

# THE EDGE

Quarterly Magazine Issue No. 1 July 2018

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

The first semester for 2018 has not been an easy one for the Durban University of Technology community. Majority of the DUT community can attest that most of us are still trying to get on our feet and embrace 2018 and the changes that are taking place around us.

With the commencement of our year being plagued with interruptions, we cannot dwell on the negative and hinder our progress any further. With the understanding that many of you are still not settled in as yet, especially those who have had to transact from High School to this new environment called tertiary.

While many could not wait to be here, when they were in high school, others are still not really sure if they should be here. Well, let me assure you, that you are at the right place and we promise you a pleasant stay here at the DUT.

You might argue and say, but it has not been easy, yes, life is not easy but we still survive and those who survive this 'thing called life', come out stronger and wiser than before. Rest assured that DUT will improve your life for the better and you will soon be singing a different tune just as our two former Miss DUT's Asilungile Ngcobo and Lianne Lazarus are.

Change is not easy for anyone or for any environment, as was your transition from High School to DUT a challenging one. Those who have been with the University had witnessed the change that is taking place in our community and will agree with me when I say that change is definitely not for the faint-hearted. Each one of us must understand that as the world evolves, we need to adapt and evolve as well.

As an institution of higher learning, it is important that we do not stay the same. But rather change with the times, just like Ngcobo and Lazarus whose lives keep changing, not long ago they were first years, then they became Miss DUT and because their lives kept changing, today they have achieved much more than they thought they would. Do you know why they achieved so much? It is because they did not let any challenge deter their journey nor did they reject change.

In this issue read all about them (Lazarus and Ngcobo). The two young, talented and intelligent women who graduated last season. Ngcobo graduated with her Bachelor of Technology Degree in Public Management, whilst studying at DUT in 2017, she was crowned Miss SA Campus. After obtaining the Miss SA Campus title she represented South Africa in the Miss World University competition in Cambodia in November 2017 and was a part of the 108 finalists from universities all over the world.

While we were still celebrating Ngcobo's successes, Lazarus has kept on flying the DUT flag high when she won Season 8 of The Tropika Island of Treasure competition. Lazarus graduated with a Deans Merit and Cum Laude with her National Diploma in Journalism. Lazarus who is not new to accolades, has done extremely well for herself, to find out more, make sure you read her story in this issue of *The Edge*.

If you want to be a part of the only campus radio station in KZN, read all about RadioDUT Station Manager, Sibusiso Nxumalo's drive to nurture local talent. Did I tell you that just like you, not long ago, Nxumalo was a DUT student? I was also a DUT student a few years back, so you see, I know exactly what your journey feels like.

If you have a flair for languages and would like to learn the second most spoken language in the world, students now have the opportunity to enrol and learn Mandarin at the Durban University of Technology's Confucius Institute which is based at the ML Sultan Campus. DUT is proud to be KwaZulu-Natal's first tertiary institution to offer the language.

There is so much on offer, so read all about DUT's achievements and stars in this edition of the Edge!

See, I told you that DUT is the right and best place to be. The EDGE magazine is yours and therefore since it is yours, you can make sure that you contribute and be a part of it. We want to hear your stories, share your success with the DUT community and allow us to celebrate you!

Visit our editorial team based at the Botanic Mansions building, 1st Floor, Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus and/or email [communications@dut.ac.za](mailto:communications@dut.ac.za) or give us a call on 031 373 2545 to share your story.

You can also like the Durban University of Technology on Facebook page, follow us on Twitter or go to the DUT website ([www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)) for more news, events and highlights.

We welcome any feedback about *The Edge*. Your contribution is highly appreciated.

Until Next Time!

**NOXOLO MEMELA**

Communications Manager

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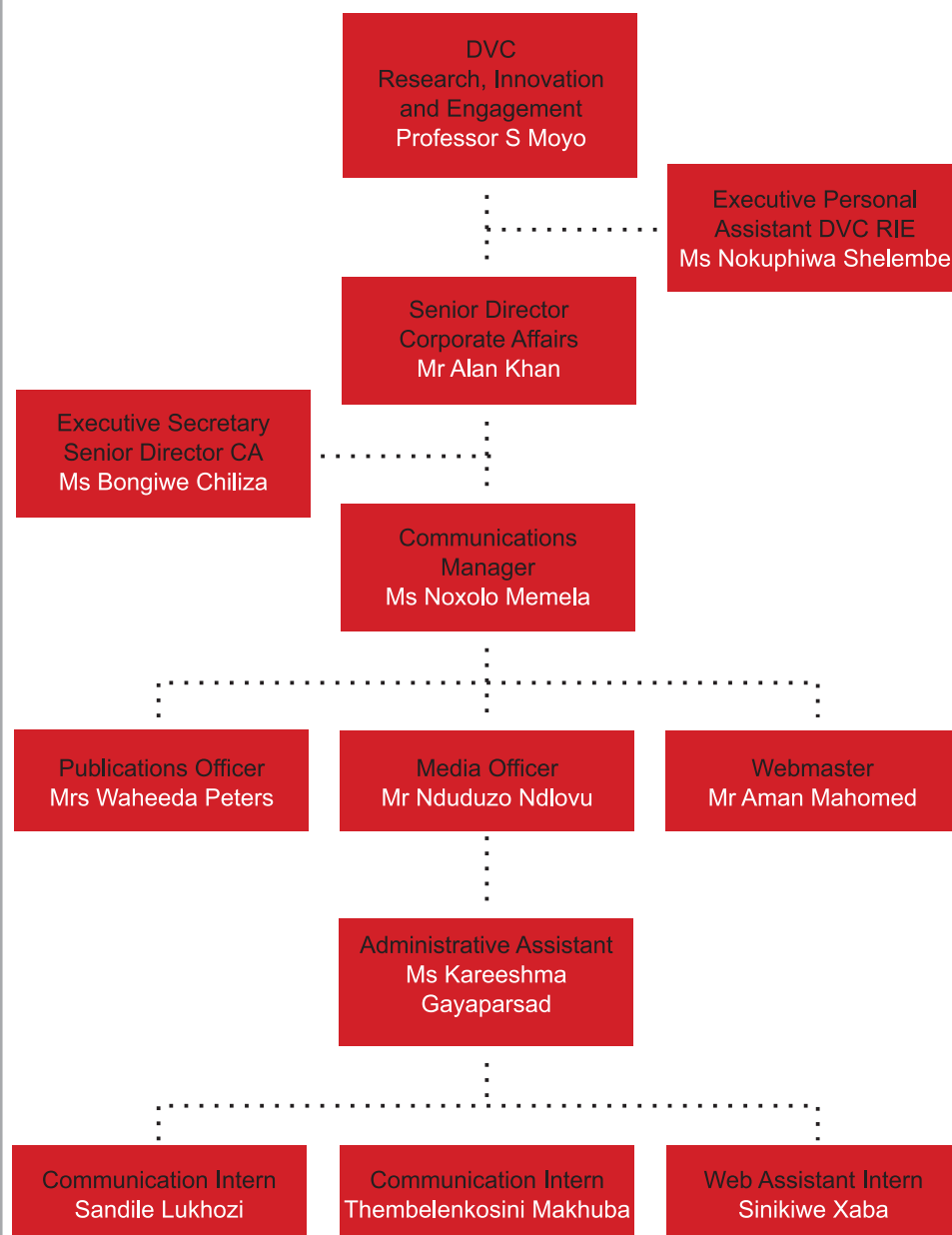
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## IF YOU HAVE THE EDGE, WE WANT YOU

THE Edge is looking for students who will contribute towards writing articles, photography as well as review the latest technology gadgets. If you want to join the team, contact Ms Kareeshma Gayaparsad on [kareeshmag@dut.ac.za](mailto:kareeshmag@dut.ac.za) or visit the office on the Steve Biko Campus, Gate 1, Botanic Mansions Building, Division of Corporate Affairs, First Floor.



# E-LEARNING SUPPORTS YOUR STUDIES

URSULA VOOCHT

## What is e-learning?

e-Learning or digital learning is when learning and teaching is assisted by technology in some way. It can mean anything from the use of a smartboard in class, accessing your lecture notes using your own phone or tablet, or online quizzes or tests to support your learning.

## What is e-learning at DUT?

At DUT, when we talk about e-Learning we usually mean the ThinkLearnZone: <https://thinklearnzone.dut.ac.za/>. ThinkLearnZone or TLZ uses the Blackboard Learn system to provide online classrooms. You may find that your lecturers talk about 'Blackboard' rather than ThinkLearnZone.

Some lecturers use other Learning Management Systems, such as Moodle or Edmodo. How you will use technology to support your learning will depend on your lecturer and their department.

## How do I log into the ThinkLearnZone?

Your username is your student registration number e.g. 122345678 and your password is DutYYMMDD (where YY is the last two digits of your year of birth, MM is your month and DD your date of birth).

When you log in to the TLZ, you should find a 'classroom' with a Study Guide for each of the taught modules for which you are registered. For some modules, you might find the lecturer has uploaded other course materials, video clips or quizzes to the TLZ. The TLZ can also be used interactively – some classes use the TLZ to work together on projects or to hold group discussions. How you will work with the TLZ depends on your lecturer.

TLZ will work on any PC, tablet or laptop as well as most newer smartphones.

## How can I keep up with what is happening on TLZ?

TLZ connects to your DUT4life email, so whenever an Announcement is sent out from the system, it will go to this email. So make sure you know how to access your DUT4Life email! Did you know you can set up your DUT4Life to forward email on to your preferred email address? You can find a guide showing you how to do this on the FAQ Students section of the e-learning helpdesk site: [http://elearning.dut.ac.za/faq/faq\\_students/](http://elearning.dut.ac.za/faq/faq_students/)

## What if I haven't used a computer or technology before?

Every year many students join DUT who have not yet had the opportunity to work with computers. Your lecturers are aware of this and you should be given



Pictured: DUT students make use of e-learning for their studies.

instruction on how to use the technology. There are also computers available through the libraries and at some of the laboratories on campus where you can practice and develop your skills. Getting to grips with computers and technology is vital for your future careers, and beneficial for your studies, so take the opportunity to develop your skills and use the DUT resources.

## Where can I find support?

You can find Frequently Asked Questions such as how to log in to TLZ at the TLZ Helpdesk site: [http://elearning.dut.ac.za/faq/faq\\_students/](http://elearning.dut.ac.za/faq/faq_students/)

You can email Simon Ndlovu on [simonn1@dut.ac.za](mailto:simonn1@dut.ac.za) who will help to direct your query.

You can also phone the TLZ helpdesk on 031 373 6758.

## What are the benefits of e-learning at DUT?

e-Learning helps students to continue to study outside of class at any time of the day which suits them. Although it is not a substitute for lectures, it can make it easier to catch up if you have missed a class. It also makes it easier to communicate, as you don't have to wait for class but can send a message using TLZ. Online quizzes can help you test your knowledge before you reach the stage of a formal assessment. e-Learning provides many benefits in how it supports teaching and learning, and we expect to see DUT further develop what is provided through the TLZ in future years.

# DUT IS THE FIRST KZN UNIVERSITY TO OFFER MANDARIN

WAHEEDA PETERS

**IF YOU HAVE A FLAIR FOR LANGUAGES AND WOULD LIKE TO LEARN THE MOST SPOKEN LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD, STUDENTS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENROL AND LEARN MANDARIN AT THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY'S CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE WHICH IS BASED AT THE ML SULTAN CAMPUS.**

DUT is KwaZulu-Natal's first tertiary institution to offer the language. DUT had established the Confucius Institute (CI) on 26 March 2013, and in February 2014, it formally started its functioning at DUT. CI currently has a Chinese Culture Experience Centre, a Chinese Language and Culture Resource Centre and other teaching facilities at ML Sultan Campus.

Since being in existence from 2014, the CI has strived to fulfil its roles of teaching various Mandarin courses of all levels for different target learners. Including introducing China and Chinese culture to South African communities, promoting cultural, educational and academic exchanges between South Africa and China, organising Summer/Winter camps to China, as well as assisting the CI learners to apply for CI scholarships from the Headquarters and Chinese government fellowships to pursue degrees.

From August 2017, DUT welcomed Mr Frank Lin Wu as the newly appointed Director of the Confucius Institute. He takes over the reigns from the former Director of the Confucius Institute at DUT, Dr Eddie Chaobo FU.

According to Mr Wu, Mandarin will help students to better understand the Chinese culture and link them to the Chinese University and Chinese society. "They will even have a chance to visit China through the Winter or Summer camps so that they could closely see the real China," he said.

From 23 December 2017 to 11 January, 2018, the Fourth Session of the Chinese Bridge Winter Camp in China of the DUT CI was successfully held in FAFU. There were 22 young students from South Africa (18 from DUT and four from PAX College) were invited to join this programme. During the visit in Fujian, the campers underwent a 16-day camp, learning the profound Chinese culture, experiencing the rapid development of China, enjoying the wonderful scenery of the mountains and



Pictured: Students at the Fourth Session of the Chinese Bridge Winter Camp in China, successfully held in FAFU.

rivers in Fujian, and making their contributions to the promotion of cultural and educational exchanges between China and South Africa.

For Nosiphiwo Dlamini, her first experience in China was unforgettable. "When we landed I could identify by the scent of aroma that I was in a totally different environment. China is such an economically stable, safe and technologically advanced country," she said excitedly.

The four Chinese-bridge Summer/Winter camps to China serve cultural and educational purposes. These trips enable CI registered students to learn about modern China and experience Chinese culture more comprehensively.

In terms of what is forthcoming from the DUT CI, Mr Wu said the first credit-bearing course at DUT has been planned to be established in the second half of this year at EBE.



# MEET TWO OF DUT'S DYNAMIC BRAND AMBASSADORS

WAHEEDA PETERS



Pictured: Lisanne Lazarus is flying the Durban University of Technology (DUT) flag high as the winner of the Tropika Island Of Treasure-Season 8.

## MAKING WAVES IN THE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL MODELLING AND TELEVISION WORLD IS NONE OTHER THAN TWO OF THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY'S (DUT'S) GORGEOUS YOUNG BRAND AMBASSADORS.

DUT's dynamic Asilungile Ngcobo, who obtained her Bachelor of Technology Degree in Public Management in April 2018. She clinched the Miss DUT title in 2016 and last year, 2017, she clinched the title of Miss SA Campus. It was through Miss SA Campus that she got to experience the international modelling field, qualifying to represent the country at the World Miss University competition in Cambodia in November 2017. Ngcobo was part of 108 finalists from all over the world, and she proudly represented DUT in a world stage.

The World Miss University is an international modelling and beauty competition that usually takes place annually in South Korea but due to the earthquake notification, the event was moved to Cambodia. This beauty contest is initiated by the International Association of University Presidents after the United Nations named 1986, the Year of Peace. The competition is attended by contestants from all over the world. The event is aimed to select World Miss University Peace Corp representatives.

The competition nevertheless became a great platform for Ngcobo, who was awarded the 'Best Dressed' accolade at the event, an honour she never

thought was possible. For her, the experience and friendships forged had been a wonderful experience as well as a stepping stone in her career. "It was so exciting and overwhelming. However, I have made friends for life with Miss Poland and Miss Malawi, but most of all the competition itself had been an eye-opener. I got the chance to experience such a competition and learn about all aspects that one has to go through at such competitions," she said.

Besides making waves internationally, DUT's local lass is the first one to graduate in her family, be part of a beauty pageant and to travel overseas. Juggling her academic studies and modelling was a challenge, a challenge she managed with ease. "Modelling is not something you can solely rely on because a career as a model lasts until a certain age but education lives with you forever," added Ngcobo.

She added that her family was thrilled with her as both her parents are unemployed so to have someone go overseas from their family was a great feat. She plans to do her Master's Degree in Public Management and is awaiting feedback with regards to that. In terms of modelling she had auditioned for the 2018 Durban Fashion Fair and received a call-back which she is excited about.

"Going forward, besides studying, I want to open my own company and also look into pursuing a career in music, a great passion of mine," she said excitedly.

DUT wishes her all the best in her future endeavours and her modeling career.

Creating 'reality' waves is the beautiful Lisanne Lazarus, who is flying the Durban University of Technology (DUT) flag high as the winner on the new season of the Tropika Island Of Treasure-Season 8. Lazarus joined the current season of Tropika Island Of Treasure-Season 8 (TIOT) and had made her mark. She teamed up with a celebrity and six other teams in the Maldives and took on challenges to win a whopping R1-million.

At present, the talented Lazarus is the Digital Producer for KwaZulu-Natal's (KZN's) flagship show, East Coast Radio Breakfast. Lazarus's future plans career wise, is to ultimately become a TV presenter.

Although Lazarus never had any intention of auditioning for the show, fate had dictated that she was destined for it. "I have always known about TIOT, however, it didn't really strike me to enter. I was completing my Work Integrated Learning (WIL) at Gateway Theatre of Shopping as the head of communications and one of the jobs was to attend the TIOT8 auditions that took place at Gateway and just cover it on social media. Whilst being there, I was encouraged by promoters and my superiors to enter. So I did, but for fun," she said.



The former Miss DUT 2015 is making strides in the modelling world as well as the entertainment industry and aims to use her fame and success to promote her charity organisation. Apart from being Miss DUT, Lazarus has achieved many accolades such as being the former Miss eThekweni 2014, Miss SA Campus-1st Princess 2016, Miss Mamelodi Sundowns SA-2nd Princess and Gateway's brand ambassador.

Lazarus completed her National Diploma in Journalism at DUT and graduates in April 2018. She aims to study further is in the process of enrolling for her BTech in Public Relations Management. She looks forward to continuing her studies and eventually obtaining her PHD as she firmly believes in furthering her academic studies, going forward.

In terms of juggling her studies and her celebrity status, she added that time was key for her. "I always plan ahead and with a good family support system I've learned to grow and mature beyond my years," she added.

Career wise, Lazarus says she is blessed to have met a lot of influential people who are in the career that she would love to pursue. "As an individual I had to grow up and mature before many people my age. Everything that I do, I have to constantly think about my reputation and what I would like people to refer to me as and that is as a brand. I have learnt good work ethics and how to handle pressure. I have also gained a thick skin and a strong mind," she said.

Lazarus has also opened her own non-profit organisation (NGO) called the Lindokuhle Creche. She started the organisation when she was still Miss eThekweni. According to Lazarus, the reason for establishing her organisation is that she grew up near a remote area where she was exposed to shack fires. "One day a five-year-old boy called Lindokuhle, died in a shack fire because he was home alone as his parents had nowhere to leave him," she said. This was her reason for opting to start this non-profit organization in his honour. "I started my own day-care centre where parents can go out and seek employment knowing that their children are safe and are learning at the same time," she added.

For Lazarus, she believes in having role models and sees South African celebrities, Rolene Strauss and Caster Semenya, as dynamic individuals she looks up to. "They are both strong dynamic women each in their own fields who have had to overcome criticism and obstacles to get to success. They both showed true elegance by never giving up," she said.

Her advice to future Journalism students at DUT is to do it for the passion and excel in it because only the best ones get the best jobs!



Pictured:Asilungile Ngcobo (Former Miss DUT and Current Miss SA Campus), at the World Miss University pageant.

When asked some of the highlights in her career, she stressed that she could not choose one because they all meant the world to her and they were all priceless. However, having her own feature on Mela was great and now featuring on SABC 3 for TIOT8, was a dream come true.

In terms of what viewers expect from her in the Tropika Island Of Treasure-Season 8, she quickly added that she had a lot of fun and laughter at the Island. A lot of swimwear, and the real person she is was shown.



Asilungile Ngcobo clinches "Best Dressed" accolade at Miss World University Competition.



The ecstatic Lisanne Lazarus upon winning Tropika Island Of Treasure- Season 8.



Asilungile Ngcobo forged international friendships at the competition.



# NEW LIBRARY FOR DUT MIDLANDS CAMPUS

NDUDUZO NDLOVU

THE DAYS OF SMALLER STUDY ROOMS, LIMITED OPERATIONAL HOURS AND LIMITED RESOURCES AT LIBRARIES ARE OVER FOR THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (DUT) STUDENTS AT THE MIDLANDS CAMPUSES, AS DUT HAS COMPLETED A NEW STATE OF THE ART LIBRARY AT INDUMISO CAMPUS AND A MAJOR REVAMP AT THE RIVERSIDE CAMPUS LIBRARY.

*The Edge* visited both libraries and spoke to the exultant DUT Subject Librarian, Lindiwe Gumede based at Indumiso Campus library, and she could not contain her excitement about the new establishments. “This is a major milestone and an historic moment for the DUT Midlands campuses. We are very grateful to Dr Martin Mandew, the Centre Director: Midlands Campus because he has been very supportive of this project,” said Gumede.

Asked about some of the new innovative features at the Indumiso Campus library, Gumede said the library now has a 24 hour Study Centre, which offers study area to students after the library operating hours. It also has Postgraduate Research Commons dedicated to Postgraduate students and researchers, a new computer lab for training for approximately 50 students has also been built, social reading spaces for casual reading with relaxed seating and the Writing Centre has also been housed in the new library, previously the Writing Centre was in a separate building.

“We now have more group rooms where students can work in groups, we have enough computer facilities for students to do online searches as we have most of our resources available online. There is also provision for the Mobile tech area for gadgets like Ipads and tablets for use by the students, we have printing facilities that allow our students to print, scan and email documents and information and we have expanded study space for students,” said Gumede.

She said the Indumiso Campus library will cater mainly for Education, Nursing and Engineering students, but it will also be used by students who are registered for programmes at the Riverside Campus,



as some of the students are staying in on-campus residences at Indumiso Campus.

“The library is considered the heart of any educational institution, and one of the key DUT Library objectives is to provide enabling learning environments that promote student success and advance the intellectual, social and emotional growth of students. It is also important to highlight that both libraries are user-friendly to both abled and disabled students, and they comply with all health and safety requirements,” added Gumede.

She also urged students to take full advantage of these resources. Both libraries are now fully operational, and their operating hours are as follows:

Indumiso Campus library are 07h30 to 24h00 from Monday to Thursday, 07h30 to 16h30 on Fridays, 08h00 to 16h00 on Saturday and the Study Centre will be open 24/7.

Public Relations Management, B-Tech student, Nomlando Khumalo based at the Riverside Campus, also shared her excitement about the refurbished library at the Riverside Campus. “The design is very captivating and welcoming, it is very conducive for studying and the study rooms are spacious, which will enable us to do our group work. I will definitely take advantage of these resources,” said Khumalo.

## DUT WELCOMES ITS NEW CHANCELLOR: MS NONKULULEKO NYEMBEZI

THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY INSTALLED ITS NEW CHANCELLOR, MS NONKULULEKO NYEMBEZI IN MARCH 2018.



Pictured: Ms Nonkululeko Nyembezi on the night of her inauguration as DUT Chancellor.

Ms Nyembezi takes over from Judge Vuka Tshabalala. Currently, the Chief Executive Officer of Ichor Coal N.V., an international mining company focusing on thermal coal production in South Africa; Nyembezi has grown to become one of the most respected woman in business in the world.

Ms Nyembezi has navigated a terrain that is still overwhelmingly male-dominated with seemingly effortless ease, excelling in the process with long strings of firsts following her trail. Known as South Africa's 'woman of steel', because of her successful career in the engineering field- with no doubt she has proven resilience in the high-demand corporate environment.

On her appointment, as DUT's new Chancellor, Ms Nyembezi, said it was a singular honour and privilege for her to be accepting her role as Chancellor at DUT, adding that her recognition from her peers was a gift, one that she did not take for granted. Confessing to doing mathematics for fun when she was at school, and for whom excellence was a habit, not an act, she made it clear that it was just a measure of good luck that propelled her to success. She

NOXOLO MEMELA, NDUDUZO NDLOVU AND WAHEEDA PETERS

stressed that the combination of hard work, high standards of excellence, and an astute recognition of how her engineering skills could propel her at a time when few women were excelling in the field, saw her leap from success to success.

Addressing attendees of her inauguration, Nyembezi spoke of success stating that she had been asked by many young people what is the formula for success. “Unfortunately, the answer to that question is there is none. Success is not a generic term, it means different things to different people. So, for example, in my case, I never spent half a minute formulating a private plan that I will be CEO in five years or Chancellor at DUT in 10 years. Such a thing, I have never done. My particular story has been falling into things,” she said.

In her conclusion, Nyembezi highlighted that she was thrilled to be a part of DUT and to contribute in every way and watch it grow from strength to strength.

Her term of office as DUT Chancellor commenced on 1 April 2018 and will end on 31 March 2022.





# RADIODUT FOCUSES ON GROOMING LOCAL TALENT



WAHEEDA PETERS

Pictured: RadioDUT Station Manager, Sibusiso Nxumalo.

**“OUR AIM IS TO FOCUS ON THE LOCAL TALENT, PLAY MORE LOCAL STUDENT MUSIC, BROADEN OUR PROGRAMMES TO HAVE MORE GROUND-BREAKING NEWS, TALENT SEARCHES AND RADIO CAMPAIGNS ACROSS ALL DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY CAMPUSES, SAID RADIODUT STATION MANAGER, SIBUSISO NXUMALO.**

With the start of 2018, RadioDUT's Nxumalo, who has been with the station for four years, is very optimistic about the growth of the radio station and promises to deliver good quality, relevant content that educates and empowers DUT students whilst also creating more opportunities for the growth of students.

RadioDUT, the official in-house, online based radio station is diverse and vibrant; and seeks to empower students before, during and after their academic lives. Nxumalo added that RadioDUT has seen many campus radio presenters go on to bigger and better things, working in local and mainstream radio stations.

“RadioDUT has produced talents such as DJ Lolo (Londeka Shabane) of East Coast Radio, TorchLoony (Sethabile Bhakiswayo) of Inanda FM and DJ Swb (Sibusiso Nxumalo), and continues striving to produce more success stories. RadioDUT is a student-centered radio station; it's all about the student. Its aim is to support the holistic development of students through the provision of useful content that enhances the learning experience of all students,” he said.

He also added that the audience is educated, brand conscious, aspirational and information hungry, serving 23 000 students of DUT. RadioDUT also aims to create a two-way system of communication that integrates understanding, learning and development of students.

Nxumalo said student-centredness entailed ensuring different ways for students to become involved, be it a talent search for presenters, news anchors, news readers and bloggers. He said the key values such as respect, recognition, opportunity and access; loyalty, dignity and trust; transparency, openness, honesty and shared governance as well as responsibility, accountability, collegiality and professionalism; speaks volumes that RadioDut always wants students to feel free and come through to the station to chat as they do have an open door policy.

He encourages students to stay in touch through social media platforms which are very interactive with competitions. Nxumalo said being a first-year student can be daunting if students don't know their campus and what it offers. Nxumalo urged students to go onto the RadioDUT website to find information on the HIV Centre and Student Counselling, to name but a few.

“Enjoy your student life, have fun but also balance your academics with your social life. We encourage each student to listen to RadioDUT live which is cheap. There are shows to cater to every students' needs from 9am to 9pm, Monday to Friday. Also, students can download the RadioDUT app on IOS and Android,” he said.

**To tune in: Go to [www.RadioDUT.co.za](http://www.RadioDUT.co.za)**

**To interact with RadioDUT:**

Download the DUT App:  
**<http://www.dut.ac.za/app/>**

Facebook:  
**[www.facebook.com/RadioDUTOnline](http://www.facebook.com/RadioDUTOnline)**

Twitter:  
**[www.twitter.com/RadioDUTOnline](http://www.twitter.com/RadioDUTOnline)**

YouTube:  
**[www.youtube.com/user/RadioDUT](http://www.youtube.com/user/RadioDUT)**

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visit <http://radiodut.co.za/contact-us/>



Pictured: Matt Tsolo, RadioDUT's drive host from 3pm to 5pm.



# DUT WRITING CENTRES NURTURE STUDENTS IN WRITING STRATEGIES

WAHEEDA PETERS



**SERVING THE NEED TO DEVELOP WRITING AND READING IN DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (DUT) COMMUNITY; IS THE VITAL ROLE TAKEN BY THE DUT WRITING CENTRES.**

DUT has five Writing Centres which are spread across campuses, namely Steve Biko, ML Sultan and City Campus in Durban, Indumiso and Riverside in Pietermaritzburg. The sixth centre is expected to be opened at Ritson Campus sometime this year. The Writing Centre team consists of Dr Gift Mheta, Ms Shahieda Kraft, Dr Nereshnee Govender, Andrea Alcock and Ms Nonhlanhla Khumalo.

The Writing Centres have trained tutors, mostly senior students, who assist students and staff with strategies for writing in different disciplines; assignments for humanities and science-related academic courses; reading, researching and referencing; proposals; dissertations; articles, book chapters and books for publication; business and professional writing; creative writing and course syllabi, to name but a few.

Giving a better understanding on the role the Writing Centres play at DUT is Dr Gift Mheta, the Writing Centre coordinator at DUT, who is based at the Steve Biko Campus Writing Centre. He is the chief editor of the first trilingual (ChiShona, isiNdebele and English) dictionary of musical terms entitled, *Duramazwi reMimhanzi* (2005). In addition, he has published articles and book chapters on lexicography, translations and African literature. One of his recent publications is a textbook entitled, *Language Society and Communication: An Introduction*.

He said the DUT Writing Centre's core focus is individualised writing consultations for students and staff (face-to-face, group and on-line consultations). "These consultations are conducted by trained peer tutors who are passionate about writing and contributing towards student success. Tutors guide, advise and support users (students, staff and alumni), with the aim of developing writing competence; offering collegial support and writing companionship; and listening and helping users plan and structure ideas and thoughts," he said. Dr Mehta also added that there are feedback forms for users to reflect on their development as writers. It also shows students' perception of the tutoring and how this impacts on their learning, highlighting areas that require improvement in student learning.

DUT student Nonkululeko Wathi, spoke of her experience utilising the Writing Centre. "The Writing Centre has helped me a lot with my grammar, research methodology, understanding my topic better, writing skills and developing ideas for my research topics. Whenever I walked into the Writing Centre without a booking, available tutors would be more than happy to assist me. The Writing Centre is very much beneficial to all students studying at DUT," she said.

Dr Mehta is also happy to announce that the Writing Centre usage by students has grown in leaps and bounds, with 39.1% students utilising the centre, to date. "The growth in the DUT Writing Centre usage can be explained by the fact that more and more students are coming back for follow-up sessions. This is an indicator that both students and staff are beginning to understand writing as an iterative process that requires Writing Centre users to have several follow-up sessions," he said.

Dr Mehta also spoke about the Writing Centre's involvement in several writing activities such as discipline-specific writing workshops, annual writing competitions, debates, and institutional projects such as Siyaphumelela, First-Year Student Experience and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL).

He said the annual Creative Writing Competition (in honour of the late Lewis Nkosi, a South African academic, creative writer and political activist), was a crucial, student development initiative event. He added that in line with promoting both academic and creative writing among students, the Writing Centre conducted an annual writing competition and all DUT full-time undergraduates with a passion for writing were eligible to participate in the competition.

"The fact that students are reading and writing outside their disciplines through this competition is an achievement on its own. Furthermore, the winning entries in the competition are being used in the Cornerstone Module of the General Education Programme at DUT. In terms of research and publications, the Writing Centre is cognisant of the need to contribute to Writing Centre knowledge and practice through reflective research on our pedagogy. Furthermore, we value contributing to the research profile of the University by writing and also supporting other writers," he said proudly.

For more information, go to: [www.dut.ac.za/academic/writing\\_centre](http://www.dut.ac.za/academic/writing_centre).

# EATING HOT SPOTS AT DUT

NDUDUZO NDLOVU AND WAHEEDA PETERS

**STUDENT LIFE ENCOMPASSES NOT ONLY AN ACADEMIC LIFE BUT ALSO A SOCIAL ASPECT WHERE ONE CAN HANG OUT TO MEET UP WITH FRIENDS AND SHARE A MEAL.**



ML Sultan



Indumiso's Jailbreak



Riverside Café

## Steve Biko Campus

At Steve Biko Campus, students can go to the Tromso eatery for their grub.

The Food Court is a popular haunt which caters for all students at an affordable rate with a wide variety of food on the menu.

Rendezvous Restaurant has a good sit-down atmosphere.

## ML Sultan Campus

Unwind at the ML Sultan café with a quick meal or a game of pool.

## City Campus

Al-Minaret is the place to be for a quick game of pool and a hearty meal.

## Indumiso Campus

If you at the Indumiso Campus, go along to the 'Jailbreak' café for a scrumptious meal.

## Riverside Campus

At Riverside Campus, the Riverside café has a wonderful ambiance with great food.