



UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

Our Future
Reimagined



INTUTHUKO

OFFICIAL UJ DEVELOPMENT AND
FUNDRAISING MAGAZINE



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Ms Thuli Hlabahlaba

This Intuthuko magazine edition is co-edited by Dr Dawn Isabel Nagar, (from the Development and Fundraising Office). We acknowledge the University of Johannesburg's Faculties' support as well as the UJ Graphic Studio's support for graphics, design and layout.

UJ Convocation

is the official interface between UJ and its alumni and the primary channel for UJ Alumni to pass their opinions to the University for consideration.

The Institutional Statute of UJ determines that the membership of the Convocation consists of:

- Alumni (diplomates and graduates of formal subsidised qualifications from the University of Johannesburg, the former Rand Afrikaans University and the former Technikon Witwatersrand)
- The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Registrar and other members of the Management Executive Committee of the University;
- Permanent academic employees of the University;
- Retired permanent academic employees of the University.

There are various mechanisms through which Convocation discharges its mandate:

- The Executive Committee of Convocation meets frequently to discuss University matters, changes affecting UJ alumni and to develop approved responses;
- The Annual Meeting of Convocation (AGM) is open to all members of Convocation;
- The Convocation is a legally constituted body that concerns itself with key issues of concern to alumni.

Join us at the upcoming Convocation AGM, more details to follow.

SCAN ME



FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

UJ continues to demonstrate its commitment to pushing the boundaries of research, teaching, and community engagement. From exploring the ancient planet to shaping modern teaching methods, UJ's diverse academic initiatives highlight its role in addressing global challenges while fostering innovation. In the Department of Geology, researchers are delving deep into Earth's history, focusing on how our dynamic planet looked 1 200 million years ago. This groundbreaking work not only deepens our understanding of Earth's geological past but also contributes valuable knowledge on climate change and planetary evolution. Meanwhile, in the Department of Biochemistry, Dr Fidele Tugizimana's team is conducting cutting-edge research on microbes that assist crops like maize in weathering extreme conditions, offering potential solutions for enhancing food security in challenging climates.

UJ's dedication to experiential learning is exemplified through the work of Prof Umesh Ramnarain and his team in the UJ Virtual Reality project. By immersing school learners in the rich cultural heritage of the San people, this project goes beyond traditional classroom methods, providing an interactive and transformative educational experience. At the same time, in the Palaeo Research Institute, Prof Marlice Lombard's research into ancient bowhunting techniques offers fascinating insights into how early humans developed cognitive focus, a skill that has shaped the trajectory of human evolution.

ON THE SOWETO CAMPUS, PROF SARAH GRAVETT IS PIONEERING A NEW APPROACH TO TEACHER TRAINING. THROUGH THE USE OF MIXED REALITY SIMULATIONS, STUDENT TEACHERS ARE GAINING HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE IN MANAGING CHALLENGING CLASSROOM SITUATIONS.

This innovative teaching method equips future educators with the skills needed to handle difficult learners, preparing them for the diverse realities of modern classrooms. Last month, the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) partnered with the African Left-Handers Foundation (ALHF) to host the Harmony of Hands Indaba and Festival launch. The event celebrated left-handed individuals and brought much-needed attention to the challenges they face in a world predominantly designed for right-handed people. It also explored new trends in education, emphasising inclusivity and equitable access to learning tools.

Another highlight on UJ's calendar was the 2024 UJ Future Walk, held at the Bunting Road Campus on 28 September. Now in its fifth edition, the walkathon attracted over 500 participants and was supported by key sponsors, including Lucky Star, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Aquelle, SABC Sport and Virgin Active. The Future Walk not only promoted a healthy lifestyle but also raised crucial funds to support UJ students. Activities such as the 2.5 km, 5 km, and 8 km walk/run, followed by high-energy aerobics sessions, fostered a sense of community while supporting a good cause.

The UJ Future Walk continues to be a symbol of how the University integrates health, community engagement, and student support. With the backing of sponsors and partners, the event continues to grow, creating a lasting impact both in terms of promoting wellness and contributing to the broader UJ student body. The enthusiastic participation of fitness icons like Ms Connie Ferguson and King of Squats added excitement, while the partnership with the Lucky Star Heartbeat Sessions, Virgin Active and the Heart and Stroke Foundation ensured that the event also highlighted the importance of heart health, particularly in underserved communities.

I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our partners and participants who made this day a success. ■

Chief Financial Officer
Ms Nolwazi Mamorare



FOREWORD FROM DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING DIRECTOR: MS DAPHNEY NEMAKHAVHANI

The 2024 UJ Future Walk was nothing short of remarkable. Reflecting on the event, it's clear that we have taken strides, not only physically but in reinforcing our community spirit and commitment to student success. The turnout exceeded our expectations, with participants from all walks of life coming together to support our cause. The weather was perfect, setting the stage for a day filled with camaraderie, fitness, and fundraising. It was especially heartening to see the number of sponsors involved this year, which was greater than ever before. As I walked alongside colleagues, students, and supporters, I was reminded of the value of wellness, both for our bodies and our minds. Good health is indeed wealth, and we are committed to making wellness an integral part of our journey as a university community. Our students who excel academically but face financial barriers remain at the heart of this event ensuring they can access quality education is why we walk.

We are also incredibly proud to announce UJ's outstanding achievement in the Healthy Campus Programme. On Friday 20 September 2024, the International University Sport Federation (FISU) released the results of their external audit, where UJ scored an impressive 95% compliance. This assessment reaffirms our commitment to fostering a healthy campus environment for our students and staff. Thanks to the dedication of our team, we have retained our Platinum Certification, a recognition that places us among the global leaders in campus wellness. FISU's external auditor, Mr Andrea Uccello, specifically praised UJ's proactive approach to the Healthy Campus Programme's guidelines, and this recognition is an encouragement for us to keep pushing the boundaries of what's possible in creating a supportive and health-conscious campus. As we celebrate these achievements, let us remember that none of this would be possible without the collective efforts of the entire UJ community. From our sponsors and partners at the UJ Future Walk to the researchers at the CEI and the dedicated teams driving our Healthy Campus Programme, we are making strides towards a more inclusive, sustainable, and healthy future. These initiatives are more than just projects – they are a reflection of our values as an institution and our commitment to the holistic development of our students, staff, and broader community.



Thank you for your continued support in making UJ a leading institution not only in education but in fostering an environment that prioritises wellness, sustainability, and the pursuit of excellence. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for our students and the world.

Director: Development and Fundraising Office
Ms Daphney Nemakhavhani ■

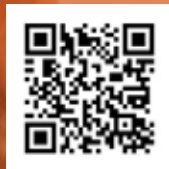
For over 10 years you have partnered with us to support more than 4000 students monthly through our Meals Assistance Project with nutritious meal packs.

Check some our students review their bi-weekly meal parcels!



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Be part of a generation that takes a stand against the scourge of student food insecurity

A BIG THANK YOU

to our corporate sponsors, staff members and alumni as well for making a lasting impact!

THE UNIVERSITY UNVEILED ITS AMBITIOUS STRATEGIC PLAN 2035 AT THE SANLAM AUDITORIUM ON THE AUCKLAND PARK KINGSWAY CAMPUS ON 8 OCTOBER 2024. THIS FORWARD-THINKING ROADMAP POSITIONS UJ AS A LEADER IN SUSTAINABILITY, INNOVATION, AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION, WITH A DISTINCT FOCUS ON MAKING A MEASURABLE IMPACT ON SOCIETY.

UJ LAUNCHES STRATEGIC PLAN 2035: A BOLD VISION FOR LASTING SOCIETAL IMPACT.

The plan aligns closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underscoring UJ's commitment to tackling pressing global issues such as climate change, inequality, and access to quality education. Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Letlhokwa George Mpedi, emphasised the importance of societal impact and sustainability: "Our story as an institution is a formidable one indeed. In just under two decades, we have shown our ability to respond to our shifting context and emerge as dynamic and active participants. These ideals remain the fabric of our institution."

Strategic Pillars Driving UJ's Future

The Strategic Plan 2035 is built on three core pillars that outline UJ's path towards a sustainable and impactful future:

- 1. Societal Impact and Sustainability:** UJ is committed to addressing social and environmental challenges through cutting-edge research and educational initiatives, positioning the University as a catalyst for positive change.
- 2. Global Footprint and Partnerships:** UJ will expand its international collaborations with universities, industries, and governments, amplifying knowledge-sharing, innovation, and influence on a global scale.
- 3. Technology for the Future:** With its leadership in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), UJ will continue to integrate advanced technologies that prepare students for a digital future, emphasising solutions that are both people-centred and ethical.

Ms Xoliswa Kakana, Chairperson of UJ's Council, highlighted the strategic importance of UJ's African heritage: "We are firmly rooted in Africa, but our influence is global. This plan ensures we are prepared to make a difference both locally and internationally."

International Recognition and a Commitment to Excellence

The Strategic Plan 2035 launch follows a series of accolades for UJ, including a position among the top 500 universities worldwide in the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. These achievements reflect UJ's ongoing dedication to excellence and societal engagement.



The launch event also celebrated UJ's rich culture and talent. Performances included the award-winning UJ Choir and a multimedia dance piece, *With-Out Limits*, choreographed by Fana Tshabalala. UJ Chancellor, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, applauded the strategic plan: "This plan is crucial for the sustainability of UJ and will leave a lasting societal impact. It shows that the University's efforts go beyond the classroom, touching the broader society."

Looking Ahead: UJ's Vision for Impact

Since its inception in 2005, UJ has championed academic transformation, innovative research, and technological advancements. As UJ moves forward with Strategic Plan 2035, the University aims to solidify its role as a transformative institution dedicated to creating a sustainable future and fostering societal contributions from empowered individuals. ■

UJ LAUNCHES TRANSFORMATIVE “UJ FOR SOCIETAL IMPACT” PROJECT IN LIMPOPO

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) proudly launched its groundbreaking “UJ for Societal Impact” project on Friday 4 October 2024, aimed at addressing critical infrastructure needs in the remote villages of Gwakwani, Matatani, and Mbodi in the Vhembe District. This initiative focuses on delivering sustainable solutions in energy, water, connectivity, and education, heralding a new era of transformation for these communities.

Developed in collaboration with the private sector since 2014, this project aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting access to clean water, affordable energy, quality education, healthcare, and technological advancement. The launch event took place at Hanyani Secondary School, which serves a cluster of villages within a 15 km radius. This school is now enhanced with solar panels and a state-of-the-art learning facility, the Tshumisano Learning Centre, among other improvements. The festivities included vibrant performances by traditional Tshivhenda dancers and the Hanyani School choir.

The launch drew hundreds of residents, traditional leaders, corporate partners, and local dignitaries, including UJ’s Chancellor, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, and members of the UJ executive leadership team. Dr Mlambo-Ngcuka expressed her gratitude to the community for embracing this transformative project, highlighting the importance of collaborative efforts in driving societal change.

“We often find ourselves working in silos within our faculties, yet we are capable of integration in real life. This project exemplifies the incredible value we can achieve through collaboration, and I commend everyone involved for their outstanding efforts,” she remarked.

Community member Godfrey Nefolovhodwe from Gwakwani expressed his heartfelt appreciation for UJ’s impact, stating, “When UJ arrived, things quickly started to change. It feels like we’re finally on the map. The government had forgotten us, but now they recognise our village. I am deeply grateful to UJ and its staff for their ongoing support.”



Key Project Highlights:

- 1. Renewable Energy:** Implementation of solar-powered boreholes, streetlights, and home lighting ensures reliable, sustainable energy access.
- 2. Water Access:** New solar pumps and water networks provide consistent access to clean water in the villages.
- 3. Digital Connectivity:** The introduction of satellite internet revolutionises information access and enhances educational opportunities.
- 4. Economic Empowerment:** Initiatives like a solar-powered bakery and agricultural irrigation systems create jobs and improve food security.
- 5. Educational Enhancement:** Local schools, including Hanyani High, are now equipped with ICT centres, science labs, and updated learning materials, preparing students for a technology-driven future. An Early Childhood Development centre has also been established for the younger generation.
- 6. Social Justice and Crime Prevention:** A social justice centre facilitates access to crucial services such as Home Affairs and SASSA while collaborating with local police for community education and crime prevention.

UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Letlhokwa George Mpedi, emphasised the project’s role in tackling inequality by enhancing access to basic services in marginalised rural areas. “This initiative promotes sustainable practices in energy and water conservation, directly addressing immediate needs while ensuring long-term viability. By involving the community in decision making and implementation, we foster a sense of ownership and self-reliance among residents,” he stated.

Prof Mpedi further acknowledged the UJ community’s dedication, stating, “Education and empowerment are vital to sustainable development. Through projects like this, we have the opportunity to make a real and lasting difference. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to bringing this project to fruition. Your commitment to societal impact and community engagement is truly inspiring.”

The “UJ for Societal Impact” project represents a pivotal step in the University’s mission to drive societal transformation through education, innovation, and leadership in achieving the UN SDGs. For the residents of Gwakwani, Mbodi, and Matatani, this initiative marks a promising new chapter in their journey towards a brighter future. ■



ALUMNI

Our Future
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About University of Johannesburg Alumni Chapters

A UJ alumni chapter is a regional, town or city based group of university of Johannesburg (UJ) alumni who want to formalise their relationship with UJ. Any verified alumnus may volunteer to convene a chapter.

Chapters coordinate and provide opportunities for alumni to socialise and network. They organise their local alumni and keep them connected to UJ. The alumni chapters are the official contact with the UJ Alumni Office and UJ. Ideally convenors execute the maintenance of their respective UJ alumni chapters with the guidance of the UJ alumni chapter guidelines that the alumni office has produced. The UJ Alumni Office provides communications and administrative support to chapter convenors.

HOW TO START – VOLUNTEERING TO BE A CONVENOR

The convenor of an alumni chapter should have the following characteristics:

- Willingness to work with the University
- Willingness to contribute time
- Enthusiasm
- Ability to motivate and engage alumni

Think about what type of activities you are hoping to organize as a chapter convenor. Successful alumni chapters base their programme on a mixture of activities. Allow the opportunity for as many people as possible to contribute.

If you are looking to establishing an alumni chapter in your region, please contact the UJ alumni office on alumni@uj.ac.za

All UJ Alumni can connect with us on Alumni Connect, www.ujalumni.co.za. The alumni connect platform allows UJ Alumni to, offer mentoring services, receive mentorship and connect with UJ in a unique way and participate in UJ Alumni chapters and affinity groups.

Key activities of a chapter include but are not limited to:

- organising multiple events or activities a year to which all alumni in the region are invited
- acting as a contact point for UJ in their country or region
- offering informal advice to alumni moving into their area
- acting as a local contact point for UJ e.g. offering advice to members of staff and faculty about where to stay or hold meetings when visiting their area

SCAN ME



UJ HOSTS SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMIT ON DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND DEMOCRACY



UJ hosted its second annual Social Media Summit on digital communication and democracy hosted by the Johannesburg Business School (JBS) on 27 and 28 June 2024. The summit, which brought together key partners like Brand South Africa, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), SABC, and the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), focused on deepening democracy through citizen engagement in the digital age.

With the theme 'Deepening Democracy – Citizen Engagement in the Digital Age,' the event provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss digital communication trends, challenges, and innovative solutions. Organised by Decode Communications in collaboration with UJ, the summit also marked 30 years of democracy within the communications space.

“THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUMMIT IS AMBITIOUS AND WILL PROVIDE INSIGHTS INTO THE DEMOCRATISATION OF TECHNOLOGY, POLICYMAKING, AND DESIGN, ULTIMATELY HELPING DELIVER SERVICES TO CITIZENS” SAID DR CAROLISSEN.

Dr Randall Carolissen, Dean of JBS, highlighted the significance of cross-sector knowledge exchange, emphasising the strategic role of social media in government communications. He noted, *“The purpose of this summit is ambitious and will provide insights into the democratisation of technology, policymaking, and design, ultimately helping deliver services to citizens”* said Dr Carolissen.

Throughout the two-day event, thought leaders, academics, and public relations professionals discussed the impact of digital communication on citizen engagement. Dr Sifiso Mnisi, Head of the School of Communication at UJ, reinforced the importance of addressing the digital divide, noting that effective public sector communication and inclusive social media engagement can foster a stronger democracy.

Key topics covered during the summit included the role of AI in government communication, the state of digital communication skills within the public sector, and the potential of social media to enhance government transparency and citizen participation. Expert-led panels and presentations, such as “AI for Good: Case Study from Sub-Saharan Africa” and “Leveraging Social Media Capital to Communicate Government Initiatives,” provided practical insights and action plans to guide government entities.

As summit conveners, Decode Communications CEO Lorato Tshenkeng and Prof Mandla Radebe, Director of the Centre for Data and Digital Communications, facilitated discussions and ensuring that the summit produced actionable strategies to strengthen digital communication and bridge the gaps that threaten South Africa’s potential for inclusive growth.

The Social Media Summit for Government 2024 served as an essential platform for fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, with tangible impacts expected to follow in the coming months as the insights shared are put into practice. Thank you to all our partners, sponsors, and stakeholders for making this impactful event possible. Together, we are working towards a more inclusive and engaged society. ■

ROYAL MILESTONE AS PRINCE MAQHAWE SIGCAWU JOINS UJ'S ESTEEMED ALUMNI



FROM MY FIRST YEAR, I FACED CHALLENGES THAT PUSHED ME TO GROW IN WAYS I HADN'T EXPECTED. BUT UJ HELPED ME FIND CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF AND MY ABILITIES. THIS DEGREE IS MORE THAN A QUALIFICATION – IT IS A TESTAMENT TO THAT GROWTH.

During UJ's 2024 Summer Graduation, the University of Johannesburg celebrated a special moment, welcoming Prince Maqhawe Sigcawu, eldest son of AmaXhosa King Vulikhaya kaZolilizwe Sigcawu, into its alumni community. On 14 October 2024, Prince Maqhawe proudly crossed the stage to receive his Bachelor of Arts in Public Management and Governance. Reflecting on his journey, he shared, "I'm still a bit in awe of being here. From my first year, I faced challenges that pushed me to grow in ways I hadn't expected. But UJ helped me find confidence in myself and my abilities. This degree is more than a qualification – it is a testament to that growth. This is only the beginning. My time at UJ has prepared me for so much more, and I look forward to gaining professional experience before returning to pursue my postgraduate studies."

AmaXhosa King Vulikhaya kaZolilizwe Sigcawu expressed pride in his son's achievement and highlighted the importance of education for young royals: "Prince Maqhawe's graduation sets a powerful example for others in our community. As we move forward in a rapidly changing world, our youth must be well-equipped to lead with knowledge and skill. I am proud of my son's achievement and confident that his continued studies will empower him to make meaningful contributions."

This milestone strengthens the bonds between UJ and the AmaXhosa Kingdom. Zolani Mkiva, senior advisor to the King, emphasised the potential for collaboration: "Prince Maqhawe's success is a significant step forward, not only for him but also for our community. UJ has long welcomed students from the AmaXhosa Kingdom, and this moment marks the start of an even deeper partnership with the University. The Prince's graduation demonstrates that education is a gateway for building bridges between institutions."

"We are honoured to have been the University of choice for the AmaXhosa royal family. Prince Maqhawe's achievement strengthens our ties with the AmaXhosa Kingdom, and we look forward to supporting him as he continues his academic journey", said Registrar, Professor Bettine van Vuuren.

With his family by his side – King Vulikhaya, Queen Nonzuzo, and Princess Ezamatshawe – Prince Maqhawe's graduation stands as more than a royal accomplishment. It is a testament to perseverance, personal growth, and the transformative power of education. ■



IN A GROUNDBREAKING ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG (UJ) AND THE BROADER AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE, PROFESSOR LETLHOKWA MPEDI, UJ'S VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL, HAS BEEN ELECTED SECRETARY-GENERAL ELECT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS (IAUP) FOR THE 2024-2027 TERM. HIS TENURE AS SECRETARY-GENERAL WILL COMMENCE IN 2027 AND CONTINUE THROUGH 2030.

This prestigious election, announced during the 20th Triennial Conference of the IAUP held in Beijing, China, from 13-15 October 2024, marks a significant milestone for both UJ and African academia, underscoring UJ's growing influence on the global stage and its commitment to fostering international collaboration in higher education.

Established in 1965, the IAUP serves as a distinguished network of university presidents, rectors, and vice-chancellors, dedicated to the exchange of ideas, experiences, and best practices among higher education leaders worldwide. With consultative status at the United Nations (ECOSOC) and UNESCO, the IAUP plays a crucial role in shaping educational policies that promote sustainable development, global competence, and peace through education. The 2024 conference, themed "Generative AI and the Future of Higher Education," featured over 60 international speakers who explored the transformative impact of AI on universities, teaching, learning, and governance.

As the current Vice-President for Africa within the IAUP, Professor Mpedi has been a strong advocate for addressing the continent's unique challenges and seizing its opportunities in the global educational landscape. His new role as Secretary-General will further amplify the voices of African institutions in global education discussions, ensuring that African perspectives shape the future of higher education.

VICE-CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR MPEDI ELECTED IAUP SECRETARY-GENERAL ELECT: A LANDMARK MOMENT FOR AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION



In his remarks at the conference, Professor Mpedi emphasised the urgent need to rethink talent development in South Africa, where youth unemployment exceeds 45%. He highlighted the importance of updating university curricula to equip students with the skills needed in an increasingly AI-driven workforce. UJ is already at the forefront of this movement, utilising AI tools to personalise student support and address skill gaps while expanding digital learning to enhance access to education.

Professor Mpedi's appointment not only strengthens UJ's leadership on the global stage but also reaffirms the University's commitment to driving positive change in higher education through international collaboration, innovation, and the transformative power of education.. ■

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: UJ SHINES AT THE 2023/2024 NSTF-SOUTH32 AWARDS

THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG (UJ) CELEBRATED A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT AT THE PRESTIGIOUS 26TH ANNUAL NSTF-SOUTH32 AWARDS, WHERE 16 UJ RESEARCHERS WERE RECOGNISED FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION.

Among the night's top honourees were Prof Ben-Erik van Wyk, Research Professor of Indigenous Plant Use, and Prof Tebogo Mashifana, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering Technology, who each took home awards in their respective categories.

The hybrid gala event that took place in July, marking 26 years of celebrating groundbreaking advancements and research that shape South Africa's future, especially within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Pioneers in Their Fields

Prof Ben-Erik van Wyk, a world-renowned botanist, was awarded for his lifetime achievements in Indigenous Plant Use. Known for his extensive work on traditional and commercial applications of plants, Prof Van Wyk has authored numerous books and publications that provide invaluable insights into the uses of various plant species. Upon accepting his award, he shared his admiration for experts in the field, stating, "The true intellectuals are those



Prof Ben-Erik van Wyk, DST/NRF SARCHI Chair in Indigenous Plant Use, received the Lifetime Award.



Prof Tebogo Mashifana

who hold generational knowledge of plants, refined through years of experimentation. I am committed to exploring the socioeconomic potential of African plants, and I dedicate this award to the mentors who have guided me along the way."

Prof Tebogo Mashifana, winner of the Emerging Researcher Award, is pioneering efforts in environmental sustainability by applying circular economy principles to reduce the impact of industrial waste. Her innovative research transforms wastewater and solid waste pollutants into usable products, with the goal of creating sustainable solutions to pressing environmental issues. Prof Mashifana reflected on the significance of her work, saying, "Pursuing innovation is about resilience and quality. This award serves as a motivation to continue breaking new ground in my field, and I accept it with great humility."

Celebrating Scientific Excellence

With finalists in four distinct categories, spanning eight fields, UJ's strong showing at the NSTF-South32 Awards underscores its commitment to a broad spectrum of scientific disciplines. This year's recognition highlights both lifetime achievements and rising stars, showcasing the University's dedication to impactful research and innovation.

Prof Sarah Gravett, UJ's acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation, expressed her pride, saying, "We are thrilled to see Prof Van Wyk honoured with a Lifetime Award and Prof Mashifana with the Emerging Researcher Award. This recognition affirms that impactful research is thriving at UJ across all academic levels. Congratulations to all our finalists who have contributed to this tremendous achievement."

UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Letlhokwa Mpedi, added, "The accomplishments of our researchers at the NSTF-South32 Awards exemplify the commitment and drive of our academic community. We are immensely proud of their contributions to science, which not only advance our understanding but also address critical societal challenges."

The 2023/2024 NSTF-South32 Awards have shone a spotlight on UJ's researchers as leaders in their fields, reinforcing the University's position as a hub of innovation, scientific inquiry, and transformative research on the African continent. ■

PROF REFILWE PHASWANA-MAFUYA APPOINTED DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, HONOURED WITH TRAILBLAZER AND LIFETIME ACHIEVER AWARDS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EXCELLENCE



“Every human being has God-given potential which is theirs to exploit. My background, which I had originally considered a hindrance, became the ideal sword to empower and inspire others who see themselves in me.”

These powerful words from Prof Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya encapsulate her extraordinary journey from modest origins to becoming an influential leader in public health and epidemiology. As the Director of the SAMRC/UJ Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research (PACER), Prof Phaswana-Mafuya was recently honoured with two prestigious awards from the Higher Education Resources Services South Africa (HERS-SA) Higher Education Women Leaders (HEWL) Awards. She received the Trailblazer and Lifetime Achiever Awards, both recognising her invaluable contributions to public health research, her dedication to mentorship, and her commitment to tackling Africa’s most pressing health challenges.

Born in a small village in Limpopo province, Prof Phaswana-Mafuya’s path to success was far from typical. Raised in a family of seven by semi-literate parents, a career in science seemed a distant dream. Reflecting on her journey, she shared, “Coming from a humble family... the prospects of science success, let alone science access or of becoming a scientist, seemed delusional.” But through resilience,

determination, and support from mentors, she overcame the odds and forged a path that has since inspired countless others.

During her acceptance speech for the Lifetime Achievement Award, Prof Phaswana-Mafuya expressed deep gratitude not only for the recognition but for the network of support that has fuelled her journey. “This award is not just a recognition of my contributions, but also a testament to the tireless efforts of my team, collaborators, networks, mentors, and colleagues,” she said. Dedicating the award to those who identify with her journey, she underscored that greatness is achievable, no matter one’s background.

The Trailblazer Award holds special meaning for Prof Phaswana-Mafuya, as it celebrates her role in developing the next generation of researchers and innovators. Reflecting on the challenges she faced as a young scientist, she noted, “Starting as a young scientist, I encountered countless obstacles. However, the guidance and encouragement of my mentors helped me persevere and succeed. This award is a tribute to my mentors, whose encouragement inspired me to pave the way for others.” Prof Phaswana-Mafuya has committed herself to mentoring emerging researchers, particularly in the field of HIV research, helping them to harness their potential and guiding them towards self-mastery.

Her concluding words resonate as a powerful call to action: “These awards stand as a call to everyone with knowledge and expertise to share their insights with future generations. It encourages us to foster a culture of scientific curiosity, resilience, and enthusiasm, aiming to create a lasting impact and contribute to a better world for all.”

New Role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation

Furthering her impact, Prof Phaswana-Mafuya has been appointed as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation Designate, effective from 1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024, and will assume the full role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation for a five-year term from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2029. As a full professor and Founding Director of the SAMRC/UJ Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research, Prof Phaswana-Mafuya remains dedicated to advancing research and innovation on the continent. Her academic credentials include a PhD from the University of Limpopo and studies at the esteemed London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Prof Phaswana-Mafuya’s achievements stand as a beacon of hope and inspiration, underscoring her steadfast commitment to science and the pursuit of knowledge. ■



PROF MMASETHUNYA ANNA TEMANE APPOINTED AS EXECUTIVE DEAN OF HEALTH SCIENCES



Prof Mmasethunya Anna Temane has been appointed as the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, beginning her five-year term on 1 October 2024. With an impressive academic career as a full professor in UJ's Department of Nursing, Prof Temane brings her extensive experience and vision for mental health to this esteemed role.

Having held the position of Acting Executive Dean since January 2023, Prof Temane has played a pivotal role in aligning the Faculty with UJ's strategic goals. Her leadership has been crucial in promoting community mental health, a topic she explored during her professorial inauguration earlier this year. In her address, titled "Achieving Mental Health for Our Communities: Challenges and Opportunities," she highlighted the urgent need to address mental health as a fundamental aspect of overall well-being, resonating with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3) that emphasise health and well-being for all by 2030.

Prof Temane is an advocate for strengthening support for caregivers, whose role in mental health services she described as invaluable yet often underappreciated. In her address, she also highlighted the rights and potential for recovery for those with mental health conditions, stressing the need for greater advocacy and inclusive policy reforms. "Policy advocacy is imperative in achieving mental health for our communities. The role of advanced psychiatric nurses

should be elevated within the Mental Health Care Act," she remarked, calling for updates to the 2002 Act to better reflect the current needs of mental health care services.

In her future research endeavours, Prof Temane plans to focus on student mental health, addressing a growing concern within psychiatric nursing. She envisions a compassionate society where stigma around mental health is diminished, and individuals are supported to thrive regardless of their mental health status. This vision aligns with her professional journey, one marked by dedication and commitment. Beginning with a degree in nursing from North-West University, she later pursued a Master's in Psychiatric Nursing from Rand Afrikaans University (now UJ) in 2004, followed by a PhD in 2010.

Her academic contributions include an impressive list of publications and international presentations. Prof Temane has guided numerous master's and doctoral students and served in key leadership roles, including Vice-Dean of Research and Innovation and Head of the Department of Nursing. Her influence extends beyond UJ, as she actively participates in advisory boards and professional committees, underscoring her dedication to advancing mental health in South Africa.

In her new role as Executive Dean, Prof Temane's tenure promises to deepen UJ's impact on health sciences, particularly in mental health advocacy, education, and research. With her wealth of knowledge, she is well-positioned to elevate UJ's Faculty of Health Sciences as a beacon of innovation and societal impact.

She has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals and presented at international conferences. Her leadership roles include serving as Head of Department of Nursing, Vice-Dean of Research and Innovation, and acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Prof Temane is also a registered advanced psychiatric nurse with the South African Nursing Council and has been involved in various prestigious committees and advisory boards, reflecting her deep commitment to mental health and research. ■

PROF KATHLEEN VAN DER LINDE, ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF LAW

The Faculty of Law welcomed Prof Kathleen van der Linde as Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Law. A distinguished academic and expert in Corporate Law, Prof Van der Linde's research centres on the legal intricacies of corporate finance, insolvency, and restructuring –topics of critical importance in today's complex economic landscape.

HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP ARE EQUALLY NOTABLE. AS A MEMBER OF THE EDITORIAL TEAM OF THE JOURNAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN LAW AND ON THE EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD OF THE NOTTINGHAM INSOLVENCY AND BUSINESS LAW EJOURNAL, PROF VAN DER LINDE REMAINS AT THE FOREFRONT OF LEGAL RESEARCH AND DISCOURSE.



Prof Van der Linde's academic journey reflects an unwavering commitment to excellence. She joined UJ in 2009 after a tenure at the University of South Africa, and her impact has been significant. As the former Head of Department of Mercantile Law, she led with vision and expertise, serving two terms in the role. Her influence extends beyond UJ, with a four-year term on the NRF Specialist Committee for Law Ratings, including two years as its convenor.

Internationally, Prof Van der Linde has gained recognition for her expertise. In 2021, she was appointed by the Amsterdam District Court as an independent expert to advocate for creditor interests in the high-profile Steinhoff global settlement. More recently, she contributed to the

Augsburg Summer Program on European and International Economic Law in 2023, enriching her global perspective and broadening the international reach of UJ's Faculty of Law.

Her contributions to legal scholarship are equally notable. As a member of the editorial team of the Journal of South African Law and on the editorial advisory board of the Nottingham Insolvency and Business Law eJournal, Prof Van der Linde remains at the forefront of legal research and discourse.

Prof Van der Linde's appointment is a testament to her deep commitment to legal scholarship and her dedication to shaping the next generation of legal professionals. Her leadership will undoubtedly propel UJ's Faculty of Law towards new heights, both locally and internationally. ■



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JOHANNESBURG

Machine Learning

Data Science

Artificial Intelligence

FULLY FUNDED POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

The Data Science Across Disciplines Research Group and the Centre for Nuclear Research from the University of Johannesburg are looking for national/international candidates to apply for a **Fully funded Postdoctoral Fellowship** at the University of Johannesburg.

Prof Charis Harley and Prof Simon Connell would like to work with a postdoctoral fellow in the fields of :

- Water Quality as Driven by 4IR
- Public Health, Artificial Intelligence and Diagnosis based on Multiple Data Sources

The applicant must have a strong programming background and be skilled in the areas of Big Data, Data Science, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence. Our aim is to develop state of the art AI tools relevant for problems found in the contexts of Water Security and Public Health.

If you are interested in applying for this fellowship, please contact Prof Harley (charley@uj.ac.za) with your CV and a letter of interest.

**Our Future
Reimagined**

BREAKING NEW GROUND: UJ FACULTY OF LAW LAUNCHES AFRICA'S FIRST VIRTUAL REALITY COURTROOM GAME



In a pioneering move for legal education, the University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Faculty of Law has launched a groundbreaking Virtual Reality (VR) Courtroom Game, a first for South Africa and the African continent. Unveiled in July, this state-of-the-art initiative is set to revolutionise traditional teaching methods, blending immersive virtual experiences with academic rigour to transform the way law is taught and practised.

South African legal education has long adhered to a structured approach, with law traditionally segmented into distinct disciplines rooted in Roman tradition. However, this often overlooks the complexities and interconnections inherent in the country's diverse legal landscape. Enter the VR Courtroom Game: developed in collaboration with UJ's Johannesburg Business School (JBS) Innovation Lab, the game immerses students in realistic legal scenarios that bring textbook theory to life. By recreating courtroom experiences in virtual reality, UJ is enabling students to confront intricate legal challenges as they unfold in real time.

Prof Michele van Eck, who leads the project, shares the team's commitment to addressing contemporary challenges in legal education. "We wanted to create a more innovative and inclusive learning environment for our students," Prof Van Eck explains. "The VR Courtroom Game is a game-changer, allowing students to navigate complex legal scenarios across various disciplines. This approach bridges the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, equipping students for the demands of modern legal practice. Extensive development was essential to ensure each scenario is both realistic and accessible, providing students with a comprehensive understanding at all levels."

Technical lead developer Prof Abejide Ade-Ibijola highlights the game's unique integration of virtual reality and artificial intelligence (AI), which creates a dynamic, interactive experience. "This isn't just about teaching law; it's about bringing it to life," Prof Ade-Ibijola notes. "The game enhances analytical skills and offers a deeper, more engaging learning experience. We've created an environment where students can fully immerse themselves, gaining insights into the nuances of legal principles that will prepare them for real-world application."

The VR Courtroom Game represents the efforts of a dedicated and talented team. Directed by Prof Van Eck and developed under the technical expertise of Prof Ade-Ibijola, the project also benefits from the knowledge and skills of Faculty of Law members, including Professors Puseletso Letete, Natasha Naidoo, Elton Hart, Felicia Zuba, and Louis Koen, as well as Drs Werner Nel, Yvette Joubert, and Whitney Rosenberg. Together, they crafted the storyline, content, and legal scenarios, and rigorously tested the game for accuracy and effectiveness.

The contribution of undergraduate students from the JBS Innovation Lab was invaluable, demonstrating the power of collaboration and innovation at UJ. By integrating this innovative tool into its curriculum, UJ's Faculty of Law is not only redefining the future of legal education in South Africa but also setting a new standard for experiential learning on the continent. This trailblazing project underscores UJ's commitment to advancing legal education through technology and positions the University as a leader in blending digital innovation with academic excellence. ■

PROF TANKISO MOLOI APPOINTED EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

“WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME PROF MOLOI INTO THIS VITAL LEADERSHIP ROLE,” SAID A UJ SPOKESPERSON. “HIS PASSION FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, COUPLED WITH HIS EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS.”

Prof Tankiso Moloi appointed as the Executive Dean of the College of Business and Economics, effective from 1 October 2024 as Dean Designate and from 1 January 2025 for a five-year term.

A distinguished academic and a dedicated leader, Prof Moloi is currently a full professor and serves as the Director of the Johannesburg Business School (JBS). With over 15 years of experience spanning the private, public, and higher education sectors, he brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this pivotal role. Prof Moloi holds a Doctor of Business Administration from the Paris School of Business in France, underscoring his commitment to academic excellence and innovation.

As he transitions into his new position, Prof Moloi aims to further elevate the College’s reputation and academic offerings, fostering an environment that promotes cutting-edge research and practical learning experiences for students. His vision aligns with UJ’s strategic goals of enhancing socioeconomic development and empowering future leaders in the business landscape.

“We are excited to welcome Prof Moloi into this vital leadership role,” said a UJ spokesperson. “His passion for education and research, coupled with his extensive experience, will undoubtedly contribute to the continued growth and success of the College of Business and Economics.”

Prof Moloi’s appointment marks a significant step for UJ as it seeks to strengthen its position as a leading institution for higher education and research in South Africa and beyond. ■





CELEBRATED FOOTBALL COACH PITSO MOSIMANE RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE AT UJ WINTER GRADUATION CEREMONY

In a memorable event during its winter graduation season, the University of Johannesburg (UJ) awarded an honorary doctorate to Pitso Mosimane, one of South Africa's most renowned football coaches. This accolade celebrates Mosimane's remarkable contributions to the sport, his commitment to innovation, and his role in nurturing young talent.

This honorary doctorate is a tribute not only to Mosimane's football achievements but also to his influence beyond the field. His dedication to elevating South African football has inspired a generation, and UJ's recognition underscores his exceptional impact. Dignitaries in attendance included SAFA President, Danny Jordaan, and legendary football figure, Jomo Sono, along with Mosimane's friends and family, who gathered to celebrate this significant honour.

Born in Kagiso, Gauteng, Mosimane began his career as a midfielder in 1982, playing for teams like Jomo Cosmos, Mamelodi Sundowns, and Orlando Pirates, and even taking his talents internationally. His coaching career began in 1995, marking his ascent to prominence with teams like Sundowns, SuperSport United, and Al Ahly SC. In 2022, he established the Pitso Mosimane Soccer Schools to foster young talent across Africa.

In his acceptance speech, Mosimane reflected on the journey that brought him to this moment: "I am honoured and humbled to receive this honorary doctoral degree from UJ. My journey, shaped by education and the game of football, has been transformative, and this recognition is beyond anything I could have imagined."

He highlighted football's profound impact on his life: "Growing up with a humble background, I never dreamed that football would be my passport to the world. It has

"I AM HONOURED AND HUMBLLED TO RECEIVE THIS HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREE FROM UJ. MY JOURNEY, SHAPED BY EDUCATION AND THE GAME OF FOOTBALL, HAS BEEN TRANSFORMATIVE, AND THIS RECOGNITION IS BEYOND ANYTHING I COULD HAVE IMAGINED."

opened doors I could have only dreamed of." He also emphasised the broader value of education, describing how it has fostered his discipline, strategic thinking, and leadership – qualities that transcend sports and play a vital role in every field.

Expressing gratitude, Mosimane acknowledged the South African Football Association (SAFA), the Premier Soccer League (PSL), and mentors like Jomo Sono and the late Stanley "Screamer" Tshabalala. He shared a message with aspiring young coaches: "Education is your most powerful tool. It equips you with the skills to navigate challenges and seize opportunities."

As Mosimane walked the stage alongside UJ graduates, his story resonated as a beacon of hope, dedication, and achievement, making this ceremony a highlight of the winter graduation season. ■

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD: ADV TEMBEKA NGCUKAITOBI ON THE CONSTITUTION



“THE CONSTITUTION CAN, AND PERHAPS ONCE AGAIN, PLAY ITS REDEMPTIVE ROLE – IT CAN BECOME OUR BOOK OF REDEMPTION,”

In a thought-provoking presentation that delved into history, inequality, representation, and the judiciary, South African lawyer and author Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi SC captivated attendees at the 12th Mapungubwe Annual Lecture. This prestigious event, a collaboration between the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA) and the University of Johannesburg (UJ), has become a significant fixture in South Africa’s intellectual landscape since its inception in 2012, drawing national and global audiences alike.

Titled ‘Constitutionalism and its Malcontents’, Adv Ngcukaitobi’s lecture provided a robust defence of the South African Constitution, addressing its critiques and imperfections. Hosted at the Ubuntu Chambers on UJ’s Auckland Park Kingsway Campus, the lecture attracted senior UJ officials, MISTRA leadership, political analysts, media representatives, and a diverse array of stakeholders.

Welcoming attendees, UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Letlhokwa Mpedi, posed an essential question about the effectiveness of the South African Constitution in translating its comprehensiveness into tangible benefits for citizens. He remarked on the foundational role of constitutionalism in modern democracies, shaping both legal frameworks and social landscapes. As South Africa marks 30 years of constitutionalism, Prof Mpedi expressed eagerness for Adv Ngcukaitobi’s insights into the critiques surrounding this pivotal framework. “Constitutions serve as critical safeguards for human rights, ensuring checks and balances, providing accountability, and promoting the rule of law. It is crucial to evaluate its impact against the backdrop of broader societal shifts,” he stated.

Adv Ngcukaitobi began by unpacking the unique concept of constitutionalism, tracing its evolution from the Athenian model through the revolutions in France and the USA, as well as the impact of colonialism in Africa. He posited that democracy remains an ideal rather than a lived reality for many, stating, “South Africa, among the last to achieve freedom and constitutionally guaranteed rights, is now a beacon for understanding these rights and freedoms. Our democracy is enriched, not undermined, by the rule of law and constitutionalism.”

In a compelling analysis, Adv Ngcukaitobi examined the origins of the South African Constitution, reflecting on the Bill of Rights, the ANC’s constitution, and the Freedom Charter. He shed light on the multifaceted nature of inequality—racial, gender-based, economic, social, and cultural. “The crisis of inequality is a crisis of constitutionalism. But it is only constitutionalism that can resolve inequality,” he asserted.

Addressing critiques surrounding land reform and property transformation, Adv Ngcukaitobi emphasised that constitutionalism must function as a dynamic, living document rather than merely a theoretical framework. “The widening gap between the ideal described by the Constitution and the lived reality for many undermines its survival,” he cautioned.

Despite acknowledging its imperfections, Adv Ngcukaitobi urged the importance of remembering the African origins of constitutionalism as a means to fulfil its promise. “The Constitution can, and perhaps once again, play its redemptive role – it can become our book of redemption,” he concluded.

In closing, MISTRA Executive Director Joel Netshitenzhe underscored the significance of the lecture. “You have helped us understand the meaning of constitutionalism and how it can be delegitimised if social change is slow. A constitution must be contextualised within the society it aims to serve, claiming both legality and legitimacy,” he noted.

Advocate Ngcukaitobi’s insights at the Mapungubwe Annual Lecture serve as a powerful reminder of the ongoing journey towards realising the ideals embedded in South Africa’s constitution. ■

EMPOWERING FINANCIAL LITERACY: UJ'S COMMITMENT TO SOCIETAL IMPACT

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Community Engagement Unit, in collaboration with the UJ Department of Finance and Investment Management, KE ZAKA, and SABC Education, proudly hosted the impactful Financial Literacy for Communities workshop on the Soweto Campus. Launched in 2023, this initiative is dedicated to equipping communities with the essential financial knowledge and skills necessary to make informed financial decisions.

Central to UJ's mission is the Community Engagement (CE) Unit, which fosters meaningful and sustainable partnerships between the university and its surrounding communities. Through various initiatives, the CE Unit addresses societal challenges, enhances educational opportunities, and promotes socioeconomic development. The Financial Literacy project exemplifies these efforts, empowering community members with practical tools and vital knowledge.

The workshop marked the kick off of a series of modularised sessions tailored for members of community-based financial savings schemes, including stokvels, burial societies, and investment groups. This inaugural session focused on crucial topics such as budgeting, debt management, saving and investing, and the importance of creating a will.

Participants from various community savings schemes, including Kopano Ke Matla, Agisanang Society, and Success Investments, actively engaged in the interactive sessions, receiving expert guidance from UJ lecturers who are Certified Financial Planners. The immediate impact of the workshop was evident, as attendees expressed overwhelming appreciation for the valuable financial insights shared.

One participant remarked, "I learned how to manage money, save, and invest across different platforms. The discipline I gained will help me register with a proper legal perspective. I will also discuss the importance of a will with my family."

Ms Thoko Ndlovu from Ipolokeng Burial Society added, "When I came to the event, I expected to learn about money, but I gained so much more. The topics were relevant, easily explained, and incredibly insightful."

The Financial Literacy for Communities project continues to resonate with participants, who eagerly anticipate the upcoming Level 2 and 3 sessions. This initiative reflects UJ's unwavering commitment to community empowerment through education, providing individuals with the necessary tools for financial stability and growth. ■

THE WORKSHOP MARKED THE KICK OFF OF A SERIES OF MODULARISED SESSIONS TAILORED FOR MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY-BASED FINANCIAL SAVINGS SCHEMES, INCLUDING STOKVELS, BURIAL SOCIETIES, AND INVESTMENT GROUPS. THIS INAUGURAL SESSION FOCUSED ON CRUCIAL TOPICS SUCH AS BUDGETING, DEBT MANAGEMENT, SAVING AND INVESTING, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING A WILL.



Left-handed children represent approximately 10% of the global population, yet they often navigate a world predominantly designed for right-handed individuals. This challenge is particularly pronounced within educational settings, where teachers typically lack training in inclusive pedagogies that accommodate left-handedness. For young children in the Foundation Phase, this situation is compounded by the dual burdens of poverty and discrimination. In post-apartheid South Africa, public awareness of the ongoing challenges faced by left-handed individuals remains minimal, marking an area of rights that warrants attention in our Thirty Years of Democracy.

To confront these pressing issues, the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) joined forces with the African Left-Handers Foundation (ALHF) to host the Harmony of Hands Indaba and Festival launch event at UJ's Kingsway Campus.



This hybrid event brought together members of the university community, ALHF representatives, media, and interested parties from around the globe to commemorate International Left-Handers Day on August 13. Established 48 years ago by Dean Campbell, this day aims to shine a light on the experiences of left-handed individuals and raise awareness about the societal biases they encounter. The event also served as a platform for both organisations to share insights about their collaborative efforts.

This initiative seeks to address the challenges faced by left-handed children through research and structured educational interventions over the long term, while simultaneously raising public awareness through creative arts. The Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture (FADA) at UJ will play a crucial role in bringing this project to fruition.

Prof June Bam-Hutchison, Director of UJ's CERT, emphasised the necessity of understanding and accommodating left-handed individuals. "Neglecting the needs of left-handed people can lead to practical difficulties and barriers in everyday activities, including mental health distress from an early age, especially during their first encounters in school. From using tools designed for right-handers to potential health risks associated with non-optimised products, the ramifications are significant. By acknowledging the uniqueness of left-handed individuals, we promote diversity and foster a society that values and respects differences. This effort must begin with training teachers to create inclusive environments for young learners."

The Harmony of Hands Indaba and Festival, aims to promote equity and equality in handedness. The event will feature participation from musicians and music educators in London and Paris, with a strong focus on advocating for inclusive education rights for children, particularly during their early childhood and foundational education phases. ■

RAISING AWARENESS FOR LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN: A CALL FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



GEMS OF EMPOWERMENT: CELEBRATING WOMXN LEADERSHIP IN ACADEMIA

The third-year students of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture (FADA) have embarked on a remarkable journey to honour and celebrate womxn leaders in academia through the art of jewellery design. This year's project reflects on the past 30 years, drawing inspiration from significant moments in the lives of the nominees, showcasing their strength, tenacity, and sacrifices that have propelled them to the forefront of their fields. By employing narrative jewellery as a form of expression, these budding designers aim to highlight the remarkable qualities of their womxn leaders while inspiring their peers and emerging academics to reach new heights.

Each piece of jewellery is a bespoke creation in sterling silver, often adorned with semi-precious gemstones, meticulously designed to celebrate the unique stories of the respective nominees. Over the past few months, students have engaged in an intensive design and manufacturing process, collaborating closely with their nominees to bring these pieces to life.

THROUGH THIS INITIATIVE, THE FADA JEWELLERY DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE STUDENTS NOT ONLY CELEBRATE THE INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THESE WOMXN LEADERS BUT ALSO INSPIRE FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ASPIRE TO GREATNESS.

Spotlight on Design Inspirations:



PROF ANNAH MOTEETEE

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science:

"These earrings are inspired by the leaf of the wormwood plant, stirring fond childhood memories for my client."

Designed by: Riley Coltman

Title: From Roots to Blooms:

The Journey from Childhood to Success

EACH PIECE OF JEWELLERY IS A BESPOKE CREATION IN STERLING SILVER, OFTEN ADORNED WITH SEMI-PRECIOUS GEMSTONES, METICULOUSLY DESIGNED TO CELEBRATE THE UNIQUE STORIES OF THE RESPECTIVE NOMINEES.



PROF SARAH GRAVETT

Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Internationalisation:

"This ring honours the journey of Prof Sarah Gravett, set with four nectarine-coloured agate cabochon gemstones."

Designed by: Bhomela Jordan

Title: Becoming



MS NOLWAZI MAMORARE

Chief Financial Officer:

"A timeless expression of elegance and simplicity, intertwining Christian symbolism with refined design."

Designed by: Zodwa Sovasi

Title: Divine Serenity



PROF MARIA FRAHM-ARP

Executive Director of the Library and Information Centre:

"Each element of this chain necklace embodies nurturing, growth, and unity, resonating with my client's caring nature and desire for others to flourish."

Designed by: Thato Moloto

Title: Nurture-link: A Chain of Life, Growth and Connection



PROF KAMMILA NAIDOO

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities:

"This pendant necklace, inspired by the butterfly and the bow tie, captures sophistication and the gracefulness of nature."

Designed by: Malesela Mathekga

Title: Butterfly Bow



MS LERATO RIBA

Executive Director of Financial Governance and Revenue:

"These earrings are an ode to Ms Riba's charismatic personality and charm."

Designed by: Mpilo Nkonde

Title: Riba's Charm



DR NDIVHUWO LURULI

Executive Director of Research and Innovation:

"An elegant jewellery pendant bringing the simple beauty of flowers to life."

Designed by: Martin Modau

Title: Garden Grace



PROF PUSELETSO LETETE

Vice-Dean of the APK Law Dean's Office:

"These earrings blend classic elegance, South African heritage, and modern sophistication."

Designed by: Aneliswa Mbonambi

Title: Heritage Harmony Earrings



MS TOKOZA KWINANA

Executive Director of Human Capital Management:

“These earrings symbolise the transformative power of faith and personal growth, celebrating the journey of victories.”

Designed by: Gopolang Segoe

Title: Rising Beyond: A Journey of Faith and Triumph



PROF BETTINE JANSEN VAN VUUREN

Registrar:

“This powerful jewellery piece draws inspiration from the sable and sub-Antarctic islands, both close to my client’s heart.”

Designed by: Johan van Heerden

Title: Icy Ridge



PROF SEHAAM KHAN

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic):

“These earrings, inspired by the classic ‘To Kill a Mockingbird,’ elegantly capture the essence of literature with a book-shaped charm and feather bookmark.”

Designed by: Bongwiwe Ngondo

Title: Mockingbird’s Bookmark



PROF NADINE PETERSEN

Executive Dean of the SWC Education Dean’s Office:

“This ring captures the colour and motif of the lavender flower in an elegant split shank design.”

Designed by: Tavonga Chikwenya

Title: Fields of Lavender



PROF MMASETHUNYA TEMANE

Acting Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences:

“A symbol of strength, discovery, and growth.”

Designed by: Siphso Mbatha

Title: New Awakenings and Beginnings



MS NOMSA MAHLANGU

Senior Director of APK UJ Sport:

“The union of green agate gemstones and chain patterns reflects Prof Mahlangu’s journey to success.”

Designed by: Lethabo Mabitsela

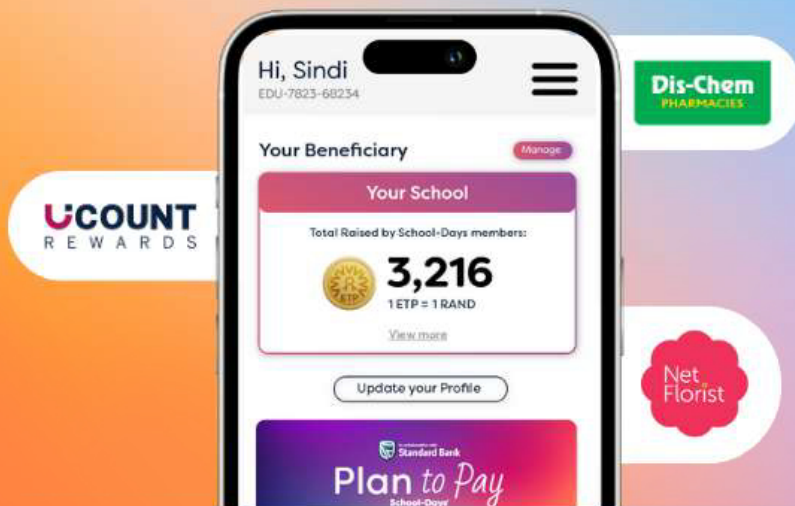
Title: A Budding Succession



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