

# THE EDGE

Quarterly Magazine – Issue No. 3. October 2024



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SCIENCES BRINGS DUT COMMUNITY TOGETHER



**DUT**  
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
INYUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE

**ENVISION2030**

transparency • honesty • integrity • respect • accountability  
fairness • professionalism • commitment • compassion • excellence

**CREATIVE. DISTINCTIVE. IMPACTFUL.**



## GUEST EDITOR’S NOTE



As we step into the vibrant Spring season, we embrace the dual celebrations of Spring and Heritage.

The season’s warmth welcomes us to flourish in a vibrant tapestry of traditions, celebrating the distinct customs, beliefs, and practices that make us who we are.

With that being said, I would like to wish everyone a fresh start this Spring, symbolising new beginnings. May this season come with joy and the realisation of your dreams.


Now to share a bit about my recent fresh start. As a new intern in the Communications unit, I have learned a tremendous amount from my colleagues and mentors. Their guidance, expertise, and willingness to share knowledge have been invaluable to my growth and understanding of the role that I was placed in.

I have had the opportunity to work alongside talented individuals who have become like a second family to me, offering support and encouragement every step of the way.


In the unit, meeting deadlines is essential, and I am grateful to be part of such a brilliant and attentive team. The strong spirit of teamwork is driven by DUT’s ENVISION2030 Living Values Framework, comprising five core values: transparency, honesty, integrity, respect and accountability. It ensures that we consistently meet our deadlines and produce excellent work.

The value that resonates with me the most at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) is fairness. As a journalist, I believe that fairness is crucial in our line of work. DUT’s emphasis on fairness has inspired me to uphold the highest journalistic integrity and ethical standards.

PHIWAYINKOSI SIBIYA



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Please send us your suggestions on what you would like to see featured in The Edge 2024, as we hope to further improve the content.

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**IMAGES:**  
DUT Audio Visual, Supplied, Waheeda Peters, Thubelihle Dumakude, Phumeza Msongelwa, Phiwayinkosi Sibiya, Sinamile Sithole, Vukani Langa

**PRINTING:** ROCMEDIA



# DUT ALUMNI MAKES AN IMPACT, ADDRESSING SOCIAL CHALLENGES THROUGH FASHION

WAHEEDA PETERS

**Balini Naidoo-Engelbrecht, a visionary fashion designer from Saldanha Bay, has made a name for herself since graduating with Cum Laude honours in Fashion and Textiles Design from the Durban University of Technology (DUT).**

Currently based in Saldanha Bay on the West Coast of Western Cape, Naidoo-Engelbrecht founded Balini TM after completing her studies at DUT six years ago. Her passion for fashion has earned her numerous prestigious accolades.

Naidoo-Engelbrecht's journey began with a personal experience – witnessing the challenges faced by a visually impaired family member while selecting clothing. This sparked her commitment to empowerment and innovative design. Today, her braille designs are being applied to affordable leisure wear for the visually impaired.

Her remarkable story is a testament to the power of dreams and dedication.

In 2015, she found herself among the elite Top 10 designers acknowledged by the distinguished Society of Dyers and Colourists.

She continued to shine the following year, earning a spot among the top 25 designers at the Vodacom Durban July Young Designer Awards in 2016.

In 2018, Naidoo-Engelbrecht's innovative designs stole the spotlight at the Design Indaba Emerging Creative Class of 2018.

That same year, she was honoured with a nomination as a Southern African Development Community Top 100 Innovator.

In 2019, she served as a Goalkeeper for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, impacting change on a global scale. The status of Golkeeper recognises leaders who are pushing forward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The year 2022 heralded fresh accomplishments as she received a nomination for the prestigious Tamil Business Award in the Woman in Business Category.

A significant highlight for Naidoo-Engelbrecht was on 31 May 2022 when she was presented with a Parliamentary Award, celebrating her groundbreaking Braille Identification System. The acknowledgement was a testament to her unwavering dedication to recognising and addressing the needs of individuals with sight impairments.

Beyond fashion, Naidoo-Engelbrecht collaborated with the Wits Health Consortium at Vredenburg Provincial Hospital on the “EMove in the



Maternity Ward” research study which focused on preventing Postpartum Haemorrhage.

Through her partnership with a local youth hub, Naidoo-Engelbrecht provided transformative sewing classes in 2022, bridging the skills gap for unemployed youth and paving the way for economic empowerment.

Recent accomplishments include winning the Woolworths Youth Maker competition (2024). Her new range will be showcased at selected stores.

The fashion fundi also formed a partnership with Dove to create a show-stopper braille-inspired dress for the Hollywood Bets Durban July (2024).

Naidoo-Engelbrecht's aspirations stretch far beyond the catwalk. Her mission is to inspire designers to address Africa's challenges through innovative solutions, emphasizing honesty, integrity, and charisma.

Naidoo-Engelbrecht's story is a testament to resilience, determination, and the celebration of diversity. “Your actions shape your legacy,” she said, echoing Nelson Mandela's wisdom.

Beyond the realm of fashion, Naidoo-Engelbrecht's legacy is built on inclusivity, empathy, and unwavering dedication. At the helm of Balini TM, she charts a course for limitless possibility.

For Naidoo-Engelbrecht, a typical day begins with dropping off her three-year-old daughter at school, followed by administrative duties and customer orders.

When asked about her goals, she said: “There is so much more in store, including a five-year plan that is underway, but over the years I have learned to leave it in God's hands because he knows the plans of my heart,” she explained.

On inclusive fashion, she noted: “It's not about the latest trends, shades or styles, but making an impact and addressing social challenges.”

Naidoo-Engelbrecht is currently pursuing accreditation as a trainer.

Her advice to new designers: “Be passionate. Having a story behind your creation, being unique, pushing boundaries and addressing social challenges in your designs are pivotal,” she said.

Her expert advice to future student designers at DUT is to find a unique style and keep it consistent.

“Don't try to copy what has already been done. We live in a country with such rich cultures and that should breathe through our designs. Always think out of the box and always remember form follows function,” she advised.



# EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S LEADERS: DUT'S STUDENT LEADERSHIP WEEK CULMINATES INTO GALA DINNER

THUBELIHLE DUMAKUDE

The Durban University of Technology's (DUT) Student Governance and Development Unit recently hosted a captivating Gala Dinner as part of the Student Leadership Week.

The prestigious event recently took place at the Riverside hotel.

The unit's primary goal is to provide a governance framework for student activities, offering high-quality support and interventions to all students and creating a nurturing environment for student leaders.

The Gala Dinner marked the culmination of a series of development programmes that encompassed training, information sessions, and consultative services for student leaders.

These initiatives were designed to cultivate a wide array of essential life skills for young leaders in line with DUT's ENVISION2030 strategy.





# WHERE CODING MEETS COMMUNITY: THEMBELIHLE QUEEN HADEBE'S INSPIRING PROGRAMME

PHUMEZA MSONGELWA

**Thembelihle Queen Hadebe, a driven Honours ICT student at Durban University of Technology, founded the Coding and Robotics Programme to enhance STEM education in grassroots communities.**

The Coding and Robotics Programme, which started in 2023, trains educators in coding and electronics, while also directly instructing learners, preparing them for tech-driven careers.

The concept emerged in 2022, but Hadebe struggled to bring it to life. Enrolling in DUT's IoT programme, she met Senior Lecturer Ebrahim Asmal, who was working on a similar project. Their collaboration sparked a breakthrough.

"Traditional educational systems often lag behind technological advancements, leaving students unprepared for today's job market. Many students at community level struggle with STEM skills. This lack of proficiency threatens job prospects and exacerbates the unemployment crisis," she explained.

Despite a slow start earlier this year, Hadebe's Coding and Robotics Programme has made significant strides. Over 1000 educators have been trained, and the 2023 RoboGirl winners have received further education on advanced technology. Additionally, an exciting event is in the works under Hadebe's programme —teaching students from the DUT community to operate drones using a simulator.

The programme won first prize at the Engagement Showcase and Pitching Awards 2024, underscoring its impact and success.

Hadebe emphasises: "This initiative is not only about fostering innovation and reducing unemployment but also about securing a better future for the community as a whole," she said.

Pictured: Educators at the RoboGirl training.



## CAMPUS VIBES

# SPRING INTO STYLE: DUT STUDENTS ROCK THE LATEST TRENDS

PHIWAYINKOSI SIBIYA

**As the warmth of Spring sets in, DUT students are embracing the freshest fashion trends: lightweight fabrics, vibrant colours, and bold prints.**

We caught up with some DUT students to see how they're updating their wardrobes for spring.

Nonhle Mkhwanazi, a third-year Clothing and Textile student, radiated confidence with her outfit that perfectly captured the essence of spring. She wore a bright red-orange crop top and sported short braids.

"Spring is my favourite time of the year. I get to wear outfits that make me feel truly alive. My fashion choices are not just about showcasing style, but they are also about wearing outfits that boost my mood," she said.

Msawenkosi Biyela, a third-year Electronic and Computer Engineering student, opted for a light brown T-shirt, orange shorts, and Adidas Adilette slides, adding a cap to complete the look.

"After a long day of lectures, I look forward to hitting the beach with my friend! Just as Spring brings new life in nature, Spring is all about refreshing my mind and recharging my batteries," added Biyela.

Thabo Mkhize and Khayaletu Songunzu, both Electronic and Computer Engineering students, wore outfits that embodied the spirit of spring: fresh, youthful, and full of energy.



Pictured: A group of students from Electronic and Computer Engineering studies show off their cool Spring looks.

Naledi Mosia, a BTech student in Chemical Engineering, donned a crisp white t-shirt and shorts. "Spring is the perfect excuse to rock my favourite outfit," she said.

As we welcome the new season, remember that spring is a time for growth, learning, and self-discovery. Just like the vibrant colours of Spring, let your personality, talents, and spirit shine bright and bold.





# CELEBRATING OUR ROOTS: DUT STUDENTS SHARE THEIR HERITAGE STORIES

Celebrating one's heritage is a time to reflect on their cultural, social, and historical inheritance. From language and music, to dance and architecture, heritage takes many forms. Heritage is the thread that weaves the past, present, and future together.



The Durban University of Technology (DUT) Communications team members, Phiwayinkosi Sibiya and Sinamile Sithole, took to the campus streets to ask DUT students about the significance of heritage in their lives. Here's what they had to say:



**Vanessa Dlamini:**  
Third-year Business Law student

To me heritage it all about celebrating the diverse cultures across South Africa and appreciating the richness of our differences. I understand that every individual has their own unique culture, and I also respect their backgrounds. As a proud Zulu woman, I often wear traditional clothing and I participate in traditional dances at events.



**Ryan Chetty:**  
Second-year Mechanical Engineering student

"Heritage allows everyone to celebrate their roots, where they came from and be proud of it instead of hiding, as society expects them to do. I celebrated by wearing cultural clothes to show people that I am not afraid to be myself."

**Andile Khwela:**  
First-year Chemical Engineering student

"Knowing your roots plays a crucial role in one's life. Heritage allows people to unite and express themselves in different ways, most usually through dance or singing songs that represent their culture. This year, I celebrated the day with my family."



**Zenande Phindane:**  
Third-year Business Law student

"Heritage month is a time when the different cultures celebrate their culture. This is significant to me because it allows me to take pride in where I come from and embrace my cultural background without fear of judgment or mistreatment. This year, as a Xhosa girl, I wore traditional Xhosa attire that symbolises my culture and I attended heritage-related events to celebrate my heritage."



**Siphelele Mkhize:**  
First-year Electrical Engineering student

"Heritage month is a time that reminds me of my background and roots. It's a time for everyone to celebrate their culture in any way they choose. During this month we get to know more about our culture as our elders share their knowledge with us, since we don't know much about our culture. To honour heritage month, I prepared traditional food and wore my Zulu traditional attire."



**Thakasile Sithole:**  
First-year Analytical Chemistry student

"Heritage Month, to me means knowing where you come from and also knowing your roots. It is the month that allows me to be proud of my culture and wear my cultural attire as a Zulu girl. I celebrated Heritage Month by attending the Zulu Reed Dance at KwaNongoma. My friends and I also formed a group that will do a traditional dance on campus at DUT."



# SPORTS DAY SUCCESS: FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES BRINGS DUT COMMUNITY TOGETHER

SUPPLIED

The Faculty of Management Sciences at DUT, in collaboration with DUT Business School and Gagasi FM, successfully hosted its first Annual Sports Day recently.

All 11 departments from the faculty gathered at the university's sports grounds for a day filled with camaraderie, sportsmanship, and fun.

The event featured various sporting activities, such as soccer, volleyball, and netball, with participation from both staff and students. In addition to the sports, the day was packed with games and entertainment, bringing together the entire DUT community in a celebration of social cohesion and healthy living.

Gagasi FM added to the festive atmosphere with live music and interactive activities.

Executive Dean, Prof Netswera, expressed his pride in the faculty's participation, noting that the event fostered unity across departments. He also declared the day a "no-lecture, no-work" event, allowing everyone to fully immerse themselves in the activities.

This annual event aims to strengthen relationships within the Faculty of Management Sciences and beyond, encouraging a holistic approach to well-being.

The day concluded with a vibrant awards ceremony to recognise outstanding performances across the various sporting codes. Plans are already underway to make next year's event even bigger and better.

Pictured: DUT staff and students having fun at its annual Sports day.





# DUT WOMEN'S RUGBY TEAM MAKES HISTORY WITH KZNRU MURRAY CUP WIN

VUKANI LANGA

The Durban University of Technology's (DUT) women's rugby team recently cemented their dominance on the pitch, claiming the KwaZulu-Natal Rugby Union (KZNRU) Women's Murray Cup for the first time.

The thrilling 29-0 victory over Varsity College at the Riverside Varsity College Sport Complex marked a triumphant moment in the team's history.

After falling short in last year's semifinals against the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal (UKZN), the Warriors secured their redemption, walking away with the coveted cup worth R30,000.

Star players Karthy Dlodla and Sinenhlanhla Luthuli took home the Player of the Series (R5,000) and Player of the Match (R1,000) awards, respectively.

Coach Bongumusa Mvelase attributed the win to the team's tireless efforts, teamwork, and unwavering belief. "We are very excited to have won this cup. After we have won a preseason, Source Cup and KZN Women's Premiere, we believe we can win any cup," said Mvelase.

Mvelase praised the team's head coach, Archie Moko, for his invaluable experience. As a former Sharks Women's head coach, he brought a wealth of knowledge to our team," added Mvelase.

Team captain Nomusa May said this win was an emotional one because they worked very hard as a team in preparing for this cup.

"I was very emotional and ecstatic. The ladies worked very hard for this massive win and to finally achieve this is incredible. I am so proud of my team and honoured to be part of this journey. The amount of commitment from the ladies throughout the season has led us to this win," said May.

This victory follows the team's impressive debut at the University Sports South Africa (USSA) Rugby Champions, where they won the Cup in Section C. The tournament took place in Grahamstown from 2-4 July 2024.

**Pictured: DUT Women's team lifting the KwaZulu-Natal Rugby Union (KZNRU) Women's Murray Cup.**

