

**Issue: 23 July 2010**

### Trio in full bloom

- Lisa Mbongwa

Three Fashion and Textile students from Durban University Technology (DUT) have been selected as Kwa-Zulu Natal's Regional top 10 finalists for the Vodacom Durban July's Young Designer Awards. B-Tech student, Dale McCarthy and third year students, Sheena-Ann Unwin and Casey Walters were selected out of 20 semi-finalists, a majority of which were DUT students, on 12th July 2010 at Greyville Racecourse.

Their individual designs are expected to be showstoppers at the glamorous event which will be attended by established brands and haute couture designers. The annual fashion competition serves as a platform for young designers to showcase their work and unexposed talent from individual designers, national educational institutions and local fashion design houses. The winning designs will be revealed on 16th July with the event closing on, the illustrious Vodacom Durban July Race Day, 31st July.

Each finalist will receive R2000 from Vodacom. The college or university that the winner is in enrolled at will receive a R30 000 Vodacom bursary to fund disadvantaged deserving students or the purchase of equipment to assist the fashion design institute.

Contestants competing for the celebrated title were subjected to a gruelling judging panel of fashion editors and established designers. McCarthy said, "The judges chose designs that attract attention both on and off the runway. Interpretation of the brief titled, A Blooming Great Day, is also a key factor in their decisions. As a designer, one has to make sure the design is in line with the theme yet original and eye-catching."

With inspiration drawn from an image of a skeleton leaf, Unwin used fashion as a platform to convey her message about the power of natural healing in HIV/AIDS and a Cancer stricken society. "I have created a very surgical look with an anatomical silhouette. My design creates an unknown flower bud, which is representative of something yet to be discovered. The focus is on what is running through the veins of this bud. The wrestling mask represents a fighter and also creates the illusion of a bald cap representing cancer," said Unwin.

Walter said they felt honoured to represent the University. "DUT's Fashion and Textiles programme offers a wide variety of subjects that all students do in order to obtain their diploma or degree. So when a student receives that certificate they are qualified in many different fields and have a variety of job opportunities in different fashion related fields. Our students are more equipped in comparison to students attending other colleges," she said.



*Vodacom Durban July Young Designer Awards KZN Regional finalists, DUT Fashion and Textile students (from left), Dale McCarthy, Sheena-Ann Unwin and Casey Walters*

*Photographer: Anthony Grote, Gameplan Media*

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## Fashion and Textile graduates scoop Vukani Fashion Awards

- Dumile Mbatha



Picture supplied

Two Durban University of Technology's Fashion and Textile graduate students were awarded first prize in two categories at the prestigious Vukani Fashion Awards Ceremony in May, at the Maponya Mall in Johannesburg. BTech student, Jane Wolff received the Metropolitan Vukani Award for the Most Innovative Design and Zanele Ncane, who completed her National Diploma qualification in 2009, took the esteemed title of overall winner; and received the award for the Dad Fund Vukani Best Collection.

Wolff said: "I felt humble to have won such a fantastic prize and to be associated with a company with a great reputation, as well as a long history of award ceremonies. It really does feel special." Wolff moved to Durban from Cape Town when aged 10. She said as a child she possessed artistic tendencies and knew she would some day make a career for her self in the field but was unsure which avenue her life would take. "I completed a short computer graphics course and worked in the industry for eight months before I realised that I needed to be more physically creative and work with my hands. Fashion was my next step. Since I started, I have never looked back," she said.

Ncane who comes from Gcilima, a small village on the outskirts of Port Shepstone, said as a scholar she often found herself drawing sketches between lessons. "I've always known I possessed creativity. However, I did not think I would do it as a profession, until I began designing my schoolmates' Matric Ball outfits. They loved my work and I knew then that I had to study fashion design." Ncane will jet off to the United States in September for a five week internship which she won, together with sponsored Bernina sewing machines. She said prior to embarking on her designs she researched the Vukani Fashion Awards to understand the competition criteria. "It made it easier for me. Their look is very traditional which I then worked into my own design style," said Ncane.

## DUT academic, judge's non-fiction for Alan Paton literary award

Director of the Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) at the Durban University of Technology, Professor Thengani Ngwenya served as a judge on the non-fiction category of the annual Sunday Times' Alan Paton Award. The winner of the category, who received R75000, was announced on 24 July 2010 in Johannesburg.

The literary competition attracts books of an exceptionally high standard in both the fiction and non-fiction categories. Prof Ngwenya said the competition is perceived as a national barometer of literary excellence in this country. Judges, who are selected on the basis of their experience and expertise in the humanities, have to assess entries according to a stringent criterion. Five books were short listed for the prestigious award according to the complex criteria.

As a literary scholar and education expert Prof Ngwenya, was selected to be part of the non-fiction judging panel which considers books that cover areas including history, biographies, politics, art and contemporary social issues. The panel included five judges who were established writers, academics and journalists. Prof Ngwenya previously served as a judge on the non-fiction panel in 2007.



Prof Thengani Ngwenya

He said 42 entries were received for the 2010 non-fiction award and covered a broad spectrum of topics and forms of writing. The quality of non-fiction in its varied forms was skilfully written to a remarkably high standard. The majority of the books dealt with the history of South Africa and the sacrifice made by those from different races and backgrounds during the apartheid struggle.

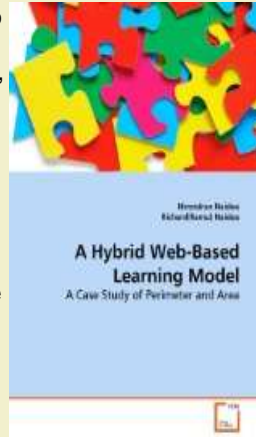
Prof Ngwenya said historical revisionism seems to be overarching theme of contemporary writing in SA. This year's entries included memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, history texts, books on environmental issues and socio-political commentary. He said: "It is

now time for young aspirant writers to pen issues concerning the youth and future leaders of the country. Themes of identity and diversity in its varied forms are areas which require further exploration. The question that contemporary writers have answered in amazingly creative ways is "What does it mean to live in a constitutional democracy in South Africa at this time?"

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### Book Publication

The Advanced Computer Modelling and Manufacturing Centre is proud to announce the publication of a book co-authored by DTech student, Niren Naidoo, and head of the Centre, Professor Ramu Naidoo. The book titled, A Hybrid Web-Based Learning Model (ISBN 978-3-639-27358-8), stems from Naidoo's MTech dissertation which was supervised by Professor Naidoo.



The book, which was sourced for publication by German publishing company, Verlag Dr Muller, is now available online at Amazon.com and BOD. As the title suggests, it encompasses a blended learning approach to the teaching and learning of mathematics with special emphasis on the concepts of area and perimeter.

The Centre, through its Community Outreach programme and mathematics education research initiatives, has embarked on primary school mathematics education for learners and school teachers. The Centre believes that to improve the mathematics pass rate at higher institutions or at secondary schools there has to be motivation for primary school teachers to become researchers. The Centre has registered four Masters and three Doctoral students. It has also created computer labs in three primary schools in Durban.

These teachers have read papers at conferences and through research are improving the mathematics curriculum. The primary school mathematics education project has an output of five peer reviewed papers per year. They have created a primary school mathematics website so that other mathematics teachers, both nationally and internationally, can interact with them.

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### Lego Mindstorms Workshops

The Durban University of Technology's Enterprise Development Unit (EDU) has re-launched its Lego Mindstorms Workshop due to popular demand. This time however, the department has expanded the project with the aim of developing a long term Corporate Social Investment project that is geared to enhance science, engineering and technology (SET) in disadvantaged schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

Lego Brainstorm workshops will kick off in early August until early December, across Durban, with classes held weekly and on weekends. Students will be issued with certificates on completion of the course. The workshops provide practical applications in basic programming, mechatronics and problem solving, with elements of design.

The project was initially established as a recreational project for scholars during the winter vacation. However, due to the success of the Westville Boys High School pilot study, EDU has developed the programme into a long term initiative that will expand into engineering, building and IT projects.

Colin Thakur, EDU HOD said: "We are overwhelmed with the interest we have received from students who participated in the in the Lego Mindstorms workshop. Lego Mindstorms is an educational kit which has been internationally marketed. The programme was well received, and has cultivated interest in the field of SET. Children are keen to learn practical applications which they can further develop and implement to diversify their robots functionality.

"We are currently engaged in talks with the corporate sector to get more businesses on board and involved in the funding and sponsorship of the project. We will be meeting with cluster schools to negotiate the inclusion of the workshop within their extra curricular activities, for Grade 7-12 learners", said Thakur.

Lego Mindstorms Programme Managers, Niri Pillay and Jarrod Scott have creatively scheduled three projects with this objective in mind. The department will host a Parent and Child Development Course which is aimed at bridging the technology gap between the two generations in an innovative, fun and creative way.

Pillay said: "This is also a bonding opportunity for parents; classes will be scheduled on a Saturday afternoon to accommodate those who work a six day week. It enables these parents to connect with their children, establish what their interests are and realise the technical potential they possess or perhaps discover which areas in science and technology poses a challenge.



"Workshops will be held in cluster schools and funds generated from the project will then be used to train DUT students as tutors. The certified tutors will then facilitate workshops in disadvantaged schools. Corporate funding will be used to purchase more Lego Brainstorm kits for disadvantaged schools where children who are interested in SET will be selected and sponsored to attend a two week workshop," said Scott.

For more information, please contact: [thakur@dut.ac.za](mailto:thakur@dut.ac.za) or [itacademy@dut.ac.za](mailto:itacademy@dut.ac.za)

### Hospitality and Tourism students showcase SA in Germany

- Lisa Mbongwa

Two students from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism at Durban University of Technology (DUT) were recently selected to attend Germany's annual Tübingen South African Programme this year.

Second year students, Nosiphi Sobahle and Nyane Mofokeng went through a process of interviews which secured their placement in the programme hosted by Eberhard Karl's Universität Tübingen. The event serves to bridge the gap between South Africa and Germany by involving students in language and cultural programmes. Sobahle and Mofokeng said: "It is basically a language and culture programme for SA students which aims to expose students to the German language, culture and perhaps bring about closer ties and understanding between Germany and South Africa."

During their four week stay, the students were able to experience Germany through various seminars, lectures and activities. This included a reception at the City Hall with the local Mayor, Rector's Reception, dance evening, cooking Kässpätzle, South African Dinner, bar hopping, German movies and a guided tour of the Mercedes Benz manufacturing plant and museum.



*DUT Hospitality and Tourism students Nyane Mofokeng (left) and Nosiphi Sobahle showcase South Africa at the Tübingen South Africa Programme in Germany*

Describing their visit to the renowned Daimler AG Plant as the highlight of their stay, Sobahle and Mofokeng said: "The process is just mind blowing, 2000 cars manufactured daily with the most advanced form of technology we've ever seen. The museum transports you through the great evolution undertaken by Daimler and it shows you exactly why they are one of the leading car makers in the world."

At the Rector's Reception, students showcased their traditional attire and sang songs reflective of their cultural diversity and rich South African heritage. Sobahle and Mofokeng used this event as an opportunity to thank their sponsors for the constant support and for making the programme a success throughout their stay.

Sobahle said: "The procedure was hectic indeed. Visas, travel insurance... but the excitement took over and we barely noticed the gruelling procedures. We waited patiently for our departure day to Germany, the 4th of January 2010, knowing that participating in the Tübingen SA programme would indeed be a life changing experience."



## FIFA TV interns

On Sunday 27 June 2010, Durban University of Technology (DUT) student interns working at Moses Mabida Stadium as part of the 2010 FIFA World Cup host broadcast operations were congratulated by FIFA and Host Broadcast Services (HBS) at a ceremony held at the stadium.

The Swiss company HBS, on behalf of FIFA TV, offered this internship during the 2010 World Cup.

Last year, 60 DUT students underwent a challenging interview process, which was arranged by Co-operative Education at the university. Successful students were then invited to workshops run by HBS at DUT. The students learnt about host broadcasting, TV production, event management and the role they would play during the World Cup.

Their tasks during the World Cup ranged from assisting media rights licensees at each commentary centre, to working at the International Broadcast Centre.

Director of FIFA TV, Niclas Ericson, said: "This project embodies FIFA's mission to leave a legacy in South Africa after the final whistle of the FIFA World Cup. The interns have been an integral part of the FIFA World Cup Production and we hope this experience has provided them with a solid foundation for a successful future in broadcasting."

Francis Tellier, CEO of HBS, explained: "This time, taking into consideration the importance of skills development in South Africa, we had the programme accredited by the MAPP Seta. All successful students receive credits relevant to particular unit standards set out by SAQA. This gives each intern an advantage when next applying for employment."

Themba Msukwini and Zama Hlubi of DUT's Co-operative Education Unit attended the function.

FIFA TV and HBS thanked the Durban University of Technology (Co-operative Education) for supporting this programme.



**First row from left:** Zama Hlubi, Sabatha Luthuli, Thulasizwe Ntsele, Veronica Mahlaba, Dumusile Mkhonza, Simangele Shangwe, Nosiphi Khafu, Pitso  
**Back row:** Nqobile Makhathini, Bayanda Maseko and Themba Msukwini

## New Connections Book Launch

- Dumile Mbatha and Lisa Mbongwa

Durban University of Technology's Faculty of Arts and Design launched New Connections, on 14 July, a peer reviewed textual publication that captures the creative outputs of academics and researchers from the Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design. Selected pieces from the publication will be exhibited from 15-30 July at DUT's Art Gallery.

To gauge public perception, part of the collection was exhibited at the KZNSA Gallery in March last year. The publication aims to demonstrate that research outputs in the creative arts can indeed be textualised and peer-reviewed. As a prerequisite for the publication to qualify for an education subsidy, it will be further tested against the criteria within the Department of Education's (DOE) Policy and Procedures for the Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions.

The publication coincided with the Department of Fine Art and Jewellery Design's 125th anniversary and was a reminder of the department's proud record in maintaining high standards. Prof Nomthandazo Gwele, DVC Academic said she felt like a proud parent and that this was a first for visual artists to communicate what they do in a textual form.

Dr Kenneth Netshiombo, Acting DVC: Institutional Support said lecturers and students must maintain the momentum in research output. "The role of exhibiting is to distribute art to



the public and exhibitions of this kind have played a major role in developing aspiring artists," he said.

*Prof Nomthandazo Gwele, DVC:  
Academic accepting a book from  
Prof Sibusiso Moyo at the launch of  
New Connections book*

Copies of New Connections were presented by Prof Sibusiso Moyo, Acting Director of Research Management and Development and Vaneshree Govender, Research administrator to exhibiting artists and DUT'S Executive Management.

*Photographer: Dumile Mbatha*

Prof Juliette Leeb du Toit, reviewer and contributor from UKZN'S Centre for Visual Arts said: "Students have flourished at DUT, the environment has nourished independent art making through a changed teaching approach, strength and commitment."

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### **Keeping a Big Eye on the video production industry**

- *Bhekani Dlamini*

Siyeza Ngcobo, a passionate entrepreneur who is a video production enthusiast has watched his production company grow with rapid success since its launch in 2006. Ngcobo, from Nkwali near Amanzimtoti is a former Cost and Management Accounting student from DUT who found a career in his love for video production.

Ngcobo has launched Big Eye Productions, a video production business after he realized he was doing the wrong course. Believing that there is no late in life, he decided to follow his inner interest and started his own business. Ngcobo embarked on thorough research into the inner workings of the video production industry to make his business venture productive. He began with no capital and limited resources to penetrate the entertainment industry but he forged ahead, determined to make a name for himself in the competitive industry. He said "where money may be absent, but vision, focus and enthusiasm are present, success is still possible".

While he was still at high school, Ngcobo started off as a still photographer at weddings, parties and small events. That is where he learned the basic principles of the business. He said: "If you want to get into the business world, don't expect to start big, you need to start small and grow from there". Four years later, Big Eye Productions is now an established company that has landed lucrative business deals including the production of marketing videos, music videos, corporate events etc. He has now set his sight on building an entertainment empire that will not only be limited to The KZN province, but which will also be operating from other provinces. Ngcobo strongly believes in brand marketing in comparison to projecting himself merely as an entrepreneur. He said: "Through hard work I know this industry from A to Z. To create brand awareness, I adhered to the basics of business and used the word of mouth to market my company". This enabled him to establish a network of contacts and potential clients in the entertainment industry. Ngcobo also make use of online marketing , to promote his company from which he has received an overwhelming amount of responses. Since then he has imparted business acumen skills to his fans on Facebook and has redirected the traffic to his website.

His business vision has also enabled him to secure a recent deal of a multi video camera recording of a big local gospel choir. This was the first project of this calibre for his company Big Eye Productions and he is sure that many will follow after its completion. He said business development is about gaining experience and developing key contacts and strategic business relationships that would be conducive to business growth and prosperity. Ngcobo is currently engaged in establishing lucrative long term business partnership with the private and corporate sector in hopes of expanding his current venture.



**For more information to help kick start your own business,  
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## **DUT IT student JETS of to Ohio on a US scholarship**

- Lisa Mbongwa

Departure day is just around the corner for third year DUT Information Technology student, Brett Pather, who will jet off to Ohio's Lorain County Community College in the United States, on a one year scholarship.

Pather was informed about the life changing opportunity by his lecturer, Alveen Singh who encouraged him to send through his application. He was later selected for the scholarship from four top achievers, after a series of interviews and tests. "The interview with the US Embassy was very intimidating. We wrote a Test of English as a Foreign Language, (TOEFL) and I later got a call back informing me of my success", he said.

He is proud to be an ambassador for DUT and hopes to gain international skills which could act as a catalyst in ensuring future employment and academic opportunities. He said he is grateful to the university and expressed his respect and gratitude to his lecturers who have contributed to his success and exposed him to new opportunities.



Pather's bags are packed and he is ready to make the most of his experience abroad. He will leave Durban for the US on July 27; his only concern is the thought of leaving his family and friends behind. During his stay he will live in a college residence in Ohio. He has learnt a great lesson from the short-listing process and will persevere to ensure he achieves short term goals. He said: "Take things into your own hands....you have to make things happen for yourself. The University creates a lot of opportunities; the rest is up to you".

Photographs are supplied by Audio Visual. Other images are supplied by departments and DUT staff.

Kindly send your articles to Bhekani Dlamini on email: [bhekanid@dut.ac.za](mailto:bhekanid@dut.ac.za)

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