



Mangosuthu  
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# SPIRIT

A MANGOSUTHU UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY NEWSLETTER



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- Surveying Students Earn National Geomatics Recognition
- Max Lifestyle owner leads development in Umlazi
- Finding a job in the digital age

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Mbali Mkhize

# FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## MBALI MKHIZE

*The business world often ignores certain jargon because it feels it has been overused. Influenced by this mindset, I am one of those who has vowed not to use the word 'synergising' - but voilà, that is exactly the role we as MUT play within the Umlazi community. Umlazi has much to lose if we don't synergise with our many stakeholders for the benefit of the institution and the community.*

Umlazi Township has a population of close to 600,000 people. Situated in the midst of this large population is MUT with its 11,000 students and over 2,000 permanent and temporary staff members from various places across the globe. Umlazi Township also boasts two state-owned technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges and a school education district renowned for producing outstanding matric results. It is also home to two vibrant malls, KwaMnyandu Mall and Umlazi Mega-City. Indeed, Umlazi Township is cosmopolitan in many ways.

Both the reputation and social status of Umlazi have improved considerably. We were hearted to learn that one of our less-mentioned stakeholders, Max's Lifestyle, was recently nominated as one of the 207 best restaurants in the world. Only three restaurants were nominated in South Africa: the Pot Luck Club of Cape Town, East Head Café in Knysna, and Max Lifestyle which is right on our doorstep! Within this vibrant community, MUT is perceived as being a beacon of hope. Indeed in our mission statement we emphasise our commitment

to the "upliftment of talented but predominantly disadvantaged individuals". In our mission to uplift the predominantly disadvantaged, we have a responsibility to enhance the township economy and ensure that whatever revenue is generated within Umlazi Township is ploughed back into it.

To kick-start this process, we have identified a huge international conference convened by the National Association of African American Studies & Affiliates (NAAAS) in July 2017. We intend to bring its delegates on a cultural tour to MUT and Max Lifestyle. Not only will this give the delegates a sense of our culture, but the over 1,000-strong crowd will be able to visit MUT and see the difference the University is trying to make in spite of limited financial resources.

This idea is associated with 'destination marketing', a concept that has yet to be optimised by the people of Umlazi. The patrons of Max Lifestyle are high-powered and as they contribute to the coffers of Max Mqadi's business, there are opportunities for MUT too. The time has come for serious dialogue on how these patrons could synergise with MUT and become morale boosters for our students. For instance, they could help fill the gaps that students have identified as impediments to coping with higher education during the #FeesMustFall movement. At MUT we aim to create a positive narrative and we can achieve that by synergising our efforts with many strategic stakeholders in Umlazi.

# Acting VC's Op-Ed: Prof Marcus Ramogale

## MUT's Academic Identity

Just as a person's fingerprint is different from all other people's fingerprints, so is a person's identity also different from all other people's identities. What's more, our identities are not static; they develop over time in relation to our changing circumstances.

The same is true for the identity of organisations. Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) projects its identity in various ways to the outside world, and this identity informs the choices that MUT makes. At the same time MUT's identity is also influenced by a changing social and economic environment.



*Prof Ramogale*

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## The Academic Identity Concept Document

A few weeks ago, MUT's Academic Identity Concept Document, which was approved by Senate in September 2015, was presented to constituencies of the University.

Of course, since its inception as a technikon, MUT has had an identity, and much of this is just as central to MUT's being today as it was in 1980. This includes the drive towards social redress and equity, and the wish to be part of socio-economic development in KwaZulu-Natal. However, when technikons were redesignated either as

Universities of Technology (UoTs) or as comprehensive universities in 2003, a 'third leg' was introduced into our higher education system: an institution that combines the research and knowledge-driven ethos of a university with the practical, problem-driven mindset of a technikon. MUT's designation as a UoT is therefore more than merely a change of name: a UoT is a new entity whose academic identity is both rooted in its historical focus as a technikon, and in its aspiration to become a vibrant generator of new knowledge and practice in the region. Naturally, this change made it clear for MUT that it needed to adapt its organisational identity to fit its new roles and goals. Hence the development of the Academic Identity Concept Document, which is the result of a long consultation process with stakeholders in the University.

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## MUT's Promises

Through the conceptualisation of our academic identity we want to show how and why MUT is different from other UoTs so that MUT is recognised for what it is, what it does and why it chooses to do so. We want to deliver a clear message to the outside world, and confirm that MUT is a credible institution that delivers on its promises. What are our promises?

Our promises are made clear in our Mission and Vision.

Our Vision is "to be a pre-eminent University of Technology". This means that MUT as a University of Technology wants to be a leader in the fields of Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Development. These are our core functions and they are not very different

from those of other UoTs. What makes our academic identity truly different is the how and why MUT wants to achieve this. This is spelled out in our Mission.

Our Mission is “to provide advanced, technology-based programmes and services that are career- and business-oriented in the broad fields of engineering, natural and management sciences, for the upliftment of talented but predominantly disadvantaged individuals. We seek to foster socio-economic advancement through the scholarships of teaching and learning, applied research and community engagement, as well as through technology transfer and innovation, in order to create an equitable and prosperous Southern Africa in which individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.”

Clearly, MUT has noble goals - the upliftment of disadvantaged individuals and the creation of an equitable and prosperous society - and the way MUT aims to achieve this is through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Transfer and Innovation.

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## Values and Culture

The values that are enshrined in our Strategic Plan have become part of a communication strategy through the Academic Identity Concept Document, as well as through the IIFASE project. MUT commits itself to transformation and, hence, to the values of Tolerance; Humanity and Respect; Customer Orientation; Ethical Conduct & Integrity; Excellence; Professionalism; a Culture of Technology, Innovation and Problem-solving; Accountability; Diversity; and Transparency and Shared Governance. Espousing and ‘living’ these values creates an institutional

culture that is conducive to fulfilling MUT’s promises and achieving its goals.

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## Graduates

Our graduates are MUT’s ‘products’. The University experience should enable students to develop useful and unique skills, qualities and abilities which reflect the academic identity of the institution and which are relevant in a world where discipline-based knowledge develops fast; where access to information and know-how about communication are key; and where graduates may have to create their own business opportunities. In fact, our Vision and Mission are the guiding lights in our quest to produce graduates who are skilled, technologically astute, employable, entrepreneurial, and socially and environmentally responsible.

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### What do we do?

The programmes we offer are career-focused, relevant to industry and have an entrepreneurial component. MUT focuses on teaching excellence and embraces a teaching and learning philosophy that aims for learning to be effective and relevant; one which thus takes into account the institutional and social contexts in which learning occurs. This has resulted in a shift in focus from training to education. MUT has the highest percentage of students in Science, Engineering and Technology programmes amongst higher education institutions in South Africa. Most of our programmes are undergraduate programmes, although there is a gradual move to offer postgraduate qualifications in areas of strength, and to develop our research capacity in designated areas.

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## An Evolving Academic Identity

We started off by saying that identities are dynamic and that they will evolve over time. For MUT this means that new programmes are in the pipeline; that our research capacity and output are growing; and that our external engagements are shaping up. Naturally, the engagement of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation & Engagements during the course of crafting MUT’s current Academic Identity, will lead to supplementary additions in the near future as it relates to new strategic initiatives within that portfolio.

It also means that as a public institution of higher education in a shrinking economy, we have to rise to new economic challenges. And yet the core of our identity will stay the same, for we will continue in our drive for social redress and equity, and as an institution we will find the way to do this well.

*The Academic Identity Concept Document can be collected from MarComms and can also be found on the MUT website*

# NEDBANK FOUNDATION DONATES R2,3 MILLION FOR LIBRARY COMPUTER UPGRADES



*The MUT library is going to benefit a lot*

It was by sheer coincidence that the MarComms team, Mbali Mkhize and Zama Sishi, met the CSI Manager from Nedbank during a directors' forum convened by the Marketing, Advancement and Communications in Education (MACE) in Port Elizabeth in June 2015.

A conversation ensued on how MUT could synergise with the Nedbank Foundation so that the University could benefit from its programme of advancing education, community and economic development.

The project would need to be extended and required synergies to be built with internal support departments at MUT.

The first port of call was Mrs Lindiwe Ndaki, the Senior Director of Library Services at MUT, who was subsequently

at the forefront in meeting deadlines during the proposal development stage. Tshego Bokaba, Eyethu Community Trust Portfolio Manager at the Nedbank Foundation, conducted a fact-finding visit to MUT to assess the feasibility of the project and discuss Nedbank's expectations. Tshego was impressed during the visit and felt that the proposal spoke to the current problem and how Nedbank could synergise with MUT.

The total grant of R2,3 million will cover the procurement of over 200 items for Library Services, including laptops, computers, printers and even the appointment of interns to provide IT support to students.

Mrs Ndaki said during the fact-finding visit that "It has always been my dream to leave a legacy for the library. If MUT is to produce quality students, the library needs to have a world-class technology infrastructure. This expands on the kind of approach started in 2013 when we set up Learning Commons

with a strategic intent to provide students with information technology, remote or online education, tutoring, collaboration, content creation, meetings and reading or study space. Having additional computer hardware will enable us to meet the strategic goals of the University".



*Lindi Ndaki*

# MUT'S RESEARCH AGENDA ATTRACTS DST INTEREST



*Seated, Prof Zodwa Dlamini, left, and Dr Phil Mjwara, with the DST and MUT teams*

A high-powered delegation from the Department of Science and Technology (DST) visited MUT on Thursday, 7 September. They followed right on the heels of the honourable Minister for Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, who attended MUT's Research and Innovation Week at the beginning of June. In voicing her appreciation for the work MUT is doing, she promised "I will be back soon" - a promise she fulfilled by promptly sending her "hands on" team to concretise her support for MUT's research agenda.

Accompanying the DST Director-General, Dr Phil Mjwara, were the Deputy Director-General: Socio-Economic Innovation Partnerships, Dr Imran Patel; Chief Director: Basic Science and Infrastructure, Dr Daniel Adams; Advisor to the Minister, Dr Lindiwe Msengana-Ndlela; Acting Head:

National Advisory Council on Innovation and Dr Mlungisi Cele, to mention a few. From MUT, the team from the Technology Station in Chemicals (TSC) and the Centre for the Development of Green Technologies (CDGT) was led by Prof Zodwa Dlamini, DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagements.

Dr Mjwara described the visit as part of the DST's drive to consult with higher education institutions as the department undertakes a review of its policies, in particular the 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology. He said, "The aim is to identify new policy issues and the evaluation of existing instruments. The issues currently include the role of Science and Technology in promoting an information society, economic development and how to harness partnerships with other role players."

Prof Dlamini presented the MUT Plan for Research, Innovation and Engagements (RIE), highlighted areas of interest to the DST in which MUT has delivered, and spoke to the Research and Innovation Framework. This outlines how MUT will contribute towards the implementation of the South African National Research and Development Strategy as well as the country's Ten-Year Innovation Plan. The delegation applauded MUT for having devised a focused plan which embraces the entire institution. The DST will be able to support the university through "Personalised Institutional Support" in areas of Research, Innovation and Engagements over a period of 5 to 10 years. Both organisations agreed that this was the first step towards a mutually-beneficial relationship.

# SEMINAR BUILDS SYNERGIES WITH SCHOOLS

MUT has adopted a new approach in strategic stakeholder engagement, building on the concept of creating synergies with high school principals, guidance and life-orientation teachers. With this in mind, the Stakeholder Relations Unit hosted local teachers and education officials to strengthen MUT's relationship with schools and create brand awareness. "We wanted the principals, guidance counsellors and life-orientation teachers to take the message back to their schools and start talking about what MUT offers – our programmes, our history, and the impact of our former students upon the economy and the society in general," said Sarda Pillay, our Schools Liaison Officer. Sarda added that they also wanted to thank the school leaders for allowing them to address the learners on the academic offerings at the University.

One of the focus areas of the seminar was the gap between the high school and post-matriculation curricula, hence the theme of the meeting:

***"How best we can align our curricula to allow for better alignment with higher education and benefit our learners".***

The guest speaker, Dr Ngogi Mahaye, Head of KwaZulu-Natal Academic Interventions, in the office of the MEC for Education. Dr Mahaye said the issue of education from early childhood to adult learning "remains one of the key focus

areas" for the Department of Education in the province. "Curriculum development management requires visionary leadership. We have to move with high speed in trying to find solutions to this problem. The MEC for Education in the province, Mthandeni Dlungwane, is discussing the issue with vice-chancellors of universities in the province," Dr Mahaye said. He added that school principals would have to "come to the party". He recommended that they should develop strong relationships with tertiary institutions in order to discuss their respective curricula.



*Sarda Pillay, left, and Zama Sishi, Director : Stakeholder Relations, right, with a Sihle High School educator*

Both education leaders and university experts are concerned about learners who do exceptionally well in Grade 12, but find it difficult at university level and are forced to drop out. The Director of the Umlazi District, Bheki Ntuli, said one of the reasons for such instances was that some teachers made it easy for learners to pass Grade 12 by giving them an exam-focused programme. Students would pass well, but would not be fit for university education. Ensuring that learners are taken through the whole syllabus might be one of the answers to the problem.

MUT seems to have a solution for coping with some of the challenges. Mammusa Lekoa, from MUT's Department of Environmental Health, offered her services to the Department of Education. She pointed out that it was not right to focus only on the improvement of Mathematics and Science and leave out the other disciplines. Mammusa said students were struggling with the so-called 'soft skills', like writing. She invited the department to work with her in assisting learners to sharpen this skill.

# WOMEN'S DAY BREAKFAST A 'MELTING POT' FOR EMPOWERMENT

MUT enhanced its relations with industry and government during its Women's Day breakfast at the Durban Country Club. Over 110 women in management from various sectors, including MUT's managers, attended.

MUT Women's Day events are not just about socialising. "We seek to promote MUT and give influential guests a glimpse of this remarkable institution. It is here that we tell the story of MUT that showcases guest speakers that every woman should aspire to emulate. We are humbled that we were able to draw speakers of such high calibre as Nomusa Dube-Ncube, MEC for Co-operative Government and Traditional Affairs, and ICC CEO, Lindiwe Rakharebe," said Mbali Mkhize, Senior Director: Marketing and Communications at MUT.

Each of the esteemed speakers emphasised that celebrations of this nature are a "melting pot" for women to grow and learn from one another.

"Thank you MUT for giving women a chance to be together. As women, there is a mission we need to fulfil," Nomusa Dube-Ncube said. She said that if women wanted to succeed in making a more meaningful contribution to society, they needed to assert themselves without changing their values and way of life. "We don't need to start playing golf. Let's play the game on our own terms."

Dube-Ncube reminded women of the need to see themselves as being important people. She said she loved being a woman, and would not have chosen otherwise. She celebrated women of different colours, backgrounds and sizes. Dube-Ncube applauded women for sharing their issues with one other, a practice she called 'sisterhood'. "Any successful society is built on having a



*The breakfast was attended by high-powered women. From left are MUT Deputy Council Chair, Diana Hoorzuk, MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube, MUT's DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof Zodwa Dlamini, and ICC CEO, Lindiwe Rakharebe*

dialogue with itself," she said.

Dube-Ncube said the struggle was not against men, but against the system that kept women down. She advised women to reach out to one another and pull themselves up the ladder in order to unleash their power. Representing 52% of the country's population, women are in the majority! She told of a woman who had been assisted by other women and was very happy to finally provide for her family. As Dube-Ncube said, "Women are the ones that fetch the water and collect wood" and they usually see to it that things are sorted out. They are the first to be affected by what is happening in the household. Dube-Ncube said that a struggle to liberate women was a struggle to emancipate society.

Lindiwe Rakharebe paid tribute to women who have made a great impact upon the provincial and national economy. Under her reign the Durban ICC has contributed R30 billion to the country's GDP, and created 80,000 jobs. R4,2 billion has been contributed to KZN's GDP. Her point was that if women were given a chance, they

could achieve as well as she had. She echoed the sentiments of Dube-Ncube by adding that the economies of the world would be improved. She invited everyone to tell the great story of Durban and how women have contributed to making the city what it is. She also encouraged women to create jobs for one another, as she does when she asks dressmakers to make designer clothes for her. Rakharebe suggested that South Africa should have an Africa Friday which would highlight the role of women.

Rakharebe acknowledged that there is still a lot to be done to change the status of women. For instance, the management of companies is still dominated by men. She urged women to "sit at the table and have conversations with men, so they influence how things are done". She appealed to women leaders to be honest so that the good reputation of women is not tarnished. "Set an example for people to follow," she concluded.



# EAC Turns Five

*Some of the delegates has been attending the EAC for five years*

The annual Empowered Administrators Conference (EAC), run by MUT's Department of Marketing and Communications (MarComms), turned five on 8 September 2016. The EAC provides a platform for MUT to showcase to employers its understanding of the volatile world of work. In particular it stresses the need to embrace change in providing industry with relevant solutions.

Amongst the speakers on the 2016 EAC programme was a former MUT student, Sandile Mahlaba. He gave a presentation on how office administrators could use innovation to improve the functioning of their line managers' offices. Sandile told delegates how, through a virtual PA, he was always connected to anyone he needed. The highlight of his presentation involved a demonstration on how managers would be conducting meetings in future.



*Sandile Mahlaba*

Mbali Mkhize, EAC Founder, added that judging from each year's participant evaluation forms, and their own research, the EAC team has been able to give office administrators what they need. Although it was not easy to surpass their own standards each year, the quality of her team has been the reason for the continuous improvement at each successive conference.

The quality of the EAC programmes has improved the lives of countless office administrators. During the last conference, delegates indicated how much they had learned from the presenters. One delegate singled out Sebe Mbhele, a lecturer in MUT's Department of Communication, who presented a report writing workshop at the conference. The delegate said she wished Sebe had more time because her report-writing workshop was very informative. Sebe said she enjoyed presenting because the delegates were so eager to learn. She was one of 14 presenters that kept the delegates spellbound.

Mbali said that the conference was unique on account of its originality. She continued with the following message: "Without fail, MarComms has been delivering strong programmes to office administrators to ensure that they are empowered. We research our topics

well, and make sure that they meet the needs of the commercial world. For instance, for this year we came up with the theme of "Becoming a 4D office administrator". Our aim was not only to boost the level of the conference, but to provide office administrators with a means of improving in preparation for future challenges. The "4D" notion means we want office administrators to have an extra factor that is exclusive to them. They must have an edge that makes them indispensable and sought-after as office administrators."

***Our aim was not only to boost the level of the conference, but to provide office administrators with a means of improving in preparation for future challenges.***

The Acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof Marcus Ramogale, thanked the MarComms team for organising one memorable conference after the other for five consecutive years. He said the conference was raising the esteem image of the University.

# EAC KEEPS GIRL LEARNERS AT SCHOOL



*Marketing and Communications Senior Director, Mbali Mkhize, handing over the donated sanitary towels to Bheki Ntuli, Director of Umlazi District; and Nomusa Shamase, Manager of Mxenge and Dukumbane Circuits*

In an effort to build synergies with schools, MUT's Empowered Administrators Conference (EAC) conceptualised a CSI programme which enabled its empowered office administrators to contribute to empowering the disadvantaged. The CSI programme was pitched to all delegates, who were asked to bring a pack of sanitary towels to keep girls within the Umlazi District of Education in class. The beneficiaries of the donations are girl learners from 58 schools in the

Umlazi District's Mxenge and Dukumbane Circuits.

This was the highlight of the EAC 2016, challenging EAC delegates to engage in a civic duty. Delegates practised emotional intelligence (EQ) by putting themselves in the shoes of disadvantaged young girls who miss classes once a month because their families cannot afford to buy them sanitary towels. Mbali said that young women in Africa have been reported as being absent

from school for a period of at least four days per month. "This can amount to approximately 24 weeks out of 144 weeks in a four-year period of high school. In some instances, these young women suffer from stress and depression through fear of soiling their uniforms. What should be a celebration of womanhood becomes a time of embarrassment and stigmatisation!"

The result was an astounding response in which 7,000 sanitary towels were collected – not only from conference delegates but also their organisations and line managers. The Department of Education jumped at the opportunity to give back and also gave generously, according to Nokulunga Nkabinde, an office administrator from the DoE. The huge donation was coordinated by the MUT Library, led by Mrs Lindiwe Ndaki, one of the university's top philanthropists. Mrs Ndaki is always at the forefront of giving and requests nothing in return. It is heart-warming that this benevolence has influenced her staff. The project was led by Ronel Govender, the office administrator at MUT's Library Services, who subsequently won a CSI certificate.

On accepting the donation at the gala dinner, Mr Bheki Ntuli said, "Between now and the final examinations, no girl learner will miss school for fear of being embarrassed that she is not protected".

To draw attention to the project, the creative MarComms team created an illusionary figure – Aka - as a focus for donors. Aka is a Tamil name meaning "big sister".

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# DELEGATES REFLECT ON THE EAC

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*Delegates really appreciated the quality of the presentations*

One of the main factors acknowledged by delegates at this year's EAC was the importance of technology in the 21st century, and why it is vital to be professional. Formerly, office administrators held all the aces as they were the ones with considerable power in being able to write the line manager's thoughts. Today, the rules of the game have been reversed and line managers have had to become more "techno-savvy". This has required a higher degree of competence amongst office administrators.

The EAC has taught office administrators to be more advanced and synergise their skills with those of their line managers. This has seen them gain valuable knowledge on synchronising gadgets, on-line collaborations, and downloading and using apps that save time and optimise productivity between them and their line managers.

Technological issues like information dissemination, data management, using technology to manage employers' diaries, and the decisions that inform the dissemination of data, were the key focus of the 2016 EAC.

The conference really lifted the spirit of the office administrators. One delegate said, "What a fantastic two days! I have been in the secretarial profession for more than 15 years, but every time I am attending the EAC I go back to my office full of new ideas that help me to take responsibility for my weaknesses. It makes me proud to be part of an organisation with intelligent and capable people." Delegates also pointed out that the conference taught them the important role they could play in nurturing the image of their organisations and thus improving their brands.

One delegate singled out Thabo Senoane, a speaker who gave a presentation on Strategic Diary Management. "Thabo really inspired me to work harder and to become smarter. I will apply everything I learnt at the EAC. I thoroughly enjoyed each session," the delegate said. Thabo is a Strategy Manager at the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). Formerly he was employed in the same organisation.

## STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

# AWARD-WINNING ACADEMIC OBTAINS A PHD

The number of MUT staff members who obtain PhDs keeps increasing.

In the previous edition we profiled four staff members who received their PhDs during the last graduation period. In this edition we take pleasure in introducing another staff member who recently obtained his PhD, namely Njabulo Gumede, a lecturer in the Department of Chemistry. Njabulo, now Dr Gumede, has this to say about his ground-breaking research thesis from Durban University of Technology (DUT):



"The title of my PhD degree is: *Njabulo Gumede*

'Computational and micro-analytical techniques to study the in vitro and in silico models of novel therapeutic drugs'. Computational methods are chemical experiments performed using a computer to mimic experiments

performed in a laboratory setting. These methods can also be used to predict the

behaviour of chemicals before they are tested in a chemical laboratory.

"My social and cultural capitals such as the will to succeed, my entrepreneurial

upbringing, not being afraid to fail, as well as being a boy-scout, kept me going.

Even when someone decided to break into my house and took two laptops with all my research results and manuscripts in 2014, I remained resolute. I used my 13th cheque back then to purchase a new laptop. That was a huge breakthrough for me; it resulted in the design of these molecules that are potential cancer cures. That was a blessing in disguise, so to speak."

Two papers were published in high impact international journals resulting from this work. The results of this PhD have opened some new avenues

for myself as a researcher, academic, innovator and an entrepreneur to offer solutions for most aggressive breast and prostate cancers.

## MUT STAFF TAKE PART IN TAU FELLOWSHIP

The scholarship of teaching and learning at MUT is set to grow stronger and stronger, thanks to the University's commitments to programmes that seek to improve these activities.

The willingness of the university staff to learn more has been an important factor in this area.

Three senior academic staff members – Assistant Professor Alfred Msomi, Head of the Department of Mathematical Sciences; Assistant Professor Sandiso Ngcobo, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication; and Alex Nabbi, Lecturer in the Department of Accounting, have been involved in a Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU) Fellowship, a 12-month

programme from which they "learned a lot".

The MUT staff members were part of a larger group from various academic institutions that met in Pretoria in 2015, and in Cape Town and Durban in 2016. They were involved in individual and group projects and each member had a mentor. Alex said one of the main features of the programme was role-play.

**STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 14**

# STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

They acted out various important roles in higher education, including being vice-chancellors and other management roles. The scenario gave them a deeper insight into what was expected of those particular administrators. In this way they became "agents of change".

Alex said the programme allowed participants to critically interrogate their personal and professional identities and the ways in which they merge into one. "We were able to critique and share perspectives of transformation and diversity in higher education, curriculum and course design, language issues in higher education, and postgraduate research development,". He added that the true value of mentorship

was clearly evident in the continual and unconditional support that group facilitators gave participants in developing individual as well as group projects. The programme also

took advantage of the availability of technology, with team members sharing their expertise via cloud computing.



*TAU Fellows! From left, Prof Sandiso Ngcobo, Alex Nabbi, and Prof Alfred Msomi*

## MUT ACADEMIC ANALYSES LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

South Africa's journey to democracy was of interest to the whole world and the country was applauded for its smooth transition to the new era. The next challenge was how to sustain democracy, given the problems in other African countries that had gained freedom. South Africa duly created constitutional institutions whose main role was to help protect democracy and the rule of law. Enshrined within democracy was the right for people to choose their leaders.

The South Africans chose their first democratic government in 1994. MUT contributed to the local government elections (LGE) through one of its own staff members, Precious Lugayeni. Precious is Head of the Department of

Economics and one of the media analysts within the University.

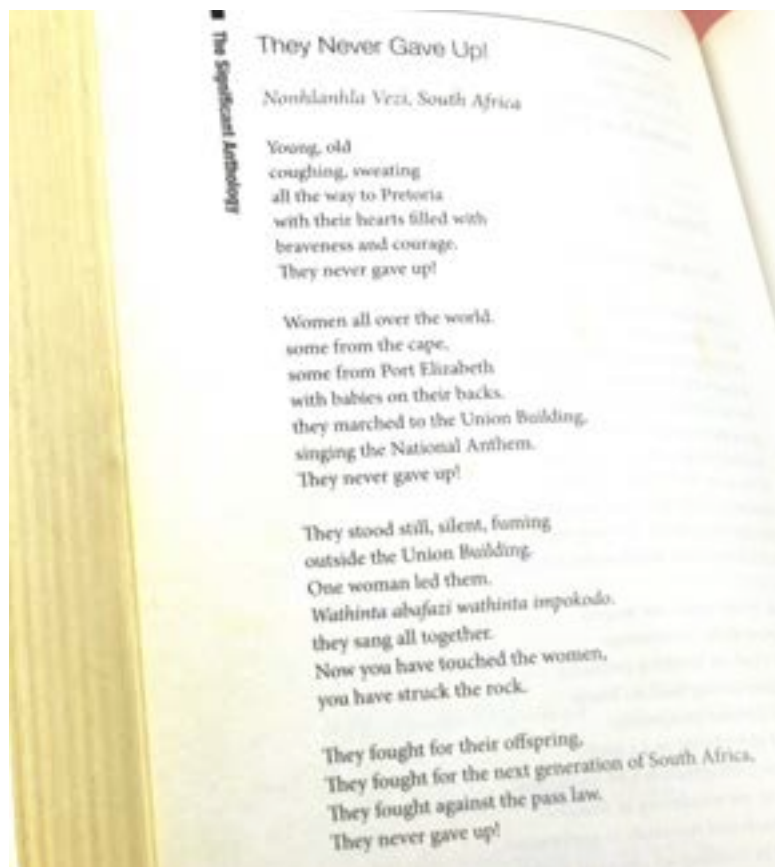
She has continued with her LGE involvement, assisting South Africans to make sense of what affects them directly. On 3 August 2016, Precious was one of the analysts associated with the local government elections.

She was part of the SABC team in Pretoria that interpreted the results. Her main focus was on the economic side of the elections and how the LGE results would impact upon local government structures. Precious has been a constant feature on SABC's Umhlobo Wenene radio station - once again giving constructive views of the results.



*Precious Lugayeni*

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



## NONHLANHLA'S POEM SPEAKS TO INTERNATIONAL READERS

NONHLANHLA VEZI HAS FACEBOOK TO THANK FOR CHANGING HER LIFE, EVEN THOUGH MANY PEOPLE ARE UNAWARE OF HER ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Nonhlanhla is a writer – a serious one for that matter! This third-year Community Extension student's favourite number is 206, the page number in the international anthology in which her poem appears. Nonhlanhla is the only writer from Southern Africa featured in the newly published book, *The Significant Anthology*. Her poem, "They never gave up", is about South African struggle heroines who fought against apartheid in 1956.

The anthology's editors, Dr Ampat Koshy (a professor of English working in Saudi Arabia) and Reena Prasad (a poetess from India living in Sharjah) brought 176 writers together from around the world through Facebook. According to its introduction, the anthology "contains prose pieces, autobiographical vignettes, essays, short stories and poetry. The writers range from seasoned ones to new and exciting voices brimming over with talent and gusto".

The anthology was published in India and is obtainable from Amazon.com.

"It's such an honour and privilege to be featured in an international anthology. I have always wanted to have my work published. Now I can see that if you believe in God, and have faith, things do happen. I have been rejected before - a number of times! I even thought of quitting. Then I realised that one has to fail before succeeding," said Nonhlanhla, who spent her childhood in Ezongolweni in Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal.

Her cousin, also a writer, encouraged her to write and she attended writing workshops while she was still at high school. Later she met a publisher who showed an interest in working with her. Nonhlanhla also writes short stories and recently completed an isiZulu drama. She would like to continue writing and possibly embark on an acting career.



*Nonhlanhla reading the book where her poem features*

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

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# ICT STUDENTS REWARDED FOR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE

*There is every reason to believe that our 21 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) students that were awarded certificates and trophies on 28 September 2016 will fare well in industry. Recent graduates from the ICT Department are already making a name for themselves in this sphere!*

Acting HOD, Pradesh Ramdeyal, said that the annual awards - based on good performance in the last examinations - are a validation of what the students can achieve.

Our "Diplomate of the Year", Vumani Mdabe, who graduated this year, is a software developer at Derivco, an IT company in Umhlanga, north of Durban. Sindi Sithole is a business analyst at Vodacom and is also running her own business as a sideline. A couple of years ago Sindi went to the UK on the ABE Bailey Scholarship. "Applicants for this scholarship are well scrutinised," said a man popularly known as PK, an awards winner himself.

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*"I used to spend long hours in the library on campus as we did not have a computer at home,"*

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The 21 students were chosen from four levels of study – the extended curriculum programme and years 1 to 3 - and most students received more than one award. Altogether, the students achieved



*Well done! Vumani, middle, with Colin Fourie, the Chairperson of our ICT Advisory Board, who is from Microvision, and Pradesh Ramdeyal, Acting Head of the ICT Department*

between 70% and 91% in their respective examinations. As Diplomate of the Year, Vumani was duly rewarded for receiving 12 distinctions in 12 subjects during his time of study.

Vumani attributed this achievement to a great deal of hard work. "I used to spend long hours in the library on campus as we did not have a computer at home," said 24-year-old Vumani. His primary education was completed at Menzi High at Umlazi, which is a leading school in the province. However, it was still a great

surprise for Vumani to achieve such excellent results. He had very limited computer knowledge when he registered at MUT in 2013.

There were three awards categories for the extended curriculum programme: Outstanding Academic Performance, Best Overall Performance and Subject Awards. There was also Subject Award in the National Diploma Programme, and Outstanding Academic Performance awards for each level of study - along with the Diplomate of The Year award.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

# SURVEYING STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL GEOMATICS RECOGNITION

*Avela Malimela ,left, and Snehlanhla Mkhwanazi*

### “I AM REALLY HONOURED!

My hard work has finally paid off.”

This is how Dolly Princess Potgieter of Pietermaritzburg reacted when she recently discovered that she had won a Smarttech Award for Best Student in Surveying 1 and 2. Dolly is one of three Surveying students that have recently received awards for their performance in the department. Dolly's average mark was 90%. She also won the ACIEL-Geomatics award for being

“Best First Year Student” with an average of 80%. In both instances she beat students from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Durban University of Technology (DUT). Both awards are administered by the South African Geomatics Institute (SAGI).

Dolly admits that her regular study programme and hard work paid dividends. “I used to revise the work we had been doing in class as well as past examination papers. This made it easy for me to do well in the examinations,” said Dolly, a forward-looking student who has already secured her Work-Integrated Learning

placement with a private firm. Dolly got to know about Surveying from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. The department granted her a study bursary for Surveying and she is currently studying Surveying S4.

Avela Malimela and Snehlanhla Mkhwanazi, S2 and S3 Surveying students respectively, were invited to the GEOMATICS INDABA which took place in the Ekurhuleni Convention Centre on 12 and 13 September 2016. They also visited the Transnet School of Rail's Esselenpark Campus in Gauteng on 14 September 2016 for winning the essay writing competition.

Snehlanhla said that the experience was very educative and encouraging. “I got to rub shoulders with the who's-who of the Land Surveying and Geomatics industry, namely, President Peter Numarch of SAGI; the National Chairman of GISSA (Geomatics Information Society of South Africa), Mr Morena Letsosa; and the Chief Director of Cadastral Spatial Information at the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mr Siyabonga Mdubeki, to mention just a few,” said Snehlanhla. “From the entire conference I learned that

Land Surveying and Geomatics is in fact a very broad industry. My limited knowledge of the industry led me to believe that it catered only for surveying technicians and professional surveyors. However, after attending the Geomatics Indaba I gained insight into a part of the industry that I was unaware of. For example, in the Surveying industry we have our very own IT specialists who cater strictly for Surveying and Geomatics. I also learnt that the Land Surveying profession is not really reliant on academics, but rather on the amount or level of experience that one has acquired, which is unlike most other sectors or fields.

“From my training at the Esselenpark School of Rail, I actually learned how a train is operated. Apart from the technicalities, I also got a chance to learn and expand my networking skills and build a network in the professional world of Surveying and Geomatics.

“Overall, I would say that I'm very grateful for the experience and the sponsorship, also for the chance to explore and participate in such competitions.”

# A WINNING INNOVATION BY MUT GRADUATES



Third and fourth, Khulani Ngcobo and Xolisani Ngcobo, with DUT students

In an effort to find innovative solutions to present day socio-economic challenges, two MUT ICT graduates created a device and mobile application that locates missing children around the city. For this innovation they won a cash prize at the Innovate Durban Business Summit, held on 15 July 2016 at the iconic Moses Mabhida stadium. This was a business initiative by the eThekweni Municipality to encourage youth to use technology to address socio-economic challenges. Khulani Ngcobo and Xolisani Ngcobo partnered with Durban University of Technology's (DUT) Vuyani Nala and Mngqobi

Gumede to design a wristband that transmits an individual's location to a mobile app that then pinpoints the individual's location.

The group was awarded with a good sum of cash for their efforts. In speaking about the prize, Xolisani said: "As recent graduates and budding entrepreneurs, the prize money will go towards further development of the app and adding improved features. It will also help in advancing our business." He added that they have created NeoOptic Solutions, an IT solutions company, through the mentorship of their lecturers.

## NEW ENACTUS MUT EXECUTIVE AIMS FOR EVEN BIGGER IMPACT

MUT has a new Enactus executive leadership which was elected on 2 September 2016. The President of the Executive, Vuyisanani Tshika, said their main goal was to strengthen internal structures such as advisory and alumni boards, and work closely with internal stakeholders such as the Institute for Rural Development and Community Engagement (IRDCE), the Centre for the Development of Green Technologies (CDGT), and business, to help them take their programme beyond the borders of South Africa. "We want our programme to have a bigger impact. We will be reporting after 90 days in office," he said. The executive leadership has a tenure lasting 12 months.

Enactus is an international non-profit organisation that works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilise university students to make a difference

in their communities. Consequently, they develop the necessary skills to become socially responsible business



Focused! The new Enactus MUT

leaders. Enactus currently exists in over 36 countries in the world, including all universities in South Africa. MUT became

a member of Enactus in 2009. Over the past seven years, Enactus MUT has helped raise over R5 million through their projects in and around KwaZulu-Natal. Their latest successful project, LL Heavens, concentrating on chicken farming, qualified for a R3.5 million loan.

Participating students form teams on their campuses and apply business concepts to develop outreach projects aimed at improving the standard of living for people in need. Enactus students create and implement community empowerment projects around the globe. They also enter such projects in national and international competitions. The experience not only transforms lives, but also helps students to develop the kind of talent and perspective that are essential to leadership in a complicated and challenging world.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

# MISS AND MR MUT WANT TO IMPROVE LIVES

*The 9th of September 2016 changed the lives of two of MUT's more than 10,000 students. Londiwe Ngcobo and Bongumusa Makhathini became Miss and Mr MUT respectively.*

They are both ecstatic about winning, and are looking forward to learning a lot as public figures. They are also anxious to give to the public in various ways. A first-year Electrical Engineering student, Londiwe said that within the limits of her academic schedule, she would like to get involved in programmes that aim to change people's lives. "I would like to talk to people about issues that will lift their self-esteem. I recently attended a disability workshop on campus and got a chance to tell the disabled students that they need to accept who they are, and not compare themselves with others," said a

very confident but down-to-earth Londiwe - who has been part of the top five in all the beauty pageants in which she has taken part.

Bongumusa said he was going to form a team that would guide new students through the early phase of life as a university student. He is worried about students who lose their way on account of the 'freedom' they experience at university. Bongumusa, a second-year Marketing student, has competed in pageants a number of times.

The two new MUT ambassadors, as prizes for winning, will receive free driving lessons from Linda Driver Training, a R50 000 clothing voucher from Ecko, and 100% remission on their tuition fees for the 2017 academic year. Londiwe will also

have free hair appointments at Africare hair salon, and for the period of one year, be taken wherever she needs to go in a Chery car.



*King and queen! Bongumusa Makhathini and Londiwe Ngcobo*

## MUT rolls out its inaugural Master of Nature Conservation degree

This degree, the first of its kind for a university of technology in South Africa, develops academic ability to apply scientific methods in supervised research and/or problem solving, and the communication and/or effective implementation of investigative research findings. It focuses on strategic level management, advanced research methods and significant relevant research. The qualification is aimed at generating new knowledge within the industry and developing a career path for graduates. The programme includes both coursework and research components which culminate in a mini-dissertation.

Selection criteria for admission to the Master of Nature Conservation are based on both academic prowess and field

experience. Students wishing to be admitted to this discipline are required to have a Post-Graduate Diploma in Nature Conservation, or a Bachelor of Science Honours in Biological Sciences, or an equivalent four-year qualification in the same or similar field. In addition, an aggregate of 60% in final-level major subjects is required.

Anyone wishing to apply for this programme must submit the title of the proposed mini-dissertation, plus the research proposal, to the Head of Department: Nature Conservation on or before 15 November 2016. Contact details for the Head of Department are:

**Prof Gavin McDonald, PO Box 12363, Jacobs 4026; gavin@mut.ac.za or 031 907 7623.**

The Head of Department will evaluate each application on academic merit and ascertain whether a suitable supervisor is available. Whether suitable resources are available within the University or could be arranged elsewhere, are points of concern.

All recommended applications will be considered by the Research Ethics Committee in January and be recommended for approval by the Faculty of Natural Sciences Research Committee which meets later in January.

All admissions approved by the Faculty Research Committee will register for the programme in early February 2017.

# MAX LIFESTYLE OWNER LEADS DEVELOPMENT IN UMLAZI

**Trendsetter. Brave. Arrogant in a constructive way. Community developer. Visionary. An honest gentleman. Foresight. Go getter. People's person. Business man. Role model. Winner. Diplomat. Family man.**

These are some of the tags that describe a man called Max Mqadi. Max is a man who proudly proclaims very early in a conversation that he grew up in Umlazi and would like to develop the township and its people. Max has done a great deal for this densely populated residential area, situated about 30 kilometres south of Durban Central. His efforts have forced the world to sit up and take notice of this place

Max Mqadi is the owner of a leisure destination called Max's Lifestyle. He said he changed the name of the place to fit in with his long-term business goal. It used to be called Max's Butchery. Now it is a complex place which boasts a restaurant, a bar, a VIP lounge, a conference hall, a wedding venue, ATM facilities and two exclusive boutiques for men and women. Max's success has attracted the attention of numerous people and large organisations.

The eThekweni Municipality does not fail to mention Max's Lifestyle in its talks on township tourism. In fact on 27 September 2016, KwaZulu-Natal Tourism, led by Philip Sithole, visited Max's Lifestyle to congratulate the leisure outlet on being chosen by the international travel magazine, Conde Nast Traveller, as one of the 207

best restaurants in the world. The Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry was also present, and had only praise for the man who has provided work for 150 people, many on a permanent basis. This new landmark might soon be hosting a delegation of researchers from the world at large. They will be led by Dr Lemuel Berry, one of the founders of the National Association of African American Studies & Affiliates (NAAAS). Dr Berry was really impressed by what he saw at Max's Lifestyle.

Max, the man who calls himself 'best in the world', looks beyond his personal



*Community developer, Max Mqadi, right, and Hlengiwe*

achievements. Not only does he empower others by giving them business ideas, but he has also assisted 15 MUT students with their studies. He has paid their fees and come to their aid in various other ways. One of these students is Hlengiwe Mthembu from Harding in the south of KwaZulu-Natal.

Hlengiwe said she did not know how her life would have turned out without Max's help. "I am doing my second year in Office Management and Technology.

Max paid for my 2015 and 2016 fees. He also paid for Mbali Mchunu's fees. She is in her final year of Electrical Engineering," said Hlengiwe. Max provided further assistance by hiring the two MUT students. Hlengiwe works at Max's Lifestyle during the day and attends classes in the evenings. Mbali works at Max's Lifestyle when she is free.

Max can attribute his success to bravery and sticking to his business plan. He challenged all other aspiring businessmen or women to be bold and not look for short cuts. "You don't wake up the next day and become rich. You have to work hard. There will be lots of challenges along the way," said a man who almost lost his house in Umhlanga.

Max appealed to the government to develop Umlazi as such a step would go a long way in reducing the influx of people into the city. That is the vision of a man with foresight. Max has made people believe that job opportunities are not only available in the city. The manageress of Max's Lifestyle, Nobuhle Buthelezi, has a qualification in hospitality and enjoys her work and its challenges.

Max said he noticed that Vilakazi Street in Soweto had been developed as a tourist attraction. "It would be nice if the government could do the same to Mbe Street as well," he said. Mbe Street is where Max's Lifestyle is situated in Umlazi's V Section.

Max's parting remarks emphasised that businessmen or women should first recognise themselves before being recognised by others. It is important to work with one another and the government to achieve lasting success.

# TELL ME YOUR FRIENDS AND I WILL TELL YOU WHO YOU ARE



*Mlamuli Buthelezi and Themba Mthembu talking about their times at MUT*

**On 12 August, a prestigious group of MUT alumni gathered for a laudatory event for one of their own at the ICC. This was the culmination of months of work between the MUT Alumni Office and the 'Alumni Masters' as they call themselves.**

The occasion was hosted by Prof Zodwa Dlamini, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagements, who shared developments at MUT and areas requiring funding with the assembled MUT Masters and guests (many of whom are involved in mega-business deals or executive management of top organisations and companies).

The camaraderie during the event showcased a very happy group of alumni who have all 'made it'. Having started off at MUT, they have never looked back. Soon after graduating from MUT, most of them moved to the University of Natal to qualify in various

engineering fields and subsequently became professional engineers.

This is a cohort that grew up being told over and over about the need to choose their 'networks of association'. They became a united family at MUT and continued to keep tabs on one another, encouraging further academic growth. It was thus not surprising that almost 20 years after graduating, they were keen to celebrate with some of their own. The guests of honour were Mlamuli Buthelezi, who was recently appointed Transnet National Group Chief Operations Officer; TC Madikane, President of the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers; and Themba Mthembu, KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development. All three shared a common goal with their fellow alumni. "There is a need to support our alma mater in order to improve skills development in this country. Let's not forget our roots and remember to treat everyone with integrity, dignity and respect," they echoed as if they had prepared their speeches together.

MEC Mthembu emphasised a need to "understand the terrain within which we operate and to understand the colonial imprint that was imposed upon us, which makes us seek to stay in jobs we were qualified for. It is therefore imperative for us to become activists of change - for the youth not to be held hostage by poverty. Economic development cannot be separated from building a non-racial society. As MUT alumni we must be aware of the massive unemployment scourge which is painful at all levels of society." He reminded alumni "not to gain the world and lose your soul. Wisdom is better than gold."

Chief event organisers and fellow alumni, Raymond Cele and Sifiso Vezi (Dweba), shared a light moment on the subject of "Life experiences at MUT". They recalled how "the guys from Jo'burg" were fascinated when the females used expressions such as Ngeke oh or Awuve uyisicefe when they courted them.

Mlamuli Buthelezi, who studied beyond South African borders at the University of Louisiana, gave his fellow alumni some good advice:

- Develop a global supply chain and have a balance of trade
- Compete in the coal industry with Australia and Indonesia
- Become thought-leaders and come up with solutions
- Be innovative and think like the inventors of Uber
- Concentrate on ideas for self-improvement.

What kind of equivalents can we come up with to improve ourselves? Buthelezi mentioned how a Black Management Forum (BMF) had been formed some time back to empower struggling black students to excel. His parting message was: "We must continue to plough back into this great university which opened doors for us. Lions hunt in packs, so we should follow suit and give back to MUT."

It was extremely gratifying that alumni pledged R365 000 and set a target of raising R1 million towards student bursaries. To assist engineering students who struggle to find Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities and are thereby delayed in graduating, the MUT Masters offered 25 WIL opportunities for MUT engineering students.

# MUT Alumni continue to make **GLOBAL FOOTPRINTS**

APART FROM OUR LOCAL CELEBRITIES AND POLITICIANS, VERY FEW PEOPLE EVER HAVE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS SPLASHED ACROSS THE PAGES OF A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WITH OVER A MILLION READERS.



*Ntuthuko Mthembu*

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**Mechanical Engineering graduate, Ayanda Ntuthuko Mthembu, defied the odds and recently made headlines for his commendable achievements.**

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At the age of 29 the very timid but articulate graduate has been appointed as Chief Engineering Officer at Transnet. Describing himself as a Maths and Science enthusiast, Mthembu was introduced to the field of Mechanical Engineering by a friend who was studying Mechanical Engineering at MUT. "MUT was my first and only choice," says Mthembu. His journey at MUT served as a cornerstone to the training he later received at Transnet Engineering School. "Most successful engineers come from MUT and some of the seniors I look up to at work studied there. MUT has a very high calibre of engineers," says Mthembu.

His new position means he will spend more time travelling and more time out at sea. The 'adrenalin junkie' has sailed all around the African continent. Some of his memorable moments include riding a bicycle for the first time in Angola. And if you are familiar with the American Comedy, The Big Bang Theory, Mthembu says his colleagues often refer to him as one of the characters, Sheldon. He is also known as 'The Encyclopedia'.

"My ultimate goal is to get my Class One Ticket as Senior Engineer," says Mthembu who is currently a Class Three Marine Engineering Officer. He emphasises that in order to achieve his

goal, he will have to spend more time at sea. When he is not at sea, the dedicated graduate spends his time travelling and surfing off the Durban beaches.

According to Mthembu, one of the biggest lessons he has learned in life comes from Albert Einstein. In his memoir, the physicist says, "You are no different from the next person. There is no such thing as a bad idea and be more meticulous – pay attention to detail". "These are the words I try to live by," says Mthembu.

### Mthembu shares his recipe for success:

- You are never too old to start something new.
- Allow yourself to adjust to the world.
- Show respect at all times.
- Be patient.
- Try to do more.

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***"You are no different from the next person. There is no such thing as a bad idea and be more meticulous – pay attention to detail"***

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# GIVING BACK TO YOUR ALMA MATER

The term "Alma Mater" has such a rich historical background, similar to our university. Its Latin origin draws a parallel between the role of universities in society and that of a "bountiful mother". Both are associated with nurturing young lives so that they can reach their full potential. Very often people refer to the days they spent at university as "the best days of their lives". With our changing economic times,

everyone is asking for help in one way or another. The income from alumni to universities is something all universities welcome. Ever-increasing costs and difficulties in obtaining adequate financial resources to meet educational and institutional needs continues to be a major problem for higher education institutions.

According to research conducted by PPS (an insurance, investment,

healthcare and financial planning specialist for graduate professionals), 54% of students plan to move abroad for work purposes within the five years following their graduation. The latest PPS Student Confidence Index (SCI) was conducted among more than 1500 South African students in their fourth year or above, studying at a university or university of technology towards a profession-specific degree, such as Engineering and Accounting.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Are universities losing alumni that could plough back their knowledge to the local economy and to the University?



Continue this conversation online and collaborate on solutions via social media platforms:

<https://www.facebook.com/AlumniMUT/>

## "G" IS FOR GIVING

Although it's important, giving back to your institution is not all about donating money. This is how you could give to MUT:

- **Sign up to be a mentor** - The MUT Alumni Mentorship Programme allows alumni to share their professional and personal experience and expertise with
- **Donate resources** - The Library accepts donations of books, journals and electronic resources which enhance its support of academic programmes.
- **Provide WIL opportunities** - Provide meaningful career opportunities for current students by

offering students an opportunity to do their Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) component in your business. Your participation in this programme helps provide MUT students with internship experiences from which they may have been excluded for lack of opportunity.

# CELEBRATING ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



*The former students came in numbers!*

As a young, township-based university, MUT in partnership with its alumni continues to play an active role in transforming the immediate community of Umlazi. It also makes a remarkable contribution in addressing the current educational challenges facing our country. This was confirmed at the MUT alumni fundraising dinner held at the Durban ICC.

The fundraising dinner aimed to recognise the recent appointments

of the following distinguished alumni, namely, Mlamuli Buthelezi, Group Chief Operations Officer of Transnet; Themba Mthembu, KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development; and Thembinkosi Madikane, MD of Igoda Projects and President of the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers (SAIEE). Their executive positions will enable them to make meaningful contributions to the economic development of our country. The event was conceptualised by a

group of engineering graduates who call themselves "MUT Masters". The group aims to focus on matters of common interest such as brand building, creation of opportunities such as Work Integrated Learning (WIL), entrepreneurship and work for MUT graduates. The event served as a platform to discuss the role MUT alumni could play in advancing economic development within South Africa and globally. The event was attended by notable government and industrial partners such as Mr Vusi Khumalo, President of the South African Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and Dr Sandile Shabalala, the CEO of Prince Mshiyeni Hospital. The occasion also provided alumni with a good opportunity to network.

A first of its kind for MUT, the fundraising dinner launched the MUT Masters Trust (MMT). A bursary fund to support financially needy but academically deserving MUT students was launched, and over R300 000 in financial pledges was pledged by alumni and industrial partners, along with in-service training opportunities.

## FOCUS: Themba Mthembu



*The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development was born in Inanda in 1958 to a working-class family. He schooled in KwaMashu and then went on to qualify as a Chemical Engineering Technician from MUT.*

This led to his work as an Engineering Technician in the chemical industry and his involvement in the trade union movement. MEC Mthembu 'cut his teeth' in politics by becoming a student activist in the 1970s and early 1980s. This led to his involvement in the struggle

for liberation through working in the underground cell structures.

Since 1994, Mthembu has held various leadership positions both in the ANC and SACP. He has been the Provincial Secretary of the SACP since 2002 and sits on its Central Committee. He joined the legislature in 2009 and was appointed as Chairperson of the Agriculture Portfolio Committee, a position he held until June 2016 when he was appointed MEC for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

As one of the keynote speakers at the fundraising dinner, Mthembu said: "As alumni of MUT it is important to understand the political economy of South Africa. This will help us become activists for change in addressing poverty and inequality. We must want a rural child to get the same break as many of

us did, ensuring that his or her future is not held hostage by poverty."

Whilst reflecting on his days at MUT both as a student and as SRC President, Mthembu said: "To make a difference in the development of our country, let us not sell our souls but strive for freedom".

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*"To make a difference in the development of our country, let us not sell our souls but strive for freedom".*

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## MUT ALUMNUS BUILDS BRIDGE TO KEEP PEDESTRIANS SAFE

CIVIL ENGINEERING GRADUATE, NOMONDE ZONDI, CONTINUES TO EXCEL IN THE FIELD OF CONSTRUCTION AS SHE TACKLES HER THIRD LARGE PROJECT AS A JUNIOR SITE ENGINEER AT LIVIERO BUILDING.

*This MUT alumna is part of the team that is building the pedestrian bridge at the KwaMnyandu Mall in Umlazi.*

Zondi says she has always had a passion for building bridges. "My role includes quality inspection and ensuring that we deliver what we promise as per Liviero Building values." According to eThekweni Municipality, the KwaMnyandu pedestrian bridge will ensure the safety of pedestrians who travel daily in the busy area. The shopping centre has the second largest train service in the south of Durban, with a minimum of 20,000 pedestrians crossing Mangosuthu Highway during peak hours on a daily basis. According to Zweli Mdunge, the Liviero building site foreman, the R34 million project is expected to be completed on 13 December 2016.

Zondi was also involved in the construction of the KwaMnyandu Mall. "That was my first big break. After that I was also involved in the MUT Student Housing Project," says Zondi. As a female in a male-dominated industry, Zondi says that gaining recognition is still a challenge.



*Nomonde, right with Andiswa Ngwane, a junior Quantity Surveyor, also an MUT graduate, who is also part of the project*

Having completed her Certificate in Project Management this year, she also plans to pursue a Bachelor of Technology Degree in Water Engineering. "The scarcity of water is a national challenge, so the skills to deal with such issues and contribute to the solution will be an advantage," she says.

The graduate dedicates her accomplishment to Dr Thandi Ndlovu, founder of the Motheo Construction Group. This is a predominantly black female-owned South African construction company. Zondi says women like Dr Thandi Ndlovu prove to us that anything is possible through dedication and determination.

# FINDING A JOB IN THE DIGITAL AGE



Two decades ago, finding a job meant buying a newspaper, submitting your CV to an employment agency, knowing someone who works for a particular organisation, or walking from company to company to drop off your CV. It was a case of approaching an office to tell them you were looking for a job. It was the most dehumanising system and in this day and age, cannot be endured by someone with a qualification!

The digital age has dawned, with more opportunities for job seekers to find rapid employment. However, it has also brought some challenges for those who do not value their personal brand.

## *Let us start with your CV, resume or profile.*

This is usually the first consideration when looking for a job. It is the first impression you make on the academic or general job market, so it is critical to make sure that it reflects well on you. It should highlight your most important skills and achievements on the front page.

Your CV must show that you are a brand and highlight how versatile you are. The person reading your CV must not feel as if it has already been seen elsewhere. Make it stand out. Standing out means providing more value than what's required to do the job. If you position yourself as being merely qualified, you are merely a commodity – interchangeable with everyone else who ticks the boxes next to the role's core competencies. You need to focus on what you offer that goes beyond the job description. What makes you interesting, compelling, valuable and differentiated?

Be honest with your achievements, however,

and do not embellish your CV. The results of overstating your achievements may affect your career in the future.

## *Here is how your CV could stand out*

- Rather than just sending your CV, resume or profile, think of ways you could prove your value to a prospective employer. Set up your own website or blog to showcase examples of your work.
- Provide examples of case-studies that show how you've gained experience. Simply put together a portfolio of everything you have successfully executed.
- Show how your skills could be used on the job by applying a problem-solving slant to your applications.
- Learn to mirror skills that are often seen in job advertisements, such as innovation, communication and customer satisfaction. Mention these in your applications, describing how you would use them to solve a specific problem in your chosen role.

## *Firming up your CV*

Include:

- Achievements (academic or general) related to the position for which you have applied
- Academic awards and fellowships (if applicable)
- Academic activities you spearheaded (philosophy clubs, reading groups, speaker series)
- Your references and their contact information.

## *Leave out:*

- Your personal information (hobbies, family, race or ethnicity, political or religious views, irrelevant accomplishments)

- Controversial opinion pieces you may have written
- Stylistic oddities (images, crazy fonts, and so on)

## *Gearing up for online jobs*

- Your CV, resume or profile must be continually updated and posted on social networking websites such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.
- Follow organisations for which you would like to work. You will be the first one to know if they have vacancies.
- Be careful who your networks are on social media platforms. You cannot look for work through these platforms or be friends with people with undesirable online behaviour.
- Be aware that the POPI Act allows employers to access your online behaviour. A few years ago, a front page article in the Sunday Times questioned the integrity of an organisation that had appointed someone guilty of inappropriate behaviour towards women.
- Remember that many small companies do not have advertising budgets for mainstream newspapers and use their websites and networks of association for this purpose.

## *Making social media work for you*

- Be a sleuth. Go beyond checking out a company's website and the LinkedIn profiles of the people you are going to meet during an interview. Stand out by digging deeper to show how much you know about the organisation. One way to do this is with the corporate Alumni feature in LinkedIn. Use it to identify potential contacts and reach out to learn as much as you can – the information they don't share on their company profile.

- Build a great LinkedIn profile. You will be Googled by a potential employer, and LinkedIn is likely to show up at the top of the search results. Make the most of this opportunity and forge ahead of the competition with a compelling headline, summary that tells your story and professional headshot.
- If you're in IT or the creative space, consider buying a domain name and building your own website. Having your own domain name will help you direct people to the information you want them to learn about you. Point the domain name to your personal website or LinkedIn profile and add the link to your resume, cover letter and business card.

#### *The dangers of seeking jobs online*

- Without mentioning unfavourable websites, be careful about the sites you use to look for jobs. There are stories of people who have vanished after being promised jobs online.
- Be careful about being too desperate. Many people are deceived and end up paying to get jobs. This cannot be tolerated!

#### *Online resources to help you*

- Google could provide you with resources on creating a CV, resume or profile that stands out.
- YouTube could help you understand how interviews are conducted and advise you on appropriate behaviour.

#### *Acing the interview*

- Do your homework. Check out the activities of the company and the industry on the days immediately preceding your interview. If you are interviewing at MUT, for example, and you learn of MUT's latest developments, you may want to bring it up in your interview to show you are observant.
- Have a personal business card. Even if you are working for a company, having your own separate business card is evidence of your professionalism. Today, with digital printing and services, you can get a unique card designed and printed at a reasonable price. Stand out with a square card or other features that showcase your personal brand.

#### *Following up*

Each individual must understand the importance of follow-through. As much as it is important in golf, the same principle applies to finding your next job.

- 'Thank Different'. You won't be the only person interviewed, but you may be the only one to follow up with a thank-you, especially a video message. You want all the elements of your thank-you video to make you stand out from your competitors. Dissect the stages of the interview process and decide how you will make your mark at each touch point.
- Stay connected. Using LinkedIn, reach out to connect with the new people you're meeting in your interviews. Even if you don't take the job or get an offer, stay in contact with the people you have met. Most jobs are filled through networking. The relationships you build through the job-search process are more valuable than that one position you are pursuing. Take a long-term, strategic approach.

In order to land your ideal job today, these tips will give you an edge and make you stand out from those merely holding the required qualification. They will help you step up, stand out and get hired!

# GRADUATE JOBS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Let your being a graduate become an asset! Most of the jobs available did not even exist before you started your qualification. This shows how volatile the working world has become in the 21st century.

In this article, we list new jobs that you may be unaware of. Many have suddenly popped

up and are here to stay. Take for example variations of careers in social media:

- Blogger
- Content strategist
- Digital media producer
- Community manager
- Specialist in social interaction
- New media coordinator
- Client engagement specialist
- Social media strategist
- Social media monitor

There are many more, even in your own field. So, what does it take to get into these new professions whose requirements are generic for anyone with a diploma or degree? The World Economic Forum lists general competencies and character qualities one needs to avoid being stuck in 20th century jobs.

The competencies are:

- Critical thinking
- Creativity and imagination
- Communication
- Collaboration

The character qualities are:

- Curiosity
- Initiative
- Persistence/grit
- Adaptability/versatility
- Leadership
- Social and cultural awareness
- Problem-solving skills

Without a doubt, these competencies and character traits will lead a new graduate through untested terrain and provide a future beyond imagination. But how does one harness these competencies and character qualities?

It all starts with embracing global interests and knowing that information is so easily accessible these days. It has become much easier to educate oneself. The Internet offers many opportunities to grow one's competencies and character qualities. As indicated in the previous article on "Finding a job in the digital age", Google and YouTube should become a job-seeker's best friend.

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