRICAN FLAG HIGH BUT ALSO THAT  
OF SOL PLAATJE UNIVERSITY.**

## STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK: #SEW2020



The School of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), in partnership with the Student Affairs department, hosted its 3rd annual (and first-ever virtual) Student Entrepreneurship Week (SEW).

The virtual event took place over a three-day period in October under the theme 'AfroTech: African Entrepreneurship through Technology'. The three-day programme was well received as attendees found it to be insightful and enlightening.

### ALL ABOUT AfroTech

The programme on day 1 was entitled "All About AfroTech", featured a keynote address by Dr Malvin Nkomo of Hailer Technologies, a Pan-African on-demand mobility service. Dr Nkomo shared his views about the Internet of Things, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and the 4th Industrial Revolution which was followed by an interactive Tech-Talk with Mr Keenan Gwells, former SPU student and Chief Heart Officer of the NCDev Ecosystem.

### GET PITCHY

On day 2, students received expert advice on how to best pitch their business ideas. The programme highlighted key insights into business and the various tools and platforms they can use to help them 'stand out' from the crowd. This session was conducted by Mr Edward Matiwane of Diamond Creative Vision Hub, a non-profit organisation based in the city.

### PITCH POP-UP

The final session was the highlight of the week where five studentpreneurs were selected to do a "Pitch Pop-Up" of their business ideas. The finalists had to put all the tips they received into practice to win prize money of R10 000. The top three finalists were also sponsored with a Virtual Business Incubation Programme, courtesy of Diamond Creative Vision Hub

After an exciting round of pitches and much anticipated deliberations, the judges announced the winners for this year's Pitch Pop-Up as follows:

**1ST PLACE: JACEYL COSMETICS**  
Ms Seosenyeng Kotsi, third-year B.Ed student

**2ND PLACE: NORTHERN CAPE CARTRIDGE AND TONERS**  
Mr Borhen Coleman, second-year BCom student

**3RD PLACE: QWIKLY**  
Mr Klensch Aken Lucas, BSc Computer Science (Hons) student

# AFRO TECH

▶ **AFRICAN  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**



On behalf of the School of EMS and the Careers Office, congratulations to the winners and thank you to everyone who made #SEW2020 a success. The School looks forward to hosting you again at the #SEW2021.



## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DIALOGUE AND FUN DAY HOSTED BY THE SRC

October signals Mental Health Awareness Month during which people are provided with insight into critical issues facing individuals who might be suffering from the effects of Mental Health and on those who care for them.

To help raise awareness on such an important conversation, the 2019/20 SPU SRC hosted a Mental Health Awareness Dialogue and Fun Day on 14 October 2020 which was aimed at addressing the importance of Mental Health in the SPU Community.

Such dialogues are necessary to educate students about the effects of Mental Health and how to overcome the stigma associated with it by providing them with insight from senior staff within their own institution, who speak to them about their own personal experiences of Mental Health during their studies and in their daily lives.



**The aim of the day was to break the stigma around Mental Health and to encourage students to speak up and ask for help when they need it. Most importantly to understand that It is Okay not to be Okay.**

The event was planned to provide students with unique experiences within a relaxed environment, free from the pressures of campus life and their daily reality. The purpose of the day was for the students to enjoy themselves in an open and safe space, whereby they could express themselves freely.

Featured guest speakers included Professor Andrew Crouch, Vice Chancellor and Principal, Ms Nthabiseng Afrika, Acting Senior Manager: Student Affairs and Ms Sadie Barnett, a third-year BA student. Ms Barnett reflected on some of their personal experiences associated with mental health.

The dialogue was streamed live on Microsoft Teams to accommodate students that could not physically attend the event.



The SRC believes that students can achieve great things if they come together in building a safe environment for all attending Sol Plaatje University but, this can only be achieved through engaging in more dialogues of this kind and assisting students that are suffering from Mental Health issues.

## STUDENTS RECEIVE WORKPLACE TRAINING IN COURTS



On 2 November 2020, Higher Certificate in Legal Interpreting students commenced with Workplace Integrated Learning at the Northern Cape Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD).

This group is the first cohort of students in the Court Interpreting programme to receive workplace training.

Of the 21 students, 15 will be placed at the Kimberley Magistrate's Court and 6 at the Galeshewe Court. They will attend the training on a rotational basis on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for six weeks until 9 December 2020.

**In welcoming the cohort on their first day, Mr Lebogang Swartz from the DOJ&CD said, "As a department we are ready and excited about this programme. This is the time for you to see the real court proceedings in relation to what you have learned over the past months. Make use of this opportunity, learn as much as you can, engage your mentor and enjoy yourselves."**



The programme will enable students to integrate theoretical knowledge acquired over the past months and further learn about court operations. Students will deepen their knowledge on court processes, court discourses, modes of interpreting used in legal proceedings, court etiquette, acceptable conduct as well as engage with court interpreters and staff members to gain insight about their roles.

Professor Victor Teise, the Head of the Department of Languages in the School of Humanities, said that this is a significant milestone in the department and thanked the DOJ&CD for their contribution and assistance in making this collaboration possible.

**HE ALSO REMINDED STUDENTS THAT THEY ARE NOW UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THEREFORE MUST COMPLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S WORKPLACE POLICIES AND COVID-19 PROTOCOLS.**



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### LARGEST RETAILER IN AFRICA AWARDS MORE BURSARIES

The SPU Career Services division, a division within the Student Affairs department, is pleased to announce that Shoprite Holdings have once again invested in SPU as part of their recruitment drive by awarding three additional bursaries.

Retail Business Management student, **Sandra Muller**, and Diploma in ICT students **Obakeng Phikiso** and **Bianca Bezuidenhoudt** are recent additions to the Shoprite Holdings list of bursary recipients.

**THESE STUDENTS STOOD OUT FROM OTHER APPLICANTS AND WERE ABLE TO SECURE THEMSELVES FUNDING FROM AFRICA'S LARGEST RETAILER THAT GUARANTEES THEM EMPLOYMENT UPON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THEIR COURSE.**



◀ GO BACK



## LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Talent was the order of the day when the SPU SRC hosted its inaugural Virtual Talent Show from 28 to 31 August 2020 that aimed at showcasing and recognising students' talents.

With strict social distancing measures in place, the SRC looked for a safe yet engaging way to bring SPU students together during this time.

*"The objective behind this initiative was to host an online talent show that created an awareness of a social environment where students can showcase their talent through dancing, singing, drama and poetry," said the Secretary of the SRC Mr Tebogo Takane.*

To enter, students had to upload a video of themselves on Facebook either dancing, singing, acting, or performing a poem using the hashtag #ThisIsMyTalent to showcase their unique talent.

**FELLOW SPU STUDENTS SHOWED SUPPORT AND CAST THEIR VOTES ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2020 USING A UNIQUE LINK CREATED BY THE SRC. OVER 1200 STUDENTS VOTED OVER THE FOUR DAYS.**

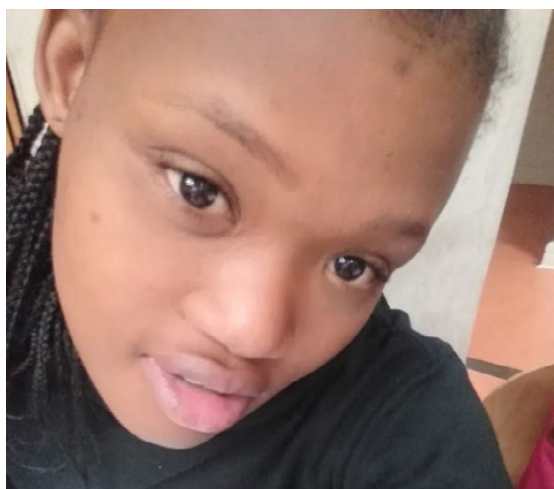
The competition was intense, and all participants put on a real show but ultimately, there could only be one winner in each category:



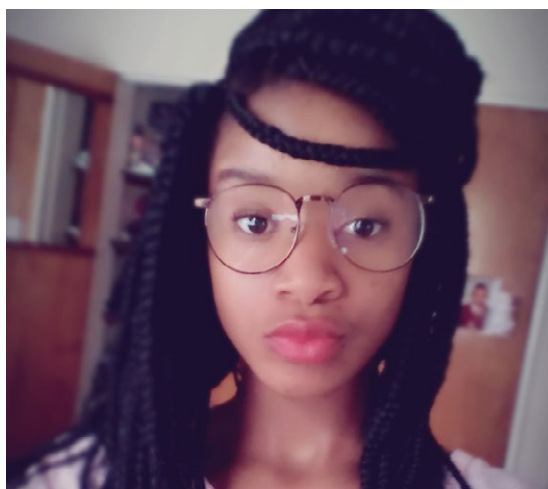
**THATO KGOMOJONG** walked away with the **best singer** title having received **111** votes. Thato is a third-year BEd student.



**VICTOR TAU**, also a third-year BEd student, received the **best dancer** award having won the hearts of **125** SPU students.



**KEAMOGETSE KEIT**, a second-year BA student, received **209** votes that won her the **best actor** title.



Third Year BA student, **Onalenna Motswadira**, was voted for **166** times for her epic poem *I'm Sorry*.

**WELL DONE TO THE FOUR WINNERS!**





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## SPECIAL FEATURE: DEFERRED HOPES AND DREAMS

Professor Karen Haire  
School of Humanities

### A reflective essay on Plaatje's dedication to Olive Ngwetsi

In a book chapter, celebrating 100 years of Plaatje's Mhudi, I recently ventured into the personal essay. Of the genre, Bonnie Friedman says, "it lets you go from scene to analysis to association and often epiphany."

The essay opens with the scene of Olive's death: 100 miles from home at the Bloemfontein railway station, denied access to a bench because of her skin colour. Plaatje's dedication to his sixteen-year-old daughter, "one of the many youthful victims of a settled system", is analyzed as paying tribute forward to next generations of youth, victims of the aftermath of that settled system (colonialism and apartheid) who even today live on deferred hopes and dreams.

The dedication continues that Olive's lifework was "accomplished at the age of 13, during the influenza epidemic." In 1918, when the Spanish flu killed a fifth of Kimberley's inhabitants, Olive, known to her family as Ngwetsi nursed eight family members back to health.

**Ngwetsi meaning daughter-in-law is associated to its Setswana origins, deriving from "moetsa" meaning "doer," that is, one who builds the family and brings life to the household.\***

Finally, I reach an epiphany of sorts, as I ponder Plaatje's gift with words, written and spoken. Researching the Dogon (hence ancient Egyptian) term, I learn that nommo \*\* (the spoken word), has a generative, creative power that carries "the energy that produces all life and influences everything from destiny to the naming of children." This generative energy, this vital life force, brings "into existence all that is seen and unseen." Thus, it can make the unseen, such as a (deferred) hope or dream into a reality. Every life, short or long, counts.



Every life, short  
or long, counts.

\* Thanks to DS Matjila for translating and elucidating the Setswana here.

\*\* Definitions of Nommo from Adisa Alkebulan, 'Nommo,' *Encyclopedia of African Religion*, <https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/africanreligion/n287.xml>

The book is entitled: *Sol Plaatje's Mhudi: history, criticism, celebration*. Sabata-mpho Mokae and Brian Willan (eds.) Johannesburg: Jacana Media (forthcoming)

# STAFF APPOINTMENTS

## ACADEMIC



### Dr Ricardo M. Peters

*Senior Lecturer: Management*

Dr Peters was born in Cape Town. He holds a Doctorate in Leadership Performance and Change from the University of Johannesburg, a Master in Business Leadership (MBL) from UNISA School of Business Leadership and a Bachelors of Commerce (B.Com) from the University of the Western Cape. Dr Peters has gained extensive experience in the private sector and academia. In 2019, he completed his term as Director of the School of Business and Finance (SBF) at the University of the Western Cape, after 10 years in the position. He has served on various committees and boards. He has a finance background and over the years has transitioned into entrepreneurial and management studies. He has been involved in various exchange programmes and has taught entrepreneurship at JIBS International Business School in Sweden to more than 29 nationalities on the Linnaeus-Palme partnership and been involved with entrepreneurship projects at HAN University in the Netherlands. Financial Planning and an on-line Management Development Programme (MDP) at UWC.



### Professor Amasa Philip Ndofirepi

*Associate Professor: Philosophy & History of Education*

Professor Amasa Philip Ndofirepi obtained a PhD in Philosophy of Education from the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. He has extensive experience in teacher education and previously worked at various higher education institutions including Great Zimbabwe University, University of the Witwatersrand and University of Johannesburg and served as a Senior Researcher for Mzala Nxumalo Centre for the Study of South Africa. He is a NRF C-rated researcher and is the co-editor of 6 book volumes. He has published several peer reviewed articles in accredited international journals.



### Dr Raymond Nkwenti Fru

*Senior Lecturer: History and Social Science Education*

Dr Fru is a Cameroonian born academic who received his PhD (2018), M.Ed. (2013). and B.Ed. Honours (2011) all in History Education from UKZN. He also holds a Diploma in History and Geography Teaching (2006) from the Higher Teachers Training College Annex of the University of Yaoundé 1 in Cameroon. Prior to joining SPU, he worked as an ad-hoc Lecturer at UKZN (2011-2014), a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Languages and Social Education at the National University of Lesotho (2014-2019); and as a Lecturer and Discipline Coordinator for Social Sciences and Economics and Management Sciences Education at the University of the Free State. He was also a secondary school teacher in Cameroon (2006-2009). Dr Fru is a recipient of the prestigious Fellowship from the George Eckert Institute for International Textbooks Research in Braunschweig, Germany (2014). His research interests are in the areas of school textbooks representations and contested discourses in history education on which themes he has published several journal articles and book chapters and has presented his work at several local and international conferences.



### Violet Pule

*Lecturer: Setswana*

Ms Violet Pule holds a Master's degree (cum laude) in Language Practice. She started teaching and specialising in Setswana in 2012 at TUT and proceeded to UNISA in 2017. She has written a Setswana study guide and has set Setswana assessments for various colleges that established African Languages Departments. Currently she is a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand looking at Prosodic feature's awareness in comprehending Setswana readings, the thesis will be written in Setswana. She is an internal moderator (Setswana) for the Department of Higher Education and Training and an external moderator for the Independent Institute of Education (IIE). She has written a paper on the awareness of language careers and employability with reference to South African indigenous languages from her Masters dissertation and is awaiting publication.



### Jefferson J. Dirks-Korkee

*Junior Lecturer: Education Studies*

Mr Dirks-Korkee was born in Willowmore, Eastern-Cape. He holds a BA Honours degree in Drama and Theatre Arts. Before joining SPU he was a lecturer at the University of the Free-State and an in-service teacher trainer/facilitator implementing the Life-Skills Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement. He currently serves on the artistic committee of the Vrystaat Arts Festival and is the executive producer of PENM Productions. He is also on the board of Opening Act NPC and is part of the writing team of the new national Creative Arts textbooks where he reviews module-guides and textbooks for both public and private universities. Mr Dirks-Korkee has a passion for Arts Education.



### Sipiwe Thwala

*Lecturer: Education*

Mr Thwala holds a Master's degree in Physics (with a specialisation in Astrophysics) from the University of the Witwatersrand. He also obtained his undergraduate (majoring in Mathematics and Physics) and Honours (Physics major) degrees at the same institution. He had been a teaching assistant with the School of Physics for the BSc Astronomy and Astrophysics, and Physics major laboratory course. He is currently a final year PhD student at Wits University. His research focuses on how the interaction of (the plasma of) radio sources with cosmic rays, can energize particles to their non-thermal energies in astrophysical environments. When not too busy focusing on his studies, Mr Thwala was involved in mentorship programmes offered by the University such as the First Year Experience (FYE) and Targeting Talent Programme (TTP) which focus on helping students transition from high school to the university experience. He enjoys using his skill set to work on highly technical problems that require intuitive solutions, and simply geeking out on computational problems.

## STAFF APPOINTMENTS ...continued

### ADMINISTRATION



#### Sabelo Gumede

*Officer: Administration*

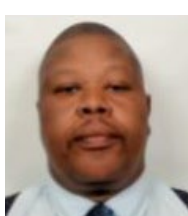
Sabelo considers himself as a rural boy from KwaZulu-Natal with roots in Appelsbosch Mission (Ozwatini) 45km outside North of Durban. Mr Gumede has worked for several higher education institutions including CPUT, MUT and UKZN in both undergraduate and postgraduate student administration. Prior to joining SPU, he was an Administrative Officer: Research & Higher Degrees at UKZN in the Graduate School of Business & Leadership. He is currently enrolled for a Master of Commerce in Management at UKZN. He is a soccer fan and enjoys music, which includes Maskandi.



#### Chanel Boraine

*Senior School Administrator*

Born and raised in Kimberley, Ms Boraine studied at the Bloemfontein CTI Campus and obtained a BTec degree in Business in 2012. Prior to joining SPU, she worked for Nedbank for three years. A year after leaving Nedbank she applied for an internship programme through SETA where she was placed at SPU's School of Education. She states that she is truly blessed to be part of the institution.



#### Nathan Thai Setseke

*Manager: Employment Relations*

Originally from Kroonstad in the Free State, Nathan considers himself as a Kimberlite after being in Kimberley for more than 20 years. He started his studies in Labour Relations with UNISA and completed his postgraduate diploma in Labour Law in 2012 with the University of Free State. Mr Setseke joins SPU after working for nearly a decade at a diamond mine in Kimberley. Before joining the mining industry, he worked for Transnet for nearly two decades. He is married and is a father to two beautiful daughters. He understands this is a new position and is looking forward to improving employment relations and labour peace between employees, the union and SPU management through promotion of social justice and fair employment practices.



#### Shawn Daries

*Control Room Operator*

Shawn was born in Kimberley, Galeshewe, where he finished his matric at Homevale Senior Secondary School. He obtained a Grade C Certificate from VJP Security Training College. He then worked for different companies as a Security Officer until his appointment as Control Room Operator at SPU.



#### Michelle Fortuin

*Control Room Operator*

Michelle Fortuin was born in Barkly West and completed her high school at Barkly West Secondary School. She moved to Kimberley in 2018. She started her career as a Control Room Operator at Rockwell Mine from 2007 to 2013. She then joined G4S Security as a Security Officer. Ms Fortuin has extensive experience in Security and Control Room Operations.



#### Boitumelo Masilo

*Information Librarian*

Born in Matatiele, in the Eastern Cape, Ms Masilo holds a postgraduate diploma in library and information science and a Bachelor of Arts degree in health science and social services. She is currently studying towards a master's degree in information sciences. Ms Masilo has spent the past 15 years in various roles within libraries in higher education institutions and has co-authored three articles published in academic journals; as well as presented at various conferences.



#### Priscilla Nkagisang Mangena

*Section Officer*

Ms Mangena was born and raised in Kimberley and matriculated at Dr EP Lekhela Senior Secondary School. She studied A+, N+ and ICDL at the Northern Cape FET college and is currently studying Human Resources at the same college. She also holds a National Certificate in Management, a Grade B in security and is PSIRA registered. She previously worked at Sun International (Flamingo Casino) where she started as a Guest Service Attendant, moved to a Surveillance Officer position, then appointed as a Supervisor and finally as a Surveillance Shift Manager.



#### Khotso Nkoe

*Senior Manager: Risk Management*

Khotso Nkoe holds a BCom degree obtained from CUT, an Advanced Diploma in Accounting from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountant (ACCA) and is currently completing his Chartered Certified Accountant qualification with the ACCA. Before joining SPU, he completed his articles with the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA) and worked at AGSA for seven years before moving to the NC Office of the Premier for another seven years as a Risk Manager.



#### Martina Lorato Shokhoe

*Control Room Operator*

Lorato hails from a small community in Ritchie. She completed her high school at Kgabang and obtained a certificate in ECD Level 4 from the Northern Cape FET college in 2015. From 2005 to 2010 she worked for a community outreach programme called Khomanani where she was the Financial Coordinator under the Department of Health.



#### Angelique Sediti

*Senior School Administrator*

Angelique was born and raised in Kimberley. She completed her N4 to N6 in Public Management at the Northern Cape Urban TVET College. She completed her practical training at SPU in 2017.



#### Unathi Mqongwana

*Officer: Administration*

From East London, in the Eastern Cape, Ms Mqongwana holds a National Diploma in Public Relations Management and a BTech in Business Administration. She was previously employed at WSU for 11 years before joining SPU.



#### Samuel Alabi

*Senior Manager: Occupational Health, Safety and Environment*

Samuel Alabi holds a BSc. (Hons) degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Lagos, Nigeria and a M.Sc. degree in Safety and Environmental Management from the Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland. Samuel has over 10 years experience in Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (OHS&E) management spanning consulting, construction, oil and gas, and the manufacturing industry. He is highly pro-active and possesses excellent leadership, management and persuasive skills to bring about changes in work culture particularly on OHS&E. He is a member of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (SAIOSH) and the South African Council for Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP).



#### Tshoghatso Chifokoyo

*NCIF Coordinator*

Tshoghatso holds a BCom Accounting degree from the University of Johannesburg, coupled with leadership and management courses. She is a certified business accountant registered with SAIBA, a facilitator, motivational speaker, community role model and an active campaigner for the African values of Ubuntu. She has 14 years combined experience in corporate banking, retail, business consulting, environmental management services and entrepreneurship. During this she has developed a passion for community and youth development where she consulted on a wide variety of financial and operational issues. She is excited and honoured to be part of such an important vehicle in driving the innovation ecosystem in the province.

### RETIREMENTS

#### Raymond Olander

*Chief Operations Officer*

### RESIGNATIONS

#### Tshepo Mogorosi

*Lecturer: Applied mathematics*

#### Sabelo Zwane

*Lab Technician: Computer Sciences and IT*

#### Riana van Merwe

*Part Time Junior Lecturer: Humanities*





SOL PLAATJE  
UNIVERSITY

NOV 2020

e-BRIEF



## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

### School of Economic and Management Sciences

2020 will go down in history as a year of disruption, of uncertainty, of fears and of reflection on life.

Despite all the challenges, humankind once again proved its resilience by adapting to change and in the process develop and implement new and innovative ways of dealing with life. This is evident in the way the staff and students of the School rose to the challenge by adopting a new modality of teaching, learning and assessment and ensuring in the process that syllabi are completed, that learning outcomes are met and that academic quality and integrity is maintained as far as possible. This is commendable!

**AS THE SCHOOL SLOWLY WINDS DOWN  
TO THE END OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR,  
IT REFLECTS ON ITS ACHIEVEMENTS  
WHICH LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE  
GROWTH OF THE SCHOOL IN THE YEARS  
TO COME.**

We are proud of the research outputs achieved and are confident that these will grow substantially in 2021. The outcome of the CHE accreditation application is eagerly awaited and we are ready to offer the new BCom in Economics and BCom in Accounting from next year. This will drastically increase the enrolment in the



*Prof Pierre Joubert,  
Head of the School of Economic and Management Sciences*

School and together with the introduction of the PGDip in Entrepreneurship and an increase in planned enrolment for the other programmes, the School will move closer to achieving sustainability.

**The above achievements are as a result of the collective effort of all staff in the School who form the EMS family. I salute them!**





## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

### School of Education

In just six more weeks the academic programme for 2020 will be done and dusted. What a year!

In the last e-Brief we reflected on progress in the School and how staff and students had taken on the challenge of emergency remote teaching and learning necessitated by the lockdown with both anxiety and determination. As we entered the second semester we felt confident that the lessons learnt from the first semester would carry us through the next 3 months.

Indeed, the School has successfully completed the first half of Semester 2. We received our students back on campus and teaching and learning continued in the online mode. Classes proceeded in the various formats on TEAMS and on MOODLE while staff and students continued to communicate and engage on all possible platforms on social media.

While some of these may have been impromptu, need-based measures to redeem the academic project, for us as a School of Education they provided opportunities to reflect and rethink the pedagogical space and the endless possibilities to reinvent teaching and learning. Drawing on existing expertise in the School academics created forums to get together not only support each other but to also explore what is possible. We are indebted to colleagues in the School who gave of their time and experience to hold workshops, discussions, seminars on teaching, learning and research ideas at a time like this.

**WE ALSO COMMEND OUR STUDENTS  
FOR PERSEVERING AND KEEPING  
YOUR STUDIES GOING IN SPITE OF THE  
DIFFICULT CONDITIONS THAT MANY OF  
YOU WERE WORKING IN.**

The teaching practice component of the BEd programme probably experienced the biggest disruption in the current situation. With schools not readily accessible for our students to do their school based teaching practice during lockdown we had to rethink practice based learning. This is yet another area that went from being very challenging to being a place for interesting opportunities to rethink teacher learning.

The School is looking forward to the new year, 2021 when we hope to launch several new programmes. We are excited to launch the Postgraduate Diploma in Mathematics Education starting in 2021. We are also poised for the Masters in Education and the BEd Foundation Phase Teaching once final approval is granted.

The year 2020 will go down as one of the most challenging years



*Prof Audrey Msimanga,  
Head of the School of Education*

for the whole world. In fact, some might say 2020 showed us up for what we should be doing but are not, for what should have been in place but wasn't, for how we could have planned for it but didn't ... the list of 'what could have been' is endless.

However, as the School of Education we believe that 2020 has shown us our potential, what we are capable of achieving if we put our minds to it and draw on our collective energies, expertise and individual skills. We reached inside ourselves and reached out to each other and connected as humans rather than just colleagues. Thank you School of Education!

Finally, I wish all Education students success with your examinations. To the Final years I wish you a bright future as beginner professionals in 2021. A lot is still uncertain but if you made it in 2020 you have the strength and resilience for 2021 and beyond.

**To the staff, this is the last lap, hang in there and when it's done do have a restful break. I wish you all a prosperous 2021 as we continue to reimagine teacher education post 2020.**



## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

### School of Humanities

#### Resilience - The African Way

In this quarter we saw how South African ingenuity and creative impulses created a global sensation around a song produced by a duo of young Black South Africans.

While the world reeled under the COVID numbers, Jerusalema - and a dance curated and choreographed by local youth - had the whole world moving to the African beat. Seemingly mundane, the dance craze represents the hope and resilience from Africa, exported to the world amid-COVID-19. The dance routine by Master KG and Nomcebo Zikode provided an uplifting soundtrack for difficult times.

The track and dance steps caught the imagination of politicians, priests and millions more. It was endorsed by presidents and priests and became the sound of the pandemic for millions across the world.

**IN THE PRESENCE OF GRUESOME  
CIRCUMSTANCES, WE DANCE AWAY,  
INSPIRING THE WORLD TO FIGHT  
ON AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE WITH  
HOPE. SO AS WE SAY IN MY MOTHER  
LANGUAGE (SHONA), NGAIRIRE NGOMA  
- LET THE DRUMBEAT GO ON!!!!**

In this last quarter of what has been a challenging year, we are focussing on completing the 2020 academic year. The university is one of the few universities where online learning, has progressed fairly well and we are on the course to complete the 2020 academic year seamlessly.

As we have moved to level 1 lockdown, the country has slowly eased up the restrictions. For Universities, this has allowed a process to have all the students back on campus, providing good opportunities for entrenching online pedagogies as the students will be in comfortable environments, while having stable access to data.

Those who choose to not return are being provided the requisite support to enable them to continue learning remotely. This will allow the University to start the new (2021) academic year at a fairly comfortable pace.



*Prof Jesmael Matanga,  
Head of the School of Humanities*

**We thank all academics, staff and our students for their resilience and for committing to go on with the academic programme, even in a very shortened second semester. We see the return of students as positive in improving students' participation, pass and throughput rates.**

**We look forward to 2021 with hope and zeal. In this summer, we say Pula, Khotso!!!**



## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

### School of Natural and Applied Sciences

The year 2020 has been one like no other in the history of NAS. COVID-19 has and continues to dictate the narrative on a day-to-day bases of the academic project.

The School found itself in uncharted territory when teaching went hundred percent online. Despite the challenges that came with this process, the online teaching has gone smoothly and that is the reason why we are one of the few universities completing the academic year in 2020, and it is all thanks to the dedication of everyone involved in this process.

The total number of undergraduate students registered in the School is 514, an increase of 25% from 2019. These students are distributed across four qualifications, two degrees and two diploma programmes. On the side of programme and curriculum development, 2020 marked the continuation of new BSc Honours programmes with the introduction of two programmes, Computer Science and Mathematical Sciences.

Although initiation and presentation of the new modules was not without challenges, the modules and supervision of diverse research projects was successfully accomplished. In October the HEQC approved the BSc Honours in Physical Sciences, becoming one of the three new Honours programmes that will commence in 2021.

Discussions on two significant collaborations between the School and industry were held at different stages of the year and it is expected that MoUs in both cases will be signed before the end of the year. The first is on the establishment of the Risk and Vulnerability Science Centre (RVSC) in collaboration with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and the National Research Foundation (NRF). The second intended collaboration is with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) on a biodiversity data pipeline for wetlands and water birds.

**ON THE RESEARCH SIDE, THE SCHOOL WILL HOST A VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, THE 2ND INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS (IEEE) INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING CONFERENCE (IMITEC 2020) FROM 25 TO 27 NOVEMBER 2020.**

The conference is a high quality event which brings together researchers and practitioners from academia and the industry to share their research findings in Computational Sciences, Data



*Prof Aijheli Gelebe,  
Head of the School of Natural and Applied Sciences*

Science, Computational Mathematics, Computational Physics, Computational Biology, Engineering, and Information and Communication Technologies amongst others.

Other positive developments in the School include the relocation to Central Campus of both the Head of School's office and the Computer Science and Information Technology Department to the NAS Administration Building (C005) and the Applied Sciences Building (C006), respectively.

The above are just a few indicators pointing to the successful year that the School has experienced.

**Finally, to the staff of the School of Natural and Applied Sciences, my sincere and warmest thanks for all of your hard work and outstanding contributions towards progress at all levels of the School's activities. As always, it's great to know that you can be counted on to go the extra mile. Thank you again for your dedication.**