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Photonic technology research partnership

Karishma Ganpath

Professor Daan Lenstra a leading scientist from the Technical University of Delft, in The Netherlands, held a two day seminar on the revolution of photonic technology and the challenges of becoming a high-ranked university by world standards. The seminar was held on ML Sultan Campus in June and was attended by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and DUT.

Professor Theo Andrew, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE) had met with Professor Lenstra on a visit to Technical University of Delft in 2010. Their passion for science, engineering and research has led to an academic partnership between the two institutions. Professor Lenstra has co-authored more than 500 research publications and is currently in retirement but is keen on developing interest and engaging with academics on the continent in the field of photonic technology. Professor Andrew said the visit was a scouting exercise to establish future collaborations in innovation and research. According to the world ranking system, the Technical University of Delft is ranked 33 in Engineering and Technology in the world and is first in The Netherlands.

Professor Andrew said: "It is great to learn from someone who is linked and working with such a prestigious university. It gives us a new long term horizon. Thus far we have identified possible areas of collaboration with the FEBE, UKZN and Prof Lenstra in quantum information and communication. After Professor Lenstra's three week academic and scouting visit, he will report to the two universities on possible areas that can be taken further." He said Technical University of Delft shares a similar background to DUT, as it had developed from a Polytech. International Education and Partnerships director, Dr Lavern Samuels said: "Professor Lenstra is an exemplar on the topic of photonic technology. His vast experience can contribute strategically and at a systemic level in terms of how DUT can elevate its standing within the international higher education sector and in its local community."

Professor Lenstra said telecommunication plays a crucial part in our life and it is therefore essential to have tailored, state of the art communication. Photonic technology is currently implemented in Europe; however there is insufficient research on it in Africa. "Although photonic integration is still in its infancy, it has already proven the ability to be a breakthrough technology, especially in telecommunications and information, health and life sciences as well as lighting and displays." He said the new partnership aims to make photonic technology commercially available in an affordable way, using devices.

With regards to developing research capacity, he said: "Besides striving to become a research university, DUT has the ambition to become a research university of note. This will require a certain change in attitude amongst the staff towards excellence in various respects such as international visibility, competitiveness and scientific leadership."



From left, Prof Theo Andrew, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE) and Prof Daan Lenstra from the Technical University of Delft, in The Netherlands

67 minutes of clean-up for DUT on Mandela Day

Andile Dube

Monday the 18th of July saw the kick-off of the annual 67 minutes campaign. The campaign is a call from Nelson Mandela for people to celebrate his birthday by dedicating their time to helping others in an effort to make the world a better place.

Students, staff, members of the community and learners from five Durban schools took part in the clean-up project at the Umgeni River Mouth.

Marking the 93rd birthday of Nelson Mandela, the 70 school pupils from Ekuthuleni Primary School, Briardale Primary School, Summerfield Primary School and Ferndale Combined School and DUT students took part in the clean-up. DUT Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ahmed Bawa, eThekweni's Speaker, Logie Nadoo and Brian Ash were speakers at the function and quoted Mahatma Gandhi

"The earth, air, the land and the water are not inherited from our forefathers, but are on loan from our children. So we have to hand over to them at least as it was handed over to us."

The pupils couldn't wait to get their hands dirty and start cleaning the river mouth. Speaking to the pupils, DUT Chancellor, Ela Gandhi spoke about the importance of keeping the environment clean at all times. Gandhi, who is the driving force behind the project also joined in picking up debris.

Programme Co-ordinator at the Gandhi Development Trust, Kanya Padayachee said they are very happy to have the learners and students involved in the clean-up. She added that they will now be Green Ambassadors as they will be going back to their communities and schools and teaching others about the effects of pollution, littering and the need to recycle.

Durban Solid Waste gave a lesson on recycling and gave out appropriate bags to ensure that the waste material is put into the right place for recycling.



Photographer: Andile Dube

DUT students and School pupils from Ekuthuleni Primary School, Briardale Primary School, Summerfield Primary School and Ferndale Combined School with the litter picked up at Mgeni River



Editor's Corner

The past few months at the university have been rather trying for staff and students alike. The university came to a standstill during the student protests and we were lambasted in local and national media. But, through it all, there has been lots of amazing research and projects happening at DUT. It's unfortunately impossible to use ConDUiT as a platform for all the good news at the university, but this issue provides a snapshot of what's been happening over the past few months.

A survey conducted by the Communications office yielded the following results:

The ConDUiT

73.3% read the ConDUiT

10.1% do not read the ConDUiT

14.1% do not receive a copy

DUT website

93.8% of respondents visit the DUT website

6.3% do not visit the DUT website

Social media

54.3% use Facebook

8.7% use Twitter

15.2% use both Facebook and Twitter

32.6% do not use social media

Communication channels

56.3% of staff prefer general emails, directly to their inbox

Online newsletters

72.6% read online newsletters

27.4% do not read online newsletters

The winner of the pamper session at DUT's Somatology clinic, Geeta Pursan has generously offered to send a colleague, Cheryl White for the manicure, pedicure, D/C facial and full body massage as she believes she is "more deserving"! I think that "DUT Stars" (given to staff who go above and beyond the call of duty) should be given to Geeta!

Enjoy this issue, and please visit the DUT website for more great DUT stories!

Ciao, Raylene

Manager: Communications

New telephone management system

Alvin Naidoo

Telephony costs are usually high in an Institution with the number of users that exists at DUT, however, there are always incidents of abuse which inadvertently escalate the already high costs of communication.

The Logistics department has initiated a project to reduce Telephony costs and this project was supported by Management. The idea is to sensitise users to the principal of being cautious with the manner in which you use resources that are available to you. This is not a "punitive" measure to punish users, but one encouraging users to manage their telephony costs more effectively.

Users would have received e-mails from TI-mailer, requesting information on certain numbers that are frequently dialed, where you would indicate whether they are "Personal" or "Business". This is called "Call Profiling". The idea is to establish the number of users utilizing the Institution's resources for "personal" calls as well as "business" calls.

Whilst staff should realize that they are not being prevented from making "Personal" calls, it should be "within reason".

Managers and HODs would now have a more user friendly report that details subordinate staff's activity and users can be identified where abuse is suspected and remedial action can be taken by the relevant Manager.

Budgets can be set up for users and managed. Departments can now also set up "Call Allowances" for certain users, where the system would alert a user once they have reached a certain threshold, e.g. 50% of your allowance has been reached, etc.

Users need to understand that the e-mails you receive are an automated response from the system and not originating from an individual, so the issue of privacy is addressed. The information pertaining to your activity would only be made available to your immediate senior, or on request.

Telephony costs are high at DUT and every user has the responsibility of ensuring that we participate in reducing these costs. The resources provided by the institution should be regarded in the same manner as you would your own, where care is taken to prevent abuse and unnecessary costs.

I trust that the DUT community receives this initiative in the spirit in which it was intended and actively participate in efforts to reduce their communication costs.

Durban International Film Festival showcases Video Tech students' creativity

The work of four aspiring filmmakers from the Video Technology Department was screened at the Durban International Film Festival in July. Shanelle Jewnarain, Kenny Gwele, Devin Carter and Gevillian Letsoalo were thrilled to have their work exposed to the local and international community and are keen to pursue further interest in the field.

Third year student, Jewnarain's 13 minute production titled, *Sam and Barry* is focused on the main character Barry who still lives with his mother. The tale begins with Barry losing his job and his struggle with the idea of being different. Barry's insecurities over the years have led to him retaining his childhood imaginary friend, Sam. Jewnarain describes the tale of Sam and Barry as, "a story of friendship and acceptance which highlights society's apprehension in accepting that which is different or strange, be it of others or of one's self".

She said: "I have always been inspired by the innocence and naivety of children and how in growing up, we retain and lose some aspects of these traits". Last year, Jewnarain produced a short film for the Durban Short Film Challenge in association with the Durban International Film Festival. The film, a 'mockumentary', was based on planet Pluto coming down to Earth after being demoted from its planet status. She said the initiative provided great experience and the film received positive reviews from both the audience and her peers. Jewnarain is passionate about filmmaking and hopes to continue telling stories and sharing ideas.

BTech student (Kenny) Gwele's 45 minute production, *Safe and Clean* was his first attempt at a feature and revolves around abortion. The film is focused on Kat and Seth who find themselves in a difficult situation after their relationship falls apart. Kat discovers she is pregnant and wants nothing to do with Seth. However her situation forces her to call upon him for help. Seth wants Kat's forgiveness, but she is adamant on an abortion. A disturbing set of events is set in motion when their financial situation forces them to settle for a back alley abortion.

Gwele intends on producing a movie each year. He was inspired to create a film on the controversial issue as many teenagers and students are faced with the dilemma of deciding the outcome of an unwanted pregnancy. He said the title of the film was motivated by the numerous abortion stickers on walls and light poles across the streets of Durban.



"One day I came across a sticker which read, 'Abortion, Safe and Clean, Call...' and I thought this would be a great title for my movie. I recently learned eThekweni Municipality is going to make a concerted effort to rid the streets of these abortion stickers and a few back alley abortionists had been arrested. It is good to know that my film had some relevance to what is currently happening in Durban.

"I have chosen not to push any sort of message or agenda with this film. My intention was just to tell a story and let the audience draw their own conclusions," said Gwele.

Director Kenneth Gwele and a promo pic for his film, *Safe and Clean* (inset above)

DUT launches web registration

Andile Dube and Anelisa Bele

The Durban University of Technology's student web registration has been designed to make registration a breeze with fast, easy and efficient online access. The university launched the first round of web registration last semester with a select number of programmes and a second round was held in July for the Engineering and Applied Sciences faculties.

The new system will ultimately reduce students' average registration time by a third, with students saying goodbye to long queues. However, a few teething problems were experienced in July when some students resorted to manual registration when they failed to log onto the system.

Online registration project manager, Mohammed Jhavary said: "We are embarking on a process to review and refine the academic structure on the system and encouraging student use of the iEnabler to ensure they are more familiar with the system so that password related problems are prevented."

"Positive feedback was received from the Faculty of Applied Sciences where students were well prepared and able to register in record time, without having to stand in long queues." He said the web registration system was created to allow students to register anywhere in the world, provided that they have made the necessary payments beforehand and do not have any academic or administrative blocks, the system will ensure that registration is quick and painless.

Civil Engineering lecturer, Avidesh Raghubar described online registration as the way to go, however he said students who are not computer literate were disadvantaged, the remaining students were happy about the process, despite finding it fast but complicated.

Fulbright scholar focuses on building research capacity

Karishma Ganpath

Fulbright New York scholar, Professor Kathy Nokes hosted a workshop titled, 'One Person, Two Infections: HIV/TB' at ML Sultan Campus on 3 August. Professor Nokes is the Director of the Graduate Nursing Program at Hunter College, Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing at City University of New York. Her visit to South Africa was aimed at building research and publication capacity within the university's Postgraduate Nursing programme and a collaborative research project between the two universities.

Over the last eleven years she has visited South Africa seven times to establish academic partnerships. She has published more than 80 research papers internationally, focusing on HIV/AIDS and Nursing Education. Her career in nursing began in 1967 and subsequently began teaching nursing in 1970.

During her visit, Professor Nokes held a series of lectures for academic staff on writing for professional journals, publications and seminars on choosing research instruments. She also worked on including HIV/AIDS education as part of nursing curriculum and outreach practices.

Professor Nokes said the Occupational

Health Postgraduate Nursing programme currently uses a blended learning approach using Blackboard, an online learning programme to communicate with students and face to face teaching and learning in the classroom. She said: "The benefit of Blackboard is that it allows you to communicate with students over long distances and allows for remote learning." In regards to research capacity building, Professor Nokes described the non-course dissertation approach as problematic. She said: "The concept is lovely and in principle it works, however students have been found to take an enormous amount of time to complete their study. When you look at the student throughput, students are not graduating. The process is therefore not productive. More work needs to be done to make students understand methodologies and the qualitative and quantitative research approach and to provide ongoing support through a variety of venues, including use of technology."

She said it is important to have a forum for students to engage in peer evaluation and discussion which makes the process of research less isolated and enables individual development.

DUT opens WASLI African style

Andile Dube

Durban University of Technology's Intercultural Studies Group from the Translation and Interpreting Practice Programme performed for thousands of delegates from all over the world at the opening ceremony of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters Conference 2011 (WASLI) which was held in Durban from 14 to 16 July 2011.



Translation and Interpreting Practice Programme's Intercultural Studies group performing at the 2011 World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) conference.



Photographer: Andile Dube

WASLI last came to South Africa in 2005. Group member, Nomkhuleko Ngubane said they were honoured to be asked to perform at the conference, saying it was an exciting experience for them and they wish to thank their Intercultural studies lecturer, Bhekabani Nxumalo for encouraging them to love and embrace their culture.

Delegates at the conference were very impressed by the performance of these students, thanking organisers for arranging such an opening with an African style. Bhekabani Nxumalo said, "This subject emphasizes the notion of multiculturalism since South Africa is a diverse country. As a result, students are not taught their culture(s) only, but they are also encouraged to learn other cultures as well."



Empowering communities through oral methodology

Karishma Ganpath

Founder of Pedagogy in Action, Professor Nesha Haniff from Michigan State University, returned to DUT in May to hold a two-day workshop on oral HIV/AIDS methodology used to educate rural communities in South Africa.

Haniff said the project, facilitated by the International Education and Partnerships Department, is geared towards a long term partnership between the two universities.

Photographer: Robin Moodley



Staff, students and members of local community at the oral HIV/AIDS methodology workshop by founder of Pedagogy in Action, Professor Nesha Haniff

Local researcher's ground-breaking discovery

Karishma Ganpath

Microbiology lecturer and doctoral student at Durban University of Technology (DUT), Nokuthula Mchunu has completed ground-breaking research in sequencing of a thermophilic genome. Mchunu, from Port Shepstone, lectures undergraduates at the Department of Biotechnology and Food Technology and is currently completing her doctoral thesis at the University of Sains Malaysia's (USM) Centre for Chemical Biology (CCB).

Biotechnology and Food Technology HOD, Professor Suren Singh said the study is a joint project by the department and USM and forms part of Mchunu's doctoral thesis. The study is co-supervised by Professor Kugen Permaul and Professor Maqsudul Alam (CCB@USM CED, and Director of the Advance Studies in Genomics, Proteomics and Bioinformatics at University of Hawaii). Professor Alam's team has featured in the international scientific journal *Nature, Science and Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA*. The team has completed the draft genomes of papaya, rubber plants and jute including several microbial genomes.

Professor Singh said: "Mchunu spent close to a year at CCB@USM and has made excellent progress in completing the sequencing of an industrially-important thermophilic fungal genome, a world first. It is a milestone for the DUT's research achievement similar to the sequencing of the human genome."

Genomic sequencing refers to a combination of laboratory experiments and computer processing that elucidates the entire DNA sequence of a living organism. Numerous organisms have had their complete DNA sequence "read", from simple bacteria to insects, trees and humans.

Professor Singh said: "Sequencing of the human genome is one of man's greatest scientific accomplishments, taking approximately 12 years since 1989 to produce a draft version. To this day, it is only approximately 90% complete. This is due, in part, to the large amount of DNA we possess and also since about 8% contains repetitive sequences that contain no genes."

Human genomes are made up of over three billion individual building blocks, however, they do not contain the most DNA - some worms have more DNA than humans! If unwound and arranged in a linear fashion, the building blocks would reach an incredible 1.8 metres in length. Even more mind-boggling is the fact that this represents the DNA in just one of the ten thousand billion cells that make up the human body.

Mchunu's project, however, focused on a much smaller genome from a thermophilic fungus. These are fungi that prefer hot conditions and can happily survive at temperatures around 60°C. They produce enzymes that can function at even higher temperatures which are important in industrial processes as they work faster and are more temperature stable than other biological catalysts. This novel fungus *Thermomyces lanuginosus* isolated by Prof Singh in 1995 produces several such enzymes that break down biological polymers such as starch, plant residue, fats and crustacean shells to produce useful by-products.

For the first time researchers at DUT will be able to identify series of novel genes from this fungus for potential biotechnological application. Enzymes from this organism are ideal for use in the paper and pulp, food and beverage, medical, animal feed, agricultural and biofuels industries and are also important in reducing environmental pollution.



Nokuthula Mchunu

3535 Programme – A Surviving and Thriving success

Bhekani Dlamini

The Faculty of Health Sciences and Department of Health (DOH) celebrated the success of Programme 3535 earlier this year, when 31 employees from DOH's 2010 empowerment initiative registered for their second year of study.

Greg Bass, Health Sciences Deputy Dean, said the project identified 3535 full-time DOH data capturers as potentially capable of a tertiary qualification in one of the health disciplines. The project kicked off with 31 employees registered and by the end of the annual programme, 64 subject distinctions were received and only three failures were reported.

He said the faculty adopted a holistic approach and provided additional academic and social support to students via its *Surviving and Thriving* programme. "We are planning to write an academic research paper exploring the factors that contributed to the success achieved by looking at the various elements involved. We want to establish if this was because of the maturity and motivation of students, or if the commitment and holistic approach led to good results," said Bass.

DOH employees were registered for qualifications in Radiography, Biomedical Technology, Clinical Technology, Dental Technology and Emergency Medical Care and Rescue. However none from the selected group met the minimum programme entrance requirements.

Bass said the academic programmes participating in the project had volunteered to be part of the initiative, which proved to be largely successful and tremendously rewarding. The 3535 Programme was endorsed by the former Executive Dean of Health Sciences, Professor Nomthandazo Gwele, now Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic. Additional support was provided by Student Counselling and the Faculty's Academic Development Practitioner, with one-on-one consultations to identify and address academic problems.

Programme co-ordinator, Gillian Cruickshank, said mechanisms were put in place ensuring an enabling environment where problems were dealt with and solutions were found. "Everyone was committed to making it work. It was satisfying and heartening and the success of the students made it all worthwhile. It was possible because of a great and powerful team that was committed to helping students. We are now implementing the *Surviving and Thriving* programme across most of the programmes in the faculty," said Cruickshank.

Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, recently met with faculty executives to discuss a training grant set aside for areas identified as scarce skills.

DUT hosts tri-nation workshop

Bhekani Dlamini

The University hosted an India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) workshop on Ionic Liquids (ILs) funded by the National Research Foundation and Higher Education South Africa in June. The tri-nation workshop was held at the Riverside Hotel Conference Centre and organised by Professor Nirmala Deenadayalu from the Department of Chemistry.

The workshop aimed at bringing together international researchers conducting experiments on ILs in particular the Thermodynamic Properties of Ionic liquids. The event received positive feedback and was attended by international researchers Dr Pannaru Venkatesu and Dr Ramesh Gardas from India and Professor Martin Aznar from Brazil. Researchers were tasked to present their findings on ILs covering diverse fields including chemical engineering, physical chemistry and biochemistry.

The presentation by Professor Aznar, from the School of Chemical Engineering at the University of Campinas, focused on Diesel Desulfurization. He co-authored the book,

Fluid Phase Behaviour of Systems Involving High Molecular Weight Compounds and Supercritical Fluids, supervised several projects, graduate and undergraduates and has published 171 peer reviewed articles and articles for conference proceeding.

Dr Venkatesu, from the University of Delhi's Department of Chemistry, addressed staff on the activity and stability of enzymes in biocompatible Ionic Liquids. He has been published in 50 international publications and seven national publications.

Dr Gardas, from the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, is widely published with over 570 citations. He currently reviews more than 21 international journals and is a member of several international organisations. His talk focused on predicting thermophysical properties of Ionic Liquids.

Professor Deenadayalu's presentation covered screening Ionic Liquids from activity coefficients at infinite dilution, using selectivity.

Students revamp prison Mother and Child Unit

As part of national Mandela Day activities on 18 July, second-year Interior Design students embarked on the revamp of Westville Correctional Facility's Mother and Child Unit. The initiative formed part of the academic programme's community outreach initiative, to create a better environment for children.

Radio station, Gagasi 99.5 FM broadcast for 67 minutes from the Unit in an effort to assist DUT students in raising sponsorships for the project, which was installed in August.

The Unit caters for incarcerated mothers who either have babies prior to being incarcerated or whilst in prison. The children are allowed to stay in the care of their mothers until they turn two-years old, thereafter they are placed in the care of family or in foster homes.

SANDF offers opportunities

Nqobizwe Zwane

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) continued their women's month celebrations by hosting the South African National Defence (SANDF) representatives at the Sports Centre, Steve Biko Campus.

The representatives were there to encourage students to join forces like the SA Army, SA Air Force, and SA Navy. Colonel N.P. Mkutuka who is responsible for marketing and recruiting said they are on a mission of informing the youth all over the country about career opportunities available at the SANDF.



Photographer: Andile Dube

From Left: Staff Sergeant M.T. Dani, Lieutenant A Dicks, Major E Mac'Pherson, Colonel N.P. Mkutuka, Lieutenant Paul Kuhlase, and Captain P.M. Sowazi at an open day presentation at the Sports Centre, Steve Biko Campus.

Concrete Flower Organisation

Raylene Captain-Hasthibeer

The student-run Concrete Flower Organisation (CFO), geared to exploring innovative interventions towards sustainable development, was launched last semester at the University's Hotel Conference Centre.

HOD of the Town and Regional Planning Department, Alan Hansen said the idea originated in August last year, the project is the brain-child of Prince Dube, a BTech student and other students from the department.

"The CFO is about creating a sustainable society which takes the environment into consideration when making decisions," explained Hansen.

Dube highlighted that the organisation's launch coincided with World Environmental Week and added that resources should be used effectively and sparingly. Speaking on the importance the environment plays in our daily lives he said: "Cars, jewellery, everything that we have comes from the environment. It may be processed, but it comes from the environment."

Explaining the root of the aptly named "Concrete Flower Organisation", Dube said: "A concrete flower is a plant that can grow out of concrete – you don't expect something to grow out of concrete."

Dube outlined the CFO's objectives:

- Promote environmental awareness such as the preservation of natural resources – eg water, the use of renewable energy, waste management, recycling, etc
- To promote the protection of endangered species and ecosystems
- Promote green development in businesses and community areas to counteract climate change
- Promote human development by dealing with issues like education, health, poverty, population growth and unemployment
- Promote skills development by setting up exhibitions in schools, especially those based in rural areas
- Assist needy students to get financial academic support, such as bursaries

- Promote the engagement of household and/or communities in agriculture, i.e. and/or commercial farming.

Professor Theo Andrew, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment commended the students on their efforts in launching the organisation. He expressed satisfaction that CFO tied in with the ideals of the Faculty. He said: "The vision for our Faculty is to produce graduates for societal development. Within this is the issue of environmental awareness and sustainable development." Professor Andrew added that the Faculty would provide support for the CFO to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

Professor Ahmed C Bawa, Vice-Chancellor and Principal explained that when he was more active as a physicist, he went to India. While there, he visited a village and was perturbed by the unnatural holes in the rock at the top of a hill. The 10 craters in the monolith turned out to be the result of tiny packs of dynamite, which were used to create cracks in the rock. The villagers then poured sand down the cracks, and rain assisted in helping the sand seep into the rock. The long-term vision was that one day, they would be able to plant trees and vegetation on the massive rock.

The VC explained that with the new frenzy of modern day life, we are driven by technology. "The village taught me that it's important to think long-term. What is the world going to be like in 10, 15 and 30 years time? We need to think about the future of our children and grandchildren."

"The challenge for you as young people is that it's not enough to be on the side of sustainable development, you need to be activists. It's no use just taking a stance on this matter; you have to take on the struggle." The VC relayed how he has incorporated small changes in his life – like taking the stairs in S-Block instead of using the elevator, or walking to meetings that were close enough, unless it was raining.

He added, "It's not enough just to be an activist – you have to do research so you can address the challenges. The solution is changing the way we think about ourselves, future generations and the earth."

DUT students attend US Community College

Bhekani Dlamini

DUT has retained its record of being the institution with the highest number of students selected to participate in the 12 month US Community College Programme Initiative. Eight DUT students along with 18 other students from across South Africa have been selected to attend the 2011 programme. A farewell celebration was held on 7 June and was attended by the US Consulate in Durban, parents and participating students in the fields of tourism, hospitality, business administration and engineering.

At the event, US Consul General in Durban, Jill Derderian applauded DUT for having the largest number of students selected. She said the US has 1200 community colleges which are a gateway to higher education, providing skills, experience, training and the opportunity to participate to people of all ages.

Derderian said the opportunity will allow them to meet people from diverse cultures and assured them that community colleges have supportive learning environments that are reflective of their own home colleges. The programme, which began four years ago, attracts students from across the world to study course work, train and learn about the vast cultures in the US. Derderian acknowledged the continuing strong relationship between DUT and the US Consulate and is happy with the mutual

understanding between the people of America and South Africa.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ahmed Bawa said Community Colleges are special institutions that do a great job to prepare people for higher education. They place emphasis on how to learn, read text books and teach people about life and the work place. He said he is pleased that students have taken the opportunity to experience life in diverse institutions and encouraged them to use the cultural diversity in the US to their advantage. He advised students to reach out to the communities in which colleges are located and to keep a reflective diary so they can share their experiences upon their return.

Director of International Education and Partnerships, Dr Lavern Samuels congratulated students for being selected for this life changing experience and opportunity. He said the initiative is DUT's flagship programme which is truly enriching and will broaden their horizons.

The Chair of Council, Dr Jairam Reddy said community colleges, which are referred to as second chance colleges, provide first class education and are supportive centres of the community. Executive Management advised students to be responsible ambassadors of DUT and South Africa, to enjoy their stay and return as economically productive citizens.

Zimbabwean National Day celebrations



International Education and Partnerships staff together with DUT Zimbabwean students at the Zimbabwean National Day celebrations

International Education and Partnerships (IEP), together with DUT Zimbabwean students, acknowledged Zimbabwean National Day in celebration of the country's independence which was achieved on 18 April 1980. This ceremony was held in April at ML Sultan Campus.

The event forms part of the IEP's commitment to International Students and in the spirit of good hospitality, the university acknowledges and celebrates important days which form part of the international student's heritage. The initiative emphasises that DUT is proud of its international students. They are valued and form part of the university's drive to foster new relations with different countries within Africa and other continents.

Convocation Silver Tusk Awards

Bhekani Dlamini

Durban University of Technology presented its Convocation Silver Tusk Awards to distinguished alumni at a gala dinner held at the annual Alumni Homecoming event in June. The Silver Tusk Award was introduced by Convocation in 2003 and is traditionally bestowed upon alumni who epitomise the institution's tradition of excellence and who have brought great honor and recognition to the institution in their various fields.

This initiative has, to date, been received by 13 candidates namely, Sean Wisedale (2003), Billy Nair (2005), Wiseman Madinane (2005), Alan Khan (2006), Gordon Murray (2008), Nanda Soobben (2008), Dion Chang (2008), Sharoda Rapeti (2008), Malusi Mkhize (2009), Dr Prithy Ramlachan (2009), Rakesh Soni (2009), Jeremy Maggs (2009) and Kosi Reddy (2009).

Nevasha Naidoo

Public Relations Practitioner, Nevasha Naidoo obtained her National Diploma in Public Relations Management from Durban Institute of Technology and received the overall best student award in her final year.



In August 2003, Naidoo established her own company, Platinum Public Relations. Her most recent achievement is her appointment as the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA) representative at the Service SETA committee. She also holds a BA Communications Science degree from UNISA.

Pinkie Mtshali

Pinkie Mtshali is a musician, scriptwriter, show director and artist manager. In February 2011 she was appointed as the Music Director for the Emmanuel Cathedral Church in Durban.

Well known as the "Durban Diva" and no stranger to audiences, this all-rounder singer is at home either in an Operetta, classical music, musicals, pop, blues, Afro-Jazz and Gospel. Mtshali won numerous singing awards including STAX Best promising young singer in 1981 whilst at an intermediate school talent search at Umlazi Township. She has performed at international festivals in various countries abroad.



Vanitha Engelbrecht

Vanitha Engelbrecht is currently an area manager at South African Breweries (SAB) in Johannesburg. She is the recipient of a Master Brewer-JS Hough Award from the Institute for Brewing and Distilling in the United Kingdom. She is the first African and South African Breweries (SAB) employee to receive this prestigious international award for excellence in the Master Brewer examination.

Engelbrecht's tertiary education includes a Bachelor of Technology Degree in Chemical Engineering (*Cum Laude*) from the former Technikon Natal, which she achieved with 15 distinctions and two merit awards. In 2010 she successfully completed the Management Development Programme at the University of Cape Town and National Assessor Training and World Class Manufacturing in 2011.



The Venice Biennale

Two former Fine Art students have been selected, together with three other South African artists, for the prestigious 54th International Art Exhibition, 2011 Venice Biennale. The event began on 4 June and will run until 27 November 2011 in Venice, Italy. DUT alumni Berry Bickle, a Zimbabwean national and Siemon Allen will showcase their work at the event.

The South African exhibition, titled 'Ideal Narratives in Contemporary South African Art', features four local artists whose work explores a range of realities, memories and fantasies. The artists produce imaginary truths or rather ideal narratives that reflect on South Africa. The Venice Biennale is an international forum for artists and curators to share and engage.

Allen said: "I am an artist whose current work is, in many ways, rooted in interests that go back to my childhood in Durban. I always loved artefacts and had a boyhood stamp collection and lots of records old and new that I would arrange in grids. I have also always been interested in media and newspapers – the particular combination of photojournalism and story."

He uses a great deal of aesthetic choice and manipulation of source material in architectural installations and displays to show off his collections. His inspiration comes

from discovering rare records or reading about a piece of lost history and the incredible range of mass produced graphic artworks over time.

Allen is fond of making digital prints, has a searchable data base web site as a project and builds large-scale display structures using a range of construction techniques. He also works with non-traditional materials and has done quite a few pieces using videotape as a raw material to weave large panels that are then configured into room-size spaces.

"I feel very honoured that people find the projects interesting and join me in my fascination with history as told through these visual artefacts. I am grateful that my projects allow me to dig up and share things that might otherwise be lost or overlooked," he said.

Allen described DUT as an excellent place to learn how to merge technical skills with conceptual rigor. Upon completion of his studies he worked as an art fabricator. He said his skills served him well during his teaching career and in his involvement with fabricating large scale sculptures with his wife, sculptor Kendall Buster, and in realising his own work.

His collection is currently on exhibition at the Kranert Museum in Illinois, United States and will be on show at the Goodman Gallery in Cape Town in September.

Experiencing the Kalahari at *Mooi Loop* Launch

The much anticipated launch of *Mooi Loop*, a book that celebrates the art and life of Vetkat Regopstaan Boesman Kruiper, was held at Bergtheil Museum in Westville.

Designed by Gareth Myklebust, each page leads you further along the visual and visceral journey of Vetkat's Sacred Art Collection as an ancient living memory - one that tells of the past, present and sometimes the future. The simple yet bold messages that are either written as text or are evoked in his art speaks to a universal living memory of nature, reconnection, human relationships, war, peace and respect for the land. Accompanying Vetkat's artwork and text is poetry by his wife, poet and author, Belinda Kruiper.

The book launch was held in collaboration with the Department of Fine Arts and Jewellery Design student's exhibition inspired by *Mooi Loop*.

A percentage of book and jewellery sale profits will go towards the ARROWSA Bechet High - Art peace intercultural exchange project between youth in Durban and the Kalahari. In keeping with the ARROWSA vision, such intercultural exchanges aim 'to develop a global network of artists, educators, young people, organisations and institutions with a commitment to building bridges across perceived boundaries and barriers'.

"We hope to achieve this by sharing our stories, challenging prejudice and stereotypes, and developing the arts as a resource for reconciliation and the creative transformation of conflict," said ARROWSA co-ordinator, Mary Lange. ARROWSA – Art, Culture and Heritage for Peace is supported by University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS).

The exhibition and book launch was supported by eThekweni Municipality's Local History Museums.

A limited first edition of 300 hardcover books are available at R280 each. For order details, email marylange@telkomsa.net

Women as Agents of Change

Nqobizizwe Zwane

Many women's voices and stories are told and heard in all corners of our country as we celebrate their month for their courage commemorating the 1956 march to the Union Buildings.

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) marked Women's Day in grand style by letting the voices of three powerful women be heard at the Hotel School Conference Centre, Ritson Campus, on issues affecting them and the country today.

The well renowned academics were Dr Lungile Bhengu, a KwaZulu-Natal Developmental and Planning Commissioner and author of the book titled "African Midwife: Change beyond Form", Dr Lubna Nadvi, an activist and lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the School of Politics, and the 80 year-old Dr Oshadi Mangena, a former lecturer at the University of Amsterdam while in exile in Holland, gender activist, and now executive Director at The Pitseng Women's Trust Fund.



Dr Lungile Bhengu



Dr Oshadi Mangena



Dr Lubna Nadvi

Interpreting the world

Nqobizizwe Zwane

More than 150 international delegates attended the recent World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) conference, in Durban.

The Department of Media, Language and Communication in partnership with Macquarie University hosted Professor Jemina Napier, a renowned sign language interpreter, during her visit.

Professor Napier is currently based in Sydney, Australia and lectures at Macquarie University. She has 20 years of experience in interpretation, four degrees, a PhD and is the author of *Sign Language Interpreting: Linguistic Coping Strategies* and has written several chapters in different books. She believes that a person with basic skills can be taught to be an interpreter.

She said: "I started interpreting at a very young age, as my parents were both deaf. I first thought it was cool until I had my first job in court, when I was just 17."

Drawing on the difference between the interpretation industry in Australia and South Africa, she said the Australian industry is broader and regulated and has various categories including mental/medical, conference, media and educational interpreting. She said however, that the demands for interpreters have grown with the influx of refugees from Africa and South America.

New Playwrights Festival

Karishma Ganpath

The Department of Drama Studies held its annual New Playwrights Festival at the Courtyard Theatre in May. The festival, which is the brainchild of Drama Professor Debbie Lutge, provides novice writers the opportunity to showcase their work to the public. Last semester, eleven plays written by Scriptwriting II students were critically reviewed to assist in strengthening their weak points and gauging audience expectations.

Last year fifteen new works were presented, either advised or in collaboration with South African Playwright, Genbia Hyla. Audience feedback of the 2010 works considered the festival as a valuable platform which was stimulating, thought provoking and academically engaging with a high standard of believability and authenticity. This year, students have once again worked under Hyla's magic and evolved unique scripts.

Professor Lutge founded the festival in the hopes that it would feature as an annual event on the Drama Studies calendar. However, since its inception the festival has grown, affording students an opportunity to showcase new works awaiting a director.

She said: "I'm delighted by the level of engagement and enthusiasm. These are scripts that capture and project what the youth reflect upon. The techniques applied are all different and governed by what the individual student perceives to be theatrically appealing. The subject matter ranges from being guilty of drunken driving to a homosexual murder, from alternative realities and the value of choice to the complexities and intricacies of family units. Also focusing on the genetic transference of psychopathic traits to the hilarities of a father and son relationship, from the impact and confinement of religious doctrines on women to the survival of abuse or snatching of husbands *a la* Housewives' style."

She added that beyond aiding students to develop a keen ear and to read audiences perceptions, the festival is a trial period for new work where potential teething problems could be ironed out.

Drama lecturer, Thomas Mpoeleng described the festival as an 'era of stories given a fresh voice'. "I was impressed with the level of professionalism and issues tackled by the scriptwriters. The students engaged the audience with appropriate material and very strong concepts," he said.



Photographer: Val Adamson

Professor Debbie Lutge in *Paradise Is Closing Down* by Pieter Dirk Uys in 1989

Filmmaking talent in motion

Aspiring filmmaker Gavillan Letsoalo participated in Talent Campus Durban, an intensive five-day programme by film professionals to enhance both theoretical and practical approaches to filmmaking. Talent Campus Durban was held from 22-26 July 2011 and attracted 40 emerging filmmakers from 20 countries across Africa.

Themed, *Africa in Motion*, the fourth Talent Campus Durban programme presented a unique platform for African filmmakers to fast-track their careers through participation in a comprehensive series of seminars, workshops and industry networking activities with local and international filmmakers. This year included the addition of a Doc Station, where selected documentary projects submitted by accepted applicants was packaged for presentation within the Durban FilmMart.

Letsoalo, from Seshego Township in Polokwane, Limpopo, has a National Diploma in Video Technology and is currently studying towards his BTech in Video Technology. His application was accepted based on his third year drama production, *Gin City*.

"This is really an honour, being accepted into the programme means a lot to me as an emerging filmmaker. It gave me the opportunity to grow, broaden my knowledge and also gain insight into other techniques and approaches to filmmaking, especially from the African continent. It also gave me a platform to showcase my work and talents to others. I feel elated to have been part of Talent Campus Durban," said Letsoalo.

In the run up to the programme, he attended workshops hosted by local and international filmmakers which improved his approach to filmmaking, both in theory and practice. "It was a great opportunity to meet with other filmmakers from our continent and feed off each other's knowledge to better ourselves in our art," he said.

Letsoalo recently worked on a 30 minute drama which was shot in July and is inspired by real events. He has great admiration for Christopher Nolan, Martin Scorsese, David Lynch, Robert Rodriguez and enjoys the work of Akin Omotoso and Gavin Hood.

Gin City is a six minute drama based on a fictional city where the popular drug on the streets known as "Superhero" enhances the mind and body functions of the user. However, the drug is highly addictive and fatal if not taken every six hours. When the drug claims the life of a user outside the city's borders, the Mayor hires two agents to eliminate anyone involved in the making or distribution of the drug.

To view the drama, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEm1Eja69mc>

Making history at DUT

Ghaneshree Moonsamy has made history at the Durban University of Technology by being the first candidate to have her Master's degree upgraded to a Doctoral degree.

She is currently completing an aspect of her thesis before handing in her final doctoral research at the end of the year. Once all her submissions meet the examiners' requirements, she can safely say the title of doctor will be "in the bag".

Moonsamy, from Brindhaven in Verulam, North of Durban, is currently on a Doctoral Studentship at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Biosciences in Johannesburg. In addition to her research, she is involved in the development of various biological processes which include the use of algae for Biodiesel production. She has acquired scarce skills in the area of Bioprocess development, is actively involved in training students and researching innovative ideas that will hopefully result in appropriate technologies and products to benefit society.

A thrilled Moonsamy said: "When the idea of the upgrade came up, I didn't realise that it hadn't been successfully done at DUT. Now that the upgrade has been granted, I am more motivated to complete my doctoral study. Once I reach that milestone, I can then officially start the celebrations. Additionally, I guess I have also put my name down in the record books and history of DUT. I tend to be very motivated and hard on myself sometimes, and I think that this achievement will only become a reality once my final dissertation has been accepted. But from the reactions of others, I guess it really is a big deal, and I am absolutely chuffed."

Moonsamy's research involves the development of a novel production process of a marine organism, which will be applied to abalone as a probiotic. Abalone, a seafood delicacy, is in great demand in China and other Far Eastern countries. This abalone, she says, is found to grow naturally on the West Coast of South Africa and can also be produced via means of aquaculture.

The supply of abalone seldom meets the demand as a result of illegal poaching, slow growth rate and poor resistance to disease. She said, it is therefore imperative to investigate means of increasing production and promote the aquaculture industry.

According to Moonsamy, abalone takes approximately four years to reach a

market appropriate size and will be a more lucrative product if its growth rate can be enhanced. Her research partner has been involved in isolating micro-organisms from the gut of abalone to characterise them for a probiotic effect. She believes that the application of the probiotic organisms to abalone, would allow these marine creatures to digest food quickly and improve their resistance to disease, thus boosting overall growth of the animal.

Moonsamy's work resulted in an internationally competitive concept technology that is patented. She completed the segment of her Masters study under the supervision of Professor Suren Singh of DUT and Dr Raj Laloo of the CSIR. Her aim was to develop a novel and commercially implementable upstream bioprocess technology for the production of this novel probiotic organism.

She said due to the limited information on the organism, fundamental understanding of the organism had to be discovered and many aspects of bioprocess development were investigated. The final aspect of her doctoral research will focus on demonstrating technology development at a pilot scale, with the implementation of all the optimised parameters, determined from her Masters study and to develop a suitable downstream process which will result in a stable abalone probiotic product. In addition, the overall productivity and techno-economics of the process will also be determined.

She believes that the research will have a direct impact on farmers involved in the aquaculture of abalone in South Africa and is likely to increase the market share for export. "This increase in abalone production in SA will increase job creation and skills transfer to many unemployed South African citizens," she said.

An achiever of note, Moonsamy graduated *cum laude* with a national diploma in 2006 and received the Dean's Award for Academic Excellence. In 2006, she was also placed first at the Department of Food and Biotechnology's Work Integrated Learning programme (WIL) presentation and published her first article in a peer reviewed journal in 2010.

She advised upcoming researchers that conducting research is a long process, with lots of administration and approval frameworks involved. "Don't let the time factor get you down, try and not let patience get the better of you, at the end of the journey, the taste of success will make the wait worth it," she said.

Matla 3-D film lab

South Africa's first 3-D film production laboratory has been launched at DUT. Established by local innovation company, Matla, the lab will be able to produce full length 3-D feature films, advertisements and educational content. Facilities will be available to Video Technology students, international and local production companies, studios and TV stations.

Matla chairman, Zwelakhe Sisulu said: "The cost of renting the laboratory, which includes 3-D cameras and an editing suite, will remain cost effective in comparison to accessing similar technologies in the US, Europe or Japan. Skills development underpins our business philosophy, not only does this initiative further the development of the local film industry but supports the role of education. We foresee that the renowned South African film industry is set to become a global 3-D film and advertising hub."

Matla has spearheaded the collaborative project by using its extensive technology networks in the East. Innovative 3-D filmmaking techniques and equipment were sourced from the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) in Taiwan, a technological research and development agency that promotes industrial development. Two of the institute's top technical minds, Dr GZ Wu and Mr JD Chen will be responsible for training DUT lecturers and local industry veterans on the art of 3-D production.

Video Technology lecturer, Professor Peter Burnett said: "We are elated at this opportunity to become knowledge leaders in 3-D techniques and this will attract students across borders".

The lab is also a part of a wider Matla partnership with eThekweni Municipality to develop educational content. The project will evaluate the popularisation of 3-D function across tablet computers, netbooks and eReaders. Matla intends on working with local and international IT companies to provide students and teachers access to modern educational tools.

Enterprise Development Unit head, Colin Thakur said: "We are thrilled with this relationship as this fits our mandate of being leading practitioners of technology in a relevant context-related manner. We will embark on convergence activities through this project and foresee a tangible impact education in the near future".

The idea for the project began when Matla partners were watching 3-D movies on circuit and noticed a clear absence of 3-D commercial adverts. Sisulu said: "We found that at a 3-D movie we were only asked to wear our glasses after all the ads had been played in 2-D, now the local advertising industry can profit from utilising new techniques".

Matla is currently involved in two projects utilising the transfer of technology and investment opportunities via an extensive network in the Far East. They include a diamond processing plant, which operates in collaboration with the Industrial Development Corporation and a Taiwanese owned Ming Yang Solar Heating Plant that works with the Eastern Cape Development Corporation to provide local houses with hot water.

Presentation on sleeping disorders

Dr Ingrid Couchman presented findings of her groundbreaking research on 'Chronic primary insomnia: the efficacy of the homoeopathic simillimum', at the 2nd Annual Neurotalk conference in Dalian, China in May. It was previously presented at the Liege Homeopathic conference in Mexico and published in the Homoeopathy Journal. Dr Couchman lectures in Homeopathy at the Durban University of Technology and was the only South African delegate at the conference.

In her address, she said thirty people suffering with insomnia had undergone homoeopathic consultation and a specific remedy for them was prescribed. Patients were then seen at two week intervals for a month and had to record hours slept in a Sleep Diary and perceptions on their sleep quality on a Sleep Impairment Index. The research has shown significant improvement in the treatment group in comparison to the placebo group.

Dr Couchman said: "We looked at each individual patient with chronic insomnia and gave them an individualised homoeopathic treatment specific to them rather than to the disease. The study was found to be effective in that people had more sleep hours per week on the treatment".

She said the study was well received by neurologists, neuro-surgeons and neuro-physicians at the international medical conference and provided good exposure to practitioners in the allopathic field who are in general, quite skeptical. However, delegates were keen to learn more about Homoeopathy. She believes that there is great scope for the university's Homeopathy programme to gain recognition by participating in medically orientated conferences, this would also provide the opportunity to promote the university to a greater audience.

Shadows in the Rainbow, gay and lesbian society launch

Shadows in the Rainbow, a gay and lesbian student organisation has been launched as a solidarity and support group at the university. The organisation currently has 150 members and recently participated in a march through the streets of Durban, to encourage acceptance by society and show support for the many who face discrimination.

The organisation encourages racial diversity and is affiliated to Kaleidoscope, a University umbrella body for gay and lesbian societies and North-West University's homosexual organisation, Pout.

Shadows in the Rainbow was established to assist students in dealing with homophobia in the classroom, hetrosexism, health, organising events and the creation of a social network. Research will also be conducted on issues to improve the student experience at the university.

Founding member, Thami Mahlobo said: "We want to discuss health issues, encourage people to come out and be visible. We create awareness on issues pertaining to gays and lesbians in society and on campus. We urge people to shape their own personal journey about their lifestyle and deal with self issues."

For more information e-mail: shadowsintherainbow2@gmail.com



DUT student to publish his 18th book

BTech Journalism student, Khulekani Magubane, 22, is celebrating the completion of his 18th book. Magubane, from Escourt, a small town in the Midlands, began writing while in high school.

Inspired by South African authors, he embarked on writing material on social issues including crime, HIV/AIDS and morals with the common message of unity amongst man. He also freelances as a writer for *Genuine Magazine* and is currently employed by the Communications Department at Invo Tech.

"I write about what I see in the environment around me. Issues that I care about tend to make better stories. Through my books, I simply aim to portray the world as I see it, or as I would like for it to be," he said.

Magubane has aspirations of becoming a recognised author in the South African literary landscape. In the interim, he intends developing his narrative and writing techniques. As a scholar, he joined the Dancing Pencils project which exposed his talent for telling tales. His books are currently published by Umsinsi Press.

He also draws inspiration from the works of Zakes Mda and enjoys reading novels by James Patterson, Stephen King, Steven Harrick, Keith Adam, Matt Zurbo and Wilbur Smith. *Young Blood*, one of Magubane's earlier novels was inspired by Sifiso Mzobe and was also selected for the Oprah Winfrey Book Club. His latest work will be published later this year.

Retracing the history of Bollywood



Twenty four hand-painted canvases by Indian artist, Ranjith Dahiya were on exhibition at Alliance Française de Durban, DUT Art Gallery and the Collective during the Durban International Film Festival in July.

DUT celebrates Madiba's life

Nqobizwe Zwane

The first democratically elected President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela turned 93 at his home in Eastern Cape, Qunu, on 18 July with millions of good wishes from people around the globe.

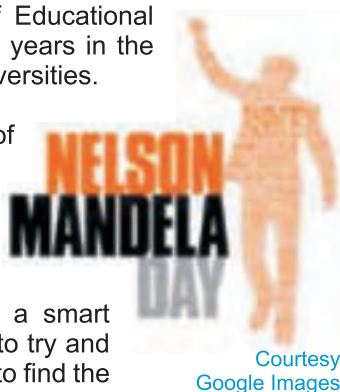
The world celebrated Mandela Day, which is aimed at inspiring people to give at least 67 minutes of their time to better their communities, symbolizing the 67 years Mandela spent serving his community, country and the world at large. Mandela Day honours a man who chose courage over fear, love over hatred, who continued to serve all South African groups despite having been incarcerated for more than two decades for challenging the laws of apartheid.

As part of the university's Mandela Day initiatives, Professor Jack Whitehead addressed staff and students at the Ritson Campus Conference Centre on the life of Mandela, a humanitarian, political activist and international icon. The event was attended by academic guests from Germany, Walter Sisulu University, University of KwaZulu-Natal and Mangosuthu University of Technology.

Professor Whitehead is a lecturer at Liverpool's Hope University in the United Kingdom (UK) and has written many publications on the subject of Action Research with his colleague, Professor Jean McNiff of Educational Research at York St. John University. He has served 36 years in the Department of Education as a visiting professor at other universities.

He commended the efforts by Professor Moira Laidlaw of Ningxia Teachers University in China, who in conjunction with her tutoring of the UK's Open University master's programme, voluntarily provided English lessons for six years to Chinese students abroad.

Professor Whitehead said language barriers can deny a smart student a chance to progress. He encouraged students to try and make the world a better place, by looking into themselves to find the power to continue where Mandela left off.



SA Navy

A team from the SA Navy visited DUT on 29 July to meet with Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ahmed Bawa, executive management and Alan Khan, Senior Director of Corporate Affairs. The visit, facilitated by the Co-operative Education Unit, focused on developing the current partnership between the SA Navy and DUT and explored areas for future partnership. The team was led by Rear Admiral AE Kubu and included Captain MT Makhuba, Warrant Officers BM Masipa and Poolchand.

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National Science Week

Raylene Captain-Hasthibeer

National Science week was held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal recently. The Durban University of Technology's marquee saw over 2 500 learners visiting the university's exhibitions on show.

Arguably, the highlight at National Science week was the SKA stand, SKA: The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) promises to revolutionise science by answering some of the most fundamental questions that remain about the origin, nature and evolution of the universe. With global investment supporting the project and astronomers and engineers around the world already working on its design, construction on the SKA is scheduled to start around 2016. The first astronomical observations are expected by 2019 and the telescope should be fully functional by 2024.

The SKA stand was manned by DUT's Steven Matebese, Paballo Mokeke and Ruvano Casper. The second-year Electronic Engineering students are part of a programme run by SKA, which looks to ensure that should South Africa land the SKA bid, we have technologically prepared technicians to work on the project.

South Africa, with eight African countries as partners, and Australia have been picked as possible sites to build the SKA. South Africa has proposed the Karoo in the Northern Cape as the core site. Scientists are now comparing the radio interference at both sites, as well as the cost of building and operating the telescope in Africa compared to Australia.

SKA manager, Daphne Lekgwathi said: "We have provided bursaries for these young students. Over 217 have gone through the Human Capital Development bursary programme. We have brought these learners, who are all from the Cape, to DUT. We have found that the programme at DUT is very suitable for the kind of training the SKA project requires. The bursaries are given to students for the duration of their studies – from first year, up to 4th year, and even post grad level. It's crucial that good grades are maintained though!"

Yashna Ravidas, a Grade 10 learner from Star College commented: "The exhibition has been quite interesting! Some people are undecided about what subjects to take at school, so this is helping us to decide what subjects we should be doing at school."

Departments represented at National Science week included: Sport Studies, Horticulture, Analytical Chemistry, Biotechnology and Food Technology, Biomedical and Clinical Technology, Chiropractic, Dental Technology, EMCR, Homoeopathy and Somatology.

Journalism awards ceremony

Bhekani Dlamini

The Journalism programme recently held its awards ceremony to acknowledge students who performed exceptionally. The event coincided with Africa Day initiatives which focused on environmental community engagement projects to counter act the effects of climate change.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ahmed Bawa acknowledged the importance of celebrating Africa Day and congratulated the top achievers. In his address, he stressed the need for journalists to play an active role in ensuring press freedom, adding that their role came with the responsibility to uphold the professions ethical code.

In light of the proposed media bill, he said with press freedom comes responsibility and it is crucial that journalists think about the current challenges facing the profession. He raised further concerns in regards to challenges facing the media by highlighting the death of photojournalist, Anton Hammerl who was killed while covering the political unrest in Libya.

Journalism Advisory Board Vice-Chair, Mbali Dhlomo applauded students who received awards and advised others to work harder. She paid homage to Hammerl and said it takes people with courage to venture into war stricken countries. She wished for the safe return of journalists currently working in hostile conditions.

DUT alumnus and spokesman for the investigating unit, the Hawks, McIntosh Polela advised students to work hard and venture into beats like sport and business reporting where there is a shortage of females and black reporters. McIntosh is currently working on his autobiography titled, *My Father, My Monster* and intends launching the book at DUT.

Associate Director: Media, Language and Communication, Advocate Robin Sewlal encouraged students to consider applying for enrolment into the BTech and MTech programmes and to become agents of change by making a positive difference in society. He said the proposed secrecy bill will affect the profession and urged journalists to exercise their rights by making their concerns heard.



Pictured from left: Third year Journalism student, Thireshni Sanasy receives her award from Advocate Robin Sewlal. Sanasy received the award for Top Student, Feature Writing and Broadcast Journalism.

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The Communications Department strives to deliver accurate reporting and interesting stories, but cannot take responsibility for inaccurate information supplied. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Corporate Affairs Division. To contribute, email: raylene@dut.ac.za

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