

talk@nmmu

September 2010 *The Staff Newsletter*

NMMU celebrates its many differences in various events Diversity Month success



Respect for diversity

HUNDREDS of staff and students flocked to the South Campus stadium as a fitting culmination to the highly successful Diversity Month.

Coordinated by the university's Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy (CANRAD), the month included a myriad of activities catering for a variety of tastes.

And NMMU staff and student embraced the event and what is also one of NMMU's new values.

"I can't think of a better place to work (and study), can you?" Vice-Chancellor **Professor Derrick Swartz** asked of those who gathered at South Campus, looking every bit the rainbow nation with their brightly-coloured diversity t-shirts.

In thanking everyone for their participation, Prof Swartz acknowledged NMMU's spirit of multiculturalism was "truly coming alive".

"Let us continue to live through this spirit in our offices, working relations with colleagues and students, and our engagements with the outside world."

Staff and students walked from their offices and lecture halls to the stadium at noon on 27 August where they received pies, cooldrinks and lucky draw prizes. Many also played in inter-faculty five a-side soccer and volleyball events.

Other events

Focused activities included a discussion session on "Difficult dialogues" with Wits University's Kevin Whitehead speaking on racial category membership and its implications for racialism and non-racialism in post-apartheid South Africa with CANRAD's **Jay Govender** responding.

The Law Faculty organised a Women's Day workshop on Islamic women and a Street Law seminar on domestic violence.

Students organised soapboxes and an Islamic



RIGHT FOOT FORWARD ...Sport Bureau's (from left) **Aubrey Klaas, Zukiswa Henen, Diba Odwa Sebe, Petrus Boukes** and **Victoria Mrwebi** were among hundreds of staff and students to enjoy a diversity walk, as a fitting celebratory end to NMMU's successful Diversity Month.

awareness week. An international buffet of food tasting, poetry judging, African and Indian cultural dance and a community jazz band was the contribution of the Arts Faculty Dean **Prof Velile Notshulwana**, the African studies Department and

I can't think of a better place to work (and study), can you?

Environmental Health and Social Development Professions.

Student Counselling discussed cultural diversity in values and beliefs, mutual respect, culture shock and xenophobia.

CANRAD involved schools with a debate.

International Week

Almost eight percent of our students are from other countries bringing their own diversity of lan-

guage and culture and a fresh perspective on learning to NMMU. Our Office for International Education contributed hugely to Diversity Month with their annual International Week from 17 to 20 August.

The week kicked off with an International Games event, followed by a Study Abroad expo sharing study opportunities abroad with our SA students.

Other events included a jazz concert including dinner, a talkshop on "Showcasing International Cultures" and an international film festival featuring *Forgiveness* with actor Arnold Vosloo and Christo Davids and the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The grand finale was an international cultural exhibition in the Student Kraal area featuring stalls with students exhibiting information, souvenirs, and other items from their home countries.

Diversity Month also ensured excellent print, radio and television coverage.

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Students and staff excel

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Support activities

HOW boring the world would be if we all had the same culture, language and characteristics? Diversity however just makes our world that much more exciting as we realised once again during the past Diversity Month.

I personally was amazed by the number and variety of events for staff and students taking place in August – from the fun antics of students at intervarsity through to the passion of African food, poetry and dance. We all benefitted.

Thank you to those who contributed to our research on talk@nmmu.

You'll find the feedback on

In praise of diversity

page 6, as well as some interesting research insight from our alumni on this page.

We are very excited about the residences "revamp" project, where learning and living will be combined in a supported and structured way, as well as the facilitated e-learning support for traditionally difficult programmes.

We are also proud of our new chancellor, two colleagues from Zoology, our art students and that innovative bunch from engi-

neering, all of whom raised the NMMU flag higher throughout South African with their various outstanding achievements.

Finally, did you know we have a plant library on campus with more than 25 000 specimens?

Read about it in this edition.

Send us your ideas, and we'll write the



stories.

Kind regards
Elma de Koker

National research provides insights from alumni Great environment, skills link

OUR environment, our students' ability to solve problems and the ability to understand the link between theory and practice were rated tops by NMMU alumni in a national research project.

Altogether 490 alumni among a database of more than 12 000 responded to the Magnet Professionals' Survey 2009 research project.

The respondents were on average 38 years old, 77% of them were permanently employed and their average work experience was 8.3 years.

Most of the respondents had honours followed by bachelors degrees and national diplomas.

They believed that their employers would rate NMMU tops for development of transferable skills such as communication and group work, also for quality of education and thirdly for the university's reputation.

Only two percent of the respondents were unemployed.

They themselves rated satisfaction with administrative staff, the choice of courses and the quality of education at NMMU lowest.

The top three services from the university that alumni are interested in are e-newsletters, networking opportunities and career support services.



NEW LONDONERS ... NMMU alumni now living in London include (from left) Siphelomiso Nomdoda, Lauren Fisher, Cary Pretorius and Achumile Majina, all of whom attended an alumni social.

New generation Londoners

SOME 20 new faces attended the tenth NMMU Trust annual London Alumni social on 9 August sponsored by Investec in their London offices.

Many of the initial alumni have returned to South Africa but newcomers were introduced to Trust Executive Director **Thembele Sofisa** and to the new roles of Director Legacies **Prof Kotie Grove** and Director Alumni Relations **Paul Geswindt**.

The future involvement of alumni in London catering for a more vibrant chapter and different interest groups as well as support for Vision 2020 and the university's capital campaign were on the agenda.

Paul also had meetings with organisations assisting in tracking alumni in the area and potential sponsors for gatherings in London.

If you know of any NMMU alumni in the UK please e-mail: Paul.geswindt@nmmu.ac.za

Briefs

Santie's achievement

NEW NMMU chancellor Santie Botha has been named Business Woman of the Year 2010.

The executive director of marketing at MTN was announced as the winner of the prestigious competition run by the Business Women's Association in conjunction with Nedbank.

Science winners

WOMEN in Science Awards finalist Zoology's **Marjetjie Landman** won her category of "PhD Fellowship", while her Zoology colleague **Dr Kwezi Mzilikazi** finished third in the "Emerging Woman Scientist" category.

Teams impress

NMMU's Team Synergy came sixth and Team Dynamic eighth in the final of the FNB Universities Business Challenge.

Student Services' **Kim Elliott** said NMMU did exceptionally well competing against four teams from Wits and two from UCT.

Diary

September
Disability Month

9 September
Research, Teaching, Performing and Creative Arts Awards

10 September
Algae-to-energy Project Open Day, Conference Centre, North Campus.

23 September
Isisusa Jazz Concert, Opera House, 19:30.

7 October
Organ Studio Concert, Dutch Reformed Church, Summerstrand.

New living and learning communities to instil values

Changes to revamp residences

OUR residences are in for a big change from 2011. The new living and learning communities will actively foster good citizenship, respect for the environment and life-long learning.

“Healthy living conditions provide the platform for growing outstanding citizens for our country,” says new Living and Learning Support Services Senior Manager **Rob Minne**.

“We want to create learning spaces with small learning communities such as the successful Thuthuka Accounting student community who live together in residence and study together.

“Eventually it’s all about strategies to reach our Vision 2020 and preparing our students for life,” Rob told **talk@nmmu** about the home-from-home concept.

The strategy focuses on grouping like-minded students together according to the programmes they study, the sport they play or other common interests.

A group of health sciences or engineering students or sport players would, for example, form such a community and will be supported by structures such as special lectures by academics or speakers.

Good decision-making will be emphasised in values training which will be additional to the academic support that students receive.

On the management side, a new student support structure reporting to each residence manager will include residence student assistants, house committee members and mentors.



Healthy living conditions provide the platform for growing outstanding citizens ...

*LIVING AND LEARNING TEAM ... Senior Manager Operations **Khotso Bada** (from left), Admissions, Records and Customer Services Manager **Estelle Broekhuizen** and Living and Learning Support Services Senior Manager **Rob Minne** are intent on improving life in the university’s residences through new strategies focusing on NMMU’s values, as well leadership and administrative structures.*

What is it?

A living and learning community is an American concept that tries to group students with common study programmes and interests so they might learn together, and from one another.

Residence student assistants will assist mostly with administrative duties, the mentors with academic leadership and the elected house committee members with social, sport, maintenance and governance activities.

“Any winning residence has to have leadership with strong attention to detail, which means fixing every broken window or fused light bulb immediately. Intellectual understanding, an innovative and developmental attitude, good people skills and the

ability to handle complex and diverse 20-year-olds fairly are crucial for success,” says Rob.

Admissions, Records and Customer Services Manager **Estelle Broekhuizen** is facilitating the centralised residence admission process for 2011 and making recommendations for accommodation based on academic achievement, leadership and extramural involvement as well as geographical location.

Apart from planning for 2011, Estelle helps with current problem areas, scrutinising statistics regarding academic achievement and disciplinary actions among current residents. She acts as link referring students with problems to the correct academic or counselling services.

She says she receives many calls from parents about their children’s safety and other issues.

New generation e-PAL available soon

SOME 2 100 students can soon benefit from our new electronic peer-assisted learning initiative in Computer Science, Psychology, Business Management, Accounting and Electrical Engineering.

Eight modules from the various subjects are the starting point of the new electronic learning e-PAL project, a HEADS (Higher Education, Access and Development Services) initiative driven by Dean: Teaching and Learning **Professor Cheryl Foxcroft** and led by CTLM Supplemental Instruction’s **Liesl Smith** and **Celeste Barker**.

Participating students’ success will be monitored. All findings will be used to improve this new generation initiative.

“The project, which is voluntary, is currently available to North, South and Second Avenue students and is planned to be extended to the Missionvale and George campuses next year,” says Liesl.

The project, funded by Eduloan, offers computer-based learning for students to engage with fa-



*PIONEERS ... A groundbreaking new electronic peer-assisted learning initiative was recently launched by (from left) CTLM Supplemental Instruction’s **Liesl Smith**, sponsor **Eduloan** acting CEO **Herman Steyn**, CTLM Supplemental Instruction’s **Celeste Barker** and Dean Teaching and Learning **Prof Cheryl Foxcroft**.*

ilitators in small groups online to enhance flexible thinking and problem solving, using good communication and information literacy skills in an online environment.

In the first phase, 11 weekly electronic sessions will be offered to expand student support in traditionally difficult courses, making some 220 additional hours of learning support available.

Online meeting times will be flexible to offer part-

time, working students and those with timetable clashes, various learning opportunities.

Peer facilitators and lecturers will also become competent in facilitating learning online.

NMMU plans to expand e-PAL in 2011, by making it available in more modules, training more students as peer facilitators and by ultimately spreading opportunities for student support to all NMMU students.

Missionvale library brings knowledge to surrounding community

Books for all readers

HAVING been denied access to the North End Library as a child, Missionvale Campus branch librarian Omayya Allie vowed that one day if she worked in a library, no one would ever be denied access to useful information.

Omayya kept that promise and today she makes sure that students and those in the surrounding community all enjoy the services that a library and the world of books have to offer them.

Born in North End in the 1950s, Omayya grew up during the times of apartheid and oppression.

Her family was politically active and counted human rights activist Prof Dennis Brutus among their neighbours.

She knew what it was like to live on the outside of society. Apartheid laws meant she can't use public libraries.

"I always had a love for books and reading but had to use the back door of the library, sitting among the rubbish bins where a kind librarian sometimes took out books for me in her name," recalled Omayya.

Her mother instilled a love for reading in her children and from the age of three she was part of a reading group. "We could not even talk properly then, but acted out the stories."

The Allie family relocated to Salt Lake in the city's Northern Areas in 1968. Unlike her friends and family members, however, Omayya attended Paterson High School in Schauderville and was elected as head girl in 1971.

"My late teacher George Botha and I often talked about how libraries can help address the struggles and challenges in education and of their importance in communities."

Missionvale has no public library. Schools in the areas also don't have functional libraries.

As a result, the new R38.5 state-of-the-art library at Missionvale Campus which opened

Our new library at Missionvale Campus serves as a beacon of hope to the surrounding community, and is the realisation of a long-held dream for the woman who runs it, writes Roslyn Baatjies

"I always had a love for books and reading but had to use the back door of the library, sitting among the rubbish bins ..."



*MOTHER TO ALL ... Missionvale branch librarian **Omayya Allie** loves to help people sharing knowledge resources with everybody.*

in late July, is a beacon of hope to an entire community.

"We already have an influx of school children crying out for support with their school assignments."

Many of NMMU's own students also find the library a more conducive and happier environment in which to study than their own neighbourhoods.

"There are very few facilities in this area and so the library has become home to many of our students. These students also share their library books with family members."

And so for Omayya, the Missionvale Library is also

helping to address social problems, to empower youth and even fight crime.

After completing matric, Omayya started working in the Accounts Department at the Livingstone Hospital in 1972 where she also helped to start a library for patients.

She later enrolled at Unisa for a Library Science degree and qualified in the late 1970s.

Every month, talk@nmmu will focus on a particular individual, unit, support service or research project to grow our understanding and appreciation of the many facets of our university.

Website a critical tool for NMMU

IN 2005 there were about 80 individual sub-sites on our public website (www.nmmu.ac.za). Today we have close to 600. The number of content pages has increased from around 700 to 8000.

These figures immediately highlight the important role of a website.

Today more and more people are going on-line to seek information – especially young people, who are NMMU's main

target market.

Other interesting statistics supplied by NMMU's webmaster **Thomas Hilmer** include:

- The average number of visitors per day (NMMU public website) has increased from 500 in 2005 to 12 500 today.
- The number of code pages written / developed for content modules (the work that is needed behind the scenes) has jumped from about 250 to 1450 during the same time.

Applications flurry

SOME 8 369 applications from prospective students to NMMU were captured in July and August this year, as compared to 4 692 during the same time last year. To find out more on the 2011 intake see the October issue of talk@nmmu.



Researcher of the year nanophotonic expert



Excellence

PHYSICS Professor Reinhardt Botha, who holds a Research Chair in Nanophotonics, is conducting innovative research in photonic applications (devices that absorb or emit light) for the infra-red and ultra-violet wavelength ranges, which could be used in high-tech military applications.

Prof Botha is the 2010 Researcher of the Year announced at the Research and Teaching Awards ceremony on 9 September.

"We're working on devices in the infra-red range which could be used in missile-tracking devices. I believe our work is of an international standard



*MOTIVATION ... Applied languages lecturer **Jacqui L. ck** is NMMU's 2010 Teacher of the Year winner. See our October issue for a profile piece on this winner.*

– it is certainly cutting-edge in South Africa."

Prof Botha explained that nanophotonics was the study of semi-conducting structures of atomic dimensions (very tiny) to develop applications in the field of photonics (i.e. devices that absorb or emit light, such as light emitting diodes, lasers or detectors).

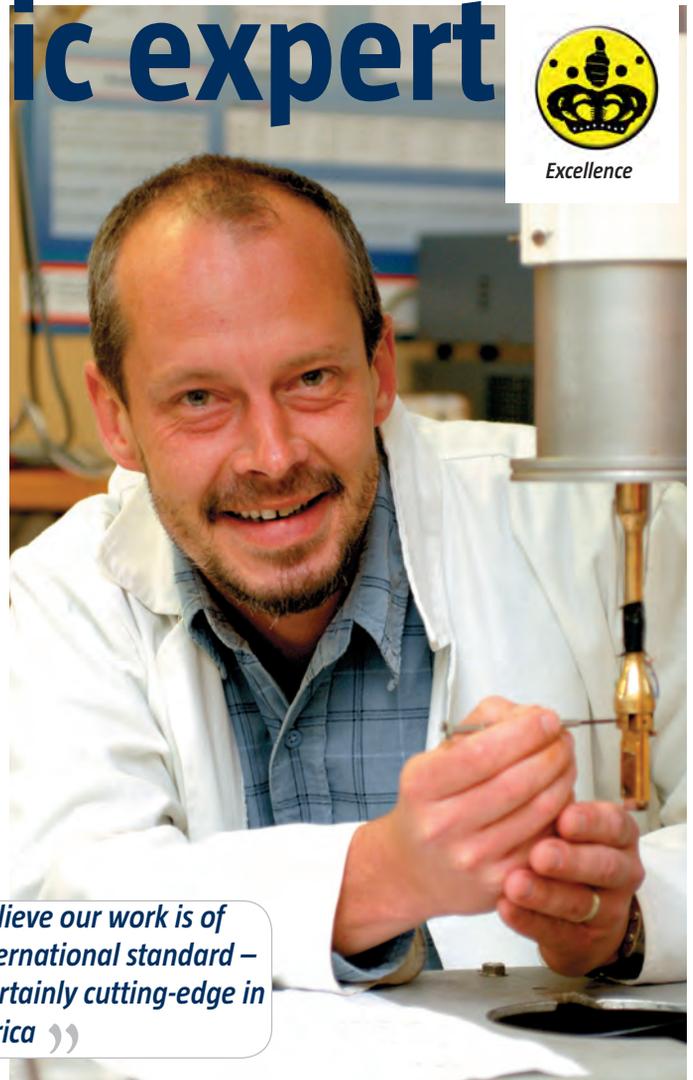
Prof Botha and his co-researchers, **Professors Magnus Wagener** and **Andre Venter**, make use of a state-of-the-art metal-organic chemical vapour deposition (MOCVD) system to deposit ultrathin films of zinc oxide and antimony-based semi-conductors (antimony is a metallic element), which are then used for research in developing ultra-violet detectors and other photonic applications.

"Semi-conductors are materials that conduct electricity at normal temperatures, but are insulating near absolute zero temperature. These materials have a band gap, which determines the

range of energies or wavelengths in which they will absorb or emit light. The band gap can be changed at will, based on the composition of the material or the size of the structure."

Prof Wagener has a provisional South African patent in the field of semi-conductors.

Prof Botha said: "One of our main interests is in devices operating in the mid-infrared (range). Such devices



Prof Reinhardt Botha holds the Chair in Nanophotonics

can be used in atmospheric pollution-monitoring or in military applications, like missile-tracking.

"We are also interested in ultra-violet materials. Here, most of our research focuses on establishing the ideal deposition parameters, which give optimised material in terms of its optical and electrical response.

Changing the size of the structure or controlling its shape will influence its efficiency as a light emitter or absorber."

"Our work is to push the boundaries, and to engineer small structures that will surpass the limitations imposed by the properties of macroscopic materials." - **NW**

... I believe our work is of an international standard – it is certainly cutting-edge in South Africa

Recognising those who have achieved excellence

Researchers of the Year

Arts - Prof Bert Olivier
Business - Prof Elmarie Venter
Education - Prof Lesley Wood
Engineering - Prof Darelle van Greunen
George - Dr Beatrice Conradie
Health Sciences - Prof Ilse Truter
Law - Prof Adriaan van der Walt
Science - Prof JR Botha

Emerging Researchers

Arts - Dr Rudi Bower
Business - Dr Houdini Fourie
Education - Dr Sylvan Blygnaut
Engineering - Dr Kerry-Lynn Thomson
George - Dr Jaap Steenkamp
Health Sciences - Prof Louise Stroud
Law - Adv Razaana Denson
Science - Dr Tim Downing

Teachers of the Year

Arts - Ms Jacqui Lück
Business - Ansulene Stone
Education - Tobeka Mapasa
Engineering - Andre Malherbe
George - Pieter Wicht
Law - Joanna Botha
Science - Dr Derek du Preez

Emerging Teachers

Arts - David Blygnaut
Business - Jonathan Dillon
Engineering - Jaco Snyders
Science - Dr Ronel Nel
There were no suitable nominations for the Creative and Performing Arts of the Year awards, as was the case with many of the other categories.

Research offers insight for improving communication with staff

Talk@nmmu gets thumbs up



YOU like the newly-packaged, full-colour monthly *talk@nmmu*, but you'd appreciate news about lesser-known, departments and fewer electronic communiqu s.

These were just some of the findings of internal research conducted as a means of plotting the way forward with various communication tools at NMMU. We wanted to get an idea of your preferences since communication is key to the success of any business.

"*talk@nmmu* keeps me up-to-date with what is happening throughout NMMU. Without it I would probably only know about things in my own department," was a sentiment expressed by many of the participants.

In total, 188 of you responded to the on-line survey, 71% of whom are in administrative positions.

Some findings:

- 79% believe success stories contribute to your sense of pride at belonging to NMMU.
- 73% want *talk@nmmu* to continue to be distributed once a month.
- 66% of you always read the publication and a further 47% share news from *talk@nmmu* with friends and family beyond NMMU.
- 86% of you read the electronic NMMU-communicues on matters that interest all staff, but 48% read only messages that affect their work directly.
- Most of you turn to *talk@nmmu* for NMMU success stories (88%), to learn about various awareness campaigns (values, water, electricity) (73%), for news (67%), and for infrastructure and development articles (62%).
- 80% prefer to hear about management decision via NMMU-communicue, and academic news (64%).

The winners of three R100 University Shop vouchers for the *talk@nmmu* on-line survey lucky draw are **Dr Blanche Pretorius** of Research Capacity Development, **Jessica Raper** of Extended Studies and **Helene van der Sandt** of the Library.



FEATHERED FEATURE ... Egyptian geese and their goslings, which are only a few weeks old, are regular visitors to NMMU South Campus, returning to the same place at the top of the abandoned boiler tower near the nursery every year to breed. The geese, which mate for life, nudge the chicks off the tower when they are ready to fledge. The chicks are light enough to survive the 15m fall to the ground after which the parents lead them to the pond which is a safe refuge from predators, such as mongooses, raptors and domestic cats. After about three months, the parents will chase the goslings away so that they cannot compete for territories.

Soapbox serves you



THOUGH 70% of respondents to the on-line survey have never used the newly-created SOAPBOX, those who have are happy with it.

Why?

They are happy with SOAPBOX because their complaints, ideas and news have received a response.

SOAPBOX, which can be accessed via the icon on the portal, offers staff a safe on-line platform for sharing. It's anonymous so it gives staff or students the opportunity, for example, to complain about potholes, the late arrival of lecturers, the price of pies, the shortage of toilet paper ...

These complaints, as well as any ideas, news or

praise that are also sent to SOAPBOX, are then sent to the appropriate individuals to follow up.

As a result, many positive improvements have been, and continue to be, made. You can see evidence of this on the SOAPBOX responses page.

In short, SOAPBOX is here to serve you.

There is no set turn-around time for response to complaints, but all staff are mindful of NMMU's new value of "taking responsibility".

SOAPBOX also posts regular debates and seeks suggestions, such as the latest request for solutions to improving traffic flow around North and South campuses.

WONDERING why it took three weeks to fix our fast Internet connection in July?

With today's technology, we may think it's simply a matter of pushing a button or clicking a mouse, but technology too is dependent on the forces of nature. ICT Services' **Jolene Schaefer** explained to *talk@nmmu* that the actual source of the problem lay 4 700 metres down in the ocean, north of Mombasa, Kenya.

The Seacom undersea cable which we use, connects South Africa and East Africa to Europe, Asia and America and results in faster internet speeds and cheaper access prices.

Solution under the sea

The problem was localised as a faulty undersea repeater on the cable, which meant that a highly specialised repair ship and technical crew had to sail from Abu Dhabi in the Middle East to Mombasa.

Meanwhile, because of the natural sea bed movements and strong submarine currents the cable moved from its original spot where it was laid a year ago.

Cables also malfunction due to earth quakes, chafing on obstacles and the dragging of ship an-

chors. Rough seas made the task even more difficult for the underwater robot to pick the cable up to be repaired on the ship.

Fortunately the rescue team already had a spare tested and prepared cable segment on board.

Tenet also organised a lower bandwidth connection with which we could manage for a while.

ICT Services received double the normal number of queries at Helpdesk, and thanked staff for their patience and support.

25 000 pressed specimens and more than 1 000 books

Plant library supports research

WITH fresh herbs top of mind of many an amateur cook, it's no wonder that we think fresh herbs are grown in a herbarium.

Our "herbarium" in the Botany Department is in actual fact a plant library housing thousands of pressed plant specimens and books identifying them and other plants.

Although the herbarium does not grow herbs, it does play a role in the identification of poisonous plants for humans and animals. It is often consulted by medical doctors, veterinarians and many zoology students analysing animal food and droppings.

"We often get calls from doctors especially about children having eaten seeds which we have to identify to see whether they are poisonous," says herbarium curator and Botany Department Head **Prof Eileen Campbell**.

"Wild garlic, for example, smells like pizza to a child and is poisonous."

Prof Campbell says the herbarium has even assisted the police forensics department with a murder case by identifying seeds found on the body. "This led them to the location of the murder."

Being the official research library for botanists, second-year students learn how to collect, press, mount and identify specimens and manage a herbarium, which also provides them with career opportunities.

The current collections manager **Kristen Ellis** is in fact an NMMU honours graduate who worked in the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew in London on

the data-base of pressed specimens.

She says she secured the job because of her herbarium experience at NMMU.

At Kew she worked on the African and Latin American Plants Initiatives of which Kew is a partner.

Since arriving at NMMU in October 2009, Kristen has already processed 5 000 specimens.

She is especially working on the older part of the collection dating

We often get calls from doctors about especially children having eaten seeds »

back to the beginning of the century.

Apart from cataloguing Kristen also deals with queries from the public.

"A while ago we assisted SAMREC (SA Marine Rehabilitation Centre) with birds dying in their cages. We identified poisonous plants near the cages which were then removed," she says.

Bayworld recently contacted the herbarium to look at the stomach contents of a sick turtle. It also regularly receives queries from veterinarians in identifying seeds for toxicity.

"We welcome queries and visitors, and at least once a year we offer plant-identifying workshops on Saturdays together with the PE Botanical Society. This is attended by some 40 people at a time," says Prof Campbell.

Being near the sea, NMMU focuses also on marine plants such as algae and seaweeds as well as freshwater plants.



TOP TEAM ... Herbarium curator and Botany Department Head **Prof Eileen Campbell** and collection manager **Kristen Ellis**, formerly from London's Kew Gardens, runs this successful plant identification research resource centre at NMMU.

Fast facts

- ▶ The herbarium houses 25 000 plant specimens of which 19 000 have been pressed and catalogued.
- ▶ The oldest specimen dates back to 1867 and many were taken over from the PE Museum, which now often makes use of the herbarium for research purposes.
- ▶ The herbarium also houses more than 1 000 books focusing on plant identification which, along with the pressed specimens, are used to identify plants.
- ▶ The herbarium is named after the first Botany lecturer Ria Olivier who started it when the former UPE was established.



Respect for the natural environment

Broadcasting bonus

THE benefits of studying agriculture and game ranch management will soon be broadcast nationally.

Students from both programmes shared their insights with the AgriTV agriculture education series, which is set for broadcast on SABC 2 at 5.30 am.

The Agricultural Management programme offered on North Campus focuses on farm management combined with plant and or animal production, while the Game Ranch Management programme at Addo focuses more on the sustainable utilisation of game.

Department Head **Willem van Heerden** says there is a currently a demand for game ranch managers as well as lodge managers and most students obtain jobs in the game industry.

Huge support for Maths learners

BURSARIES, winter schools, Mathematics and Science DVDs, books and special prizes all form part of the specialised teaching experience for more than 200 Grade 11 and 12 learners in our Mathematics Incubator School Project.

The project run by our Mathematics and Applied Mathematics' Govan Mbeki Mathematics Development Unit and sponsored by SASOL SA, this year also included Grade 11 learners for the first time.

The learners from 42 schools attended 28 Mathematics and 28 Science lessons facilitated by experts and based on a DVD series which learners took home for preparation.

The learners were also assisted individually by qualified university stu-

dents as peer supporters.

A calculators workshop, brochures with study options, a two-week Engineering Winter School, a one-week Science discovery week, as well as special exam preparation workshops all form part of the options included for learners.

In addition, 20 learners in the project can qualify for bursaries of R20 000 each to study in Science or Engineering at NMMU in 2011.

The classes on Missionvale Campus over 14 Saturdays culminated in an awards function on 14 August.

Based on its track record, the organisers believe that the 14-week programme has given learners adequate preparation for their trial and final examinations.

NMMU takes four of seven awards in top contest

Art students excel



NMMU's art students continue to fly the flag with their exceptional success in the country's oldest and leading competition for emerging artists.

Four of the seven prizes went to students from the School of Music, Art and Design, including that of the overall winner Allyrian Laure, a BTech Fine Art 2009 graduate.

Furthermore, though NMMU submitted the least number of entries to the SASOL New Signatures competition, 16 students and NMMU alumni were selected for the final judging – the most from any region in the country.

"All tertiary institutions enter this competition so the results serve as a barometer," National Chairman Peter Blinsbergen wrote to Head of Department **Mary Duker** in a congratulatory letter.

"Your art department is a cut above all I have seen," he added.

Allyrian received R60 000 for his efforts, while the three merit award winners – Zane Lange, Gerhardt Coetzee and Lorinda Pretorius – each received R5 000.

The competition which was established in 1962 aims to assist emerging artists who have not had a solo exhibition, to become professional artists

Your art department is a cut above all I have seen

– hence the proliferation of student entries.

NMMU's **David Jones** was invited to be a national judge for the competition, while photography lecturer **Glenn Meyer** and Introductory Studies: Art and Design Head of Department **Andrieta Wentzel**, who won the 2009 Creative and Performing Arts Awards, were asked to be



Mary Duker



Glenn Meyer



David Jones



Andrieta Wentzel

local judges.

"Your staff morale is high, all the lecturers contribute to a collective whole and this reflects on the calibre of students you produce and their enthusiasm for the art making process," wrote Mr Bingsbergen.

Renowned French journalism training

EIGHT French subject group students were exposed to renowned French journalism trainer Patrick Lenormand from the prestigious Centre Pour le Formation et Perfectionnement de Journalists (CFPJ) in Paris, France.

The students participated in a two-week intensive training course in multimedia journalism, culminating in the creation of a blog www.2010worldcupimpact.info in French and English about the impact of the 2010 World Cup.

The blog features articles, audio recordings, video clips, photographs and slideshows produced by the students, focusing on the story behind the scenes rather than the results of the event.

The training forms part of a joint project between NMMU, the French Embassy and the Alliance Française, running for the fourth year.

The previous blogs covered the Ironman SA events. The NMMU Trust together with the other two entities funded the project.

Top students in French at second and third-year level as well as a few



SWEET SUCCESS ... French subject group students Tara Domoney (back from left), Language, Media and Culture School Director Prof Michael Sommiso, Anne Jones and French lecturer Dr Hilda Thomas, (front) Lisa Weideman and Lisa Moore celebrated their successful 2010 World Cup blog.

print journalism and video production students in the BA Media, Communication and Culture programme were chosen to take part in the project.

"The results have been extremely positive" says French subject group's **Dr Hilda Thomas**.

► **French subject group student Lisa Weideman (front left) is the first NMMU student to win a trip to France in the annual French embassy competition with her photography.**

Briefs

Multilingualism

APPLIED Language Studies' **Prof Liesel Hibbert** and Extended Studies lecturer and PhD student **Ghauderen Coetzee** were among 30 delegates to experience the latest advanced researcher training in linguistic ethnography at Birmingham University in June. Ethnography uses observation, interviews, and questionnaires to describe people.

MOSAIC Centre's Director Prof Marilyn Martin-Jones will visit our Applied Language Studies Department in January.

Please contact Prof Hibbert on liesel.hibbert@nmmu.ac.za if you are interested in learning about ethnographic research.

Interpret thyself

SECOND-year Fine Art Sculpture students interpreted themselves as they are or perceive themselves to be, in an exhibition organised by NMMU Arts and Culture in collaboration with the Art and Design Department.

The students had to draw self portraits, investigate, understand and record the skull and spine, and related muscle structure.

Head office at NMMU

NMMU's International Students Association which forms part of NMMU Arts and Culture, held a two-day national seminar where a national association was established to represent international students in South Africa.

The new association's national office will be based at NMMU and full membership is open to all students including local students.

Talent show

LEARNERS from four high schools around Missionvale Campus enjoyed the second annual **We've Got Talent Show** hosted by NMMU Arts and Culture.

Poets, dancers, singers and hip hop MCs from Ikwezi Lomso, Hillside, Tyilulwazi and Douglas Mbopa high schools received goodie bags for their participation at the Missionvale Sports Arena on 30 July.



Mechanical Engineering students and staff - Automotive Components Technology Station (ACTS) Director **Prof Danie Hattingh** (from left), Innovation Support and Technology Transfer Director **Jaci Barnett**, Engineering, the Built Environment and IT Dean **Prof Henk De Jager**, Darren Samuel, Daniel Bulbring, **Ian Wedderburn** and Dirk Odendaal (front) (absent: **Louis von Wielligh**) - celebrated their victory in the National Innovation Competition.

WeldCore team beats 57 finalists from 18 varsities Team wins top contest

OUR Mechanical Engineering's WeldCore team has won the National Innovation Competition (NIC) for the second consecutive time beating 57 other finalists from 18 other universities.

Furthermore, Eskom recently approved financial support of R11 million towards late stage research and development to assist with finalisation of the research which will ultimately save industry vast sums of money.

The achievement of the WeldCore team follows the victory of Chemistry

doctoral student Robert Bosch, who won the competition for his Rubber Nano Products Liquid Activation System in 2008.

The WeldCore process assists with decision-making around the life prediction of current engineering structures and reduces the risk of unexpected catastrophic failure and reduction of plant down time contributing to substantial cost savings.

The NIC exhibition took place in Durban on 5 August, where participants showcased their projects and

the final announcement was made at a gala event at the Moses Mabhida Stadium.

The exhibiting team representing the WeldCore team included Dirk Odendaal, Darren Samuel and Daniel Bulbring while the project team also included Automotive Components Technology Station (ACTS) staff members **Louis von Wielligh** and **Ian Wedderburn**. The technology has been developed under the guidance of **Prof Danie Hattingh** and other members of the ACTS team.

Briefs

Internet risks

A TALK about Internet risks by School of ICT's security expert **Prof Rössouw von Solms** attracted more than 80 people and led to further presentation requests.

The dangers of cyberbullying, cyberstalking and harassment, paedophiles, Facebook, Myspace, and MXit as well as online shopping, cell phone banking and the use of your credit card for purchases were all covered.

Colloquium

ABOUT 130 staff and students attended the Mechanical Engineering Department's annual colloquium on 28 July.

The colloquium encouraged professional feedback from fellow students and staff to the 14 masters' and doctoral students research presentations.

Guest speaker student Dirk Odendaal discussed WeldCore (see adjacent story).

A first and second

Master's Engineering graduate Dominic Barth, 27, is not only the first student from Germany's Reutlingen University to write his masters thesis for NMMU but he also completed his thesis for Reutlingen to obtain two masters' degrees at the same time.

Dominic, who spent two semesters at NMMU with Mechatronics Department head **Prof Igor Gorlach**, was also honoured as the best student in mechatronics course. He also received the Albert Wessels Trust prize as the best graduate in the natural sciences and engineering.

Reutlingen annually sends some 12 to 15 students to study at NMMU.

Green solutions

Mechanical Engineering's **Russell Phillips** is driving a blog <http://www.nmmugreen.blogspot.com/> where mechanical green solutions are posted.

They offer, for example, an independent testing service to the manufacturers and developers of small turbines.

SCIENCE SUPPORT
... Walmer High School Grade 12 Science learners are attending classes at our TRAC laboratory to prepare for their final exams with the help of Walmer High's Madolwana Siyabonga (back from left), Engineering, the Built Environment and IT Dean **Prof Henk de Jager**, TRAC EC Lab Manager **Tarin Roberts** and Civil Engineering Department Head **Johan Barnard**.



Engineering supports Walmer learners

SOME 50 Grade 12 Science learners at Walmer High School attend classes at our Technology Research Activity Centre (TRAC) laboratory to prepare for their final exams.

"This is an intervention programme aimed at learners who do not have fully functional science laboratories

within their schools," said Beauty Kotela, TRAC Eastern Cape's regional manager.

The Engineering, the Built Environment and IT Faculty has sponsored the transport for these learners to the classes for about three months.

TRAC makes computer-based tech-

nology and syllabus content available to learners and educators throughout South Africa.

"These classes have definitely helped and I certainly feel more comfortable about my upcoming exams," said Whisky Melikhaya, a Grade 12 learner at Walmer High School.

Ubuntu: a person is a person because of other people Law leads by example



THE Faculty of Law has created a cost centre for what has become the *Ubuntu* community outreach programme.

This is because we subscribe to the principle of *ubuntu* – and believe we all have to do something to help those in need.

This programme had its origins in a lay Catholic group dedicated to serving the poor. In the process many students in our faculty from different nations, religions and races started volunteering with the projects and eventually it was decided to formalise the project and house it in the faculty.

Our volunteers include students from other faculties as well as alumni and staff members.

At the moment we have two programmes, one our weekly schools outreach programme for a group of children in Booyens Park, and the other a home for the elderly in Bethelsdorp.

The schools project is now in its second year and currently has about 30 children attending our weekly “school”.

The children signed the Ubuntu Children’s Charter on Saturday 14 August.

This charter is based on the children’s own practical understanding of what *ubuntu* means and includes things such as respecting other people, the environment and their elders.



In September and October NMMU will focus on our new value of *ubuntu* through various initiatives, such as *Ubuntu Fridays*. *talk@nmmu* asked Prof Andr Mukheibir of the Law Faculty to share what they are doing to “walk the talk” and live out the value of *ubuntu*.



ADOPTED SCHOOL ... Some 30 children attend the Law Faculty’s weekly school in Booyens Park which forms part of their community outreach and reflects their focus on *ubuntu*.

We visit the home for the elderly about once every six weeks, with parcels of toiletries, or to host a tea for them.

Last year we served Christmas lunch to some 100 elderly residents on Christmas Day and were assisted by volunteers from St Augustine’s Catholic Cathedral, NMMU staff

and students.

We hope to do it again this year – Christmas is a time of joy, but it is also a time of great loneliness for elderly people who are left alone.

One of the results of the outreach is that our volunteers have forged some very good friendships among them.

In a small way we are realising the

dream of the rainbow nation.

Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu – we hope that we can make this true for the poor of our city.

What are you doing?

Ubuntu Fridays

NMMU is encouraging you to get behind the Law Faculty’s project, or start your own initiative as part of living out the value of *ubuntu*.

Please send your ideas to SOAPBOX (press icon on the portal) or send your news to elma.dekoker@nmmu.ac.za so that we can keep flying the

flag in building a better nation.



Mail box

Get R100 for winning letter

PUT yourself in line to win a R100 Greenacres gift voucher by sending us letters with your concerns, ideas and comments about life at NMMU.

Send your letters to: elma.dekoker@nmmu.ac.za

Living out *ubuntu*

IF WE subscribe to the principle of *ubuntu*, we all have to do something to help those in need.

NMMU recently embraced a number of new values, including *ubuntu*, which is an oft-used term.

Many authors, philosophers and even Constitutional Court judges have tried to explain it.

It has even been adopted by a leading software company as the name

for a computer programme.

But what does it mean?

The term *ubuntu* is a contraction of the expression *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* which loosely translated means “a person is a person because of other people”.

It implies an interdependence of people and hence also responsibility of people for one another.

Beautifying, upgrading in line with green campus



George gets facelift

SIGNIFICANT upgrading of facilities at George Campus over the past months ensured a pleasant surprise for students who returned to the campus after the winter holidays.

Pavilion

One of the most visible changes was made to the existing sports pavilion which was overhauled (interior and exterior) at a cost of R450 000.

The biggest metamorphosis was as a result of an application of cement fibre panels with a wood-grain finish.

The roof plates were replaced with pre-treated brown chromadek cladding and new gutters and downpipes made of durable pvc replaced the old gutters to round off the new image.

In tune with our value new of respect for the natural environment, two 5000 litre water tanks were installed to store and utilise rainwater efficiently.

Energy efficiency is also ensured with two 200 litre solar geysers.

For safety reasons all glass panels at the pavilion were replaced with synthetic panels.

The interior was painted, slip-proof rubber flooring for sport centres and new toilet cisterns using less water were installed.

The adjacent rugby and tennis kiosks were also been upgraded and boast the same cladding as the pavilion.



RENOVATED ... The existing sports pavilion now boasts new cement fibre panels with a wood-grain finish, along with pre-treated brown chromadek cladding for the roof. Two 5 000 litre water tanks for rainwater and two 200 litre solar geysers were also installed in line with the green campus philosophy.

Lighting

High mast lighting at the pavilion was inspected; the lighting output was enhanced for the soccer and rugby field and four masts were re-established after undergoing the required stress tests.

Area lighting on the masts were also enhanced to allow students to move on campus with greater comfort after sunset.

Residences

The interior of Oukraal and Kiepersol, the two men's residences at George Campus were repainted in duo-tone, while all 68 rooms of the women's residence, Outeniqua, were fitted with new curtains.

In addition, all lecture rooms and houses on campus were "deep-cleaned", and appear like new.

Student Recreation Centre

Braai facilities and a wooden deck were added to the new student recreation centre. The deck extends from recreation hall and has a magnificent view of the Outeniqua Mountains.

Two offices and a boardroom have also been equipped for the student council leaders.

Enhanced ventilation

In addition to an array of smaller works, 10 additional "whirly birds" and ceiling grids have been installed to ensure improved circulation of air in lecture venues.

Free movement

The wire fencing around the administrative building will also be removed to allow for free movement of small buck and other animals sharing George Campus.

Briefs

Top paper

Director of the School of Natural Resource Management School Director



Dr Josua Louw

(right), won second prize for his paper at the Fourth Forest Science Symposium in Pietermaritzburg in August.

His paper, competing against some 40 others, is titled *A stratification of the South African Forestry Landscape, based on Climatic Parameters*. The symposium was organised by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research.

Student scoops award



BTECH Forestry student Muedanyi Ramantswana (left) won first prize in the Forestry Youth Advancement

Programme with his paper on *The effects of climate change on forestry with possible mitigation and adaptation strategies*.

Muedanyi was subsequently invited to attend the 18th Commonwealth Forestry conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, at the end of June.

Three experts join academics

Motor industry portfolio

Former BMW marketing strategy manager in Midrand **Vincent Hau-Yoon** (right) recently joined the School of Business and Social Sciences. Vincent holds a masters degree in business leadership (MBL) and his portfolio includes product, pricing, volume planning, competitive intelligence and special projects. He began his career as business administration trainee at Siemens leaving as assistant commercial manager. In 1990 he joined BMW SA as finance controller. He also held posts as product manager, marketing strategist and research manager and received the BMW Managing Director's Award in 2006 for his role in research and planning.



The appointment of three new academics will see a boost in knowledge of animal production, African organic farming and marketing strategy at George Campus.

Outreach vision

Prof Victor Mmbengwa (right) holds a PhD degree in Agriculture from Free State University and comes from UNISA where he was senior lecturer in agricultural management. He was also involved with UNISA's community outreach programmes which he hopes to continue at George. He is a member of a number of professional bodies and authored several articles in academic publications.



International flavour

Prof Raymond Au-erbach (right) has international experience

completing a doctorate in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (integrated catchment management, rainwater harvesting, sustainable farming and experiential learning) at Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands.

He also did an apprenticeship in organic farming in Australia, specialising in soil fertility and dairy science. He is a pioneer of participatory rural appraisal and experiential learning approaches, as well as cooperative development.



Slow recovery for economy

“THE worst is probably over, but we are faced with an extended period of relatively low investment returns,” was the message from Sanlam chief economist Jac Laubscher addressing staff, some 200 students, and guests at Business Management’s annual Sanlam-FPI-NMMU gala event.

Mr Laubscher emphasised that although global economic growth in the first quarter of 2010 was better than expected, the recovery was uneven, especially with countries like Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain experiencing a sovereign debt crisis.

Countries such as Japan, the USA and the UK also have very high levels of government debt which will contin-

ue to increase, as well as in South Africa where government debt currently represents 32 percent of GDP.

Mr Laubscher believes it will rise to 42 percent by 2015.

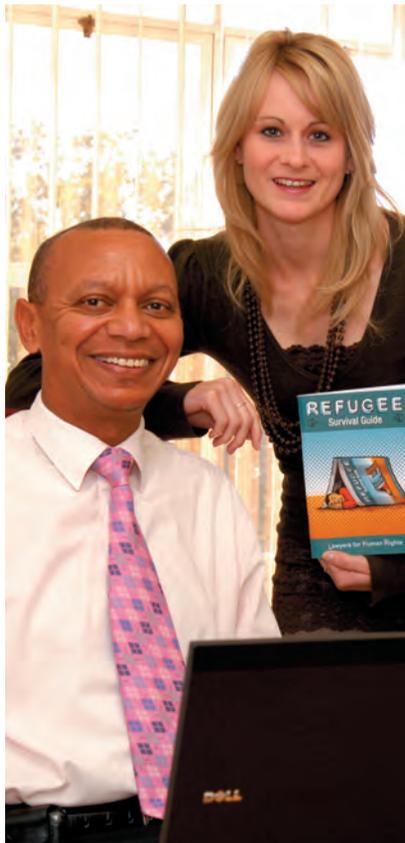
He said the SA economy was already in a downswing when the financial crisis struck and therefore the coming upswing “will be muted” compared to previous years.

“The upswing will be muted ...”

Consolidated Financial Planners’ Paul Leonard stressed the importance of one’s own attitudes and behaviour to successfully manage one’s finances.



FINANCIAL EXPERTS ... Business Management Department Head **Prof Eileen Mazibuko**, guest speakers Paul Leonard and Sanlam chief economist Jac Laubscher, Financial Planning lecturer **Jackie Palframan**, and Business and Economic Sciences Dean **Prof Niek Dorfling** contributed to the success of the popular annual Sanlam-FPI-NMMU Gala event.



IN FULL SWING ... Our Law Faculty’s Refugee Rights Centre’s collaboration with Legal Aid South Africa has already borne fruit as centre head attorney **Linton Harmse** (left) and legal aid attorney **Sarine Broderick** joined forces to secure the release from detention of a Zimbabwean juvenile soon after opening in August. This young foreigner was released into the care of the Refugee Rights Centre which is at the Bird Street Campus. The centre plays a crucial watchdog role to ensure individuals with legitimate asylum claims are not returned to life-threatening situations, which would be in violation of international law. The facility is only the third at a university in the country and the first in the Eastern Cape.



INDUSTRY FOCUS ... Business School lecturers promoting Business Administration masters’ and doctoral students, were privy to first-hand knowledge of global research from Volkswagen SA Technical new vehicle Project Manager, Dr Joost Kessels (centre). Dr Kessels, who has a PhD in Mechanical Engineering, emphasised the importance of monitoring trends in industries and generating innovations through research at a function at Singa Lodge in Port Elizabeth. Dr Kessels is joined by Business School lecturer **Prof Cecil Arnolds** (left) and Director **Prof Piet Naud**.

Distinctive new book

Business School Director Prof Piet Naud’s latest monograph *Neither Calendar nor Clock* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co) is the only up-to-date English-language book on the Belhar Confession.

The Belhar Confession arose out of the struggle against apartheid and was drafted in 1982 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church.

The book offers an inside look at the origin of the Belhar Confession, as well as its relevance to current global issues such as gender relations, economic justice and the HIV/AIDS crisis. This is Prof Naudé’s third academic book. He has published nine popular Afrikaans books amongst which are *Stories vir die Lewe* (Stories for life) and *Die Groot Gebedeboek* (The big book of prayer).

Top graduate for FIFA

FIFA/CIES graduate Solomon Mudege recently graduated with distinction from the FIFA Master Class in Switzerland and will start a year-long internship at FIFA in Zurich from 1 September.

Solomon, 28, who re-

ceived the Sepp Blatter Scholarship in 2007, graduated top of his class in the FIFA/CIES/NMMU certificate in Sport Management programme and was the first of these graduates worldwide to proceed to the

Master Class.

FIFA Master Class modules took place at De Montfort University, Leicester, the DA Bocconi School of Management in Milan and the Université de Neuchâtel in Switzerland.



INTERNATIONAL GRADUATION ... Top NMMU Sport Management student Solomon Mudege (left), who graduated with distinction from the FIFA Master Class in Switzerland, is joined by Liberian football legend and patron for the 10th Edition FIFA Master Programme George Weah.



Respect for diversity

DIVERSITY DRESSERS ... Library colleagues (from left) **Miriam Ntantiso, Bonga Makrwele, Tenjie Solundwana, Zola Bob, Constance Malahle, Xoliswa Martin and Pamela Kuse** and **Funeka Nombande** (front) dressed up in traditional African gear to join staff on Diversity Fridays.



ENGINEER'S PERSPECTIVE ... Engineering students in all programmes had the opportunity to listen to Volkswagen's CEO in Slovakia Dr Andreas Tostmann (centre), who was the former SA CEO, talk about the journey from marketing, product engineering and testing, to the various facets of manufacturing. Part of VW's relationship with NMMU is providing insight into the real world of automotive engineering. Dr Tostmann is joined by student Harshal Nathoo (from left), VW's Manager: Human Resources Anthony Hunneyball and students Akhona Mantashe and Wade Schoeman.



WINDS STUDIO CONCERT ... Students Nathan Musson (from left), Kristle van Niekerk (flute) and Elanie Kok performed at the Winds Studio Concert with solo performances, a recorder trio, a flute quartet and a trio comprising of the flute, clarinet and bassoon along with a performance by woodwind lecturer **Erna Cloete**.



WINNERS ... Our best music students including (from left) Nopinkie Mba who won joint third place for voice, JF Viljoen second place for piano, overall winner Antonio Lottering for horn and Kyle du Preez, joint third place for trombone, battled it out at the Charles Bryars Scholarship concert in the South Campus Auditorium last month. Other finalists were Liske Potgieter (voice), Mzuvikile Sirenka (voice), Jarred Pow Chong (piano) and Elanie Kok (recorder).

► Staff

20 000 cases of skin cancer in SA annually

Cancer of the ear

DO YOU remember to put sunscreen on the top of your ears? Often one forgets how sun burnt the top of your ears get. It is exactly this easily forgotten area that can become cancerous.

Did you know?

- The most common cancer in South Africa is skin cancer - made up of basal cell carcinomas, squamous cell carcinomas and malignant melanoma, with about 20 000 new cases reported each year.
- South Africa has the second highest incidence of skin cancer in the world after Australia.
- Over 700 South Africans die each year from skin cancer, with the majority of those cases being malignant melanoma, the most dangerous type of skin cancer. *
- The top of the ear forms part of the external ear also called the pinna or auricle which is the expanded portion which projects from the side of the head. It is composed of a fibro-elastic cartilage covered with skin.
- The skin is covered with fine hair and there are many sebaceous (oil) glands which projects into

the hair follicles. The top of the ear is also called the helix.

- The skin on top of the ear is thin and vulnerable to the ultra violet rays of the sun. Think of golfers who wear caps and leave the ears exposed.
- Men are therefore more likely to get squamous-cell cancer on the helix of the ear.
- Even people with long hair mostly tie their hair into ponytails when swimming or out in the sun and a cap does not protect the top of your ears.
- The process starts with sun spots which are dry spots on the skin. If these are left untreated they can turn into a squamous cell carcinoma which needs more drastic treatment.
- The treatment is usually successful but because the skin is thin, healing is not quick. Another problem is that the skin with drying becomes crustaceous and bleeds easily.
- Squamous cell carcinoma is familiar to the face, neck, hands and top of the ears therefore as you apply sun block on face neck and hands **do not forget the top of your ears!**

*Source: Cancer Association of SA



*DOING IT PROPERLY ... Financial Aid's **Bukelwa Tshamlambo** was among 35 candidates, the majority from NMMU, who completed a protocol and business etiquette training course presented by our Raymond Mhlaba Institute of Public Administration and Leadership over three days earlier this year. The course was facilitated by International Protocol Consultants' Christine van Heerden. The other delegates came from, among others, ABSA, East London IDZ, Bhisho Sport, Arts & Culture and the Red Location Art Museum.*

Celebrating women



*INSPIRATION ... Missionvale Campus staff and students were inspired at Student Governance's annual Women's Day celebration by guest speaker Miss NMMU Fikile Konono (centre), joined here by organisers Student Governance's **Karen Snyman** and **Lynette Roodt**. Fikile and Nehawu Deputy-Chairperson and PR and Communication Studies lecturer **Brightness Mangolothi** motivated women to be true to themselves and follow their dreams.*

You can win

LUCKY readers can win three R100 Greenacres Shopping Centre vouchers and two R100 University Shop vouchers. Just read your **talk@nmmu!**

Congratulations to our **August** competition winners: **Cecilia Saunders** of InnoVenton, **Marilyn Gibbs** of Initial Teacher Education, **Janet van Zyl** of the Central Timetabling Office and **Yolisa Beta** of Financial Aid.

Answer the following questions (from articles in this edition):

1 Almost e...t (**five letter word**) percent of our students are from other countries bringing their own diversity of language and culture and a fresh perspective on learning to NMMU.

2 Some 2 100 students can soon benefit from our new e.....c (**10 letter word**) e-peer-assisted learning initiative in eight modules.

3 Our Mechanical Engineering's WeldCore team won the National l.....n (**10 letter word**) Competition (NIC) for the second consecutive time beating 57 other finalists from 18 other universities.

Correct answers, along with your name, surname, staff number, department and telephone number, can be e-mailed to elma.dekoker@nmmu.ac.za by **20 September**.

Schuinvilla Pharmacy in Newton Park charges no additional fees, fax fees, telephone fees or delivery fees for chronic medication to members. Tel: 041 3642109 or George Campus - Pacaltsdorp Pharmacy: Tel: 044 878 1707.

Rules ► Only NMMU employees may take part in this competition. ► Only e-mail entries qualify for this competition. ► Staff who do not have access to e-mail may ask a colleague to submit their entry – just include the correct name, department and phone number of the person entering the competition. ► Your full details must appear on the e-mail entry. ► Only one entry per person is allowed. ► The judges' decision is final.

Condolences

THE university staff and students extend their condolences to the family and friends of the following staff and students who passed away recently:

- Mechanical Engineering lecturer **Dr Calvin Blignaut**
- Third-year Mechanical Engineering student **Chwayita Mbane**
- Zimbabwean BSc student **Jamestous Mutanhamhana**
- BSc student **Alfred Wildeman**
- Retired Vista University staff member **Moffat Gobeni**
- Retired PE Technikon staff member **Magriet Grindstad**
- Former Vista University Council Chairperson **Dr Sidwell Ngapi**

We also extend our condolences to **Marina de Jager** of Student Counselling whose father passed away recently.

Just doing things differently

THIRD-YEAR LLB student Nomawethu Sifumba, 23, is a friend to many, a motivational speaker, leader, sportswoman and academic, who continues her life journey regardless of the challenges she faces with her disability.

Nomawethu became disabled after being involved in a bus accident on her way to Potchefstroom to compete in a provincial netball tournament.

In spite of her disability she coaches NMMU's netball D league and reserve teams.

And there's always a smile on her face.

"When doing assignments or writing exams, I have to get a scribe and tell them what to write, it gets frustrating, but it's a skill you acquire," she says.

Her strong, determined and positive personality resonates not only in her everyday life with friends and family, but also in her chosen career.

"Law is the only profession that allows you to assist those that are legally paralysed to be rehabilitated."

However, an uninformed society creates even further challenges for these individuals and it is for this reason that NMMU has made September

Disability Awareness Month, in line with the national Casual Day which raises funds and awareness for people with disabilities.

"If there is one thing I could change in this world, it would be the mentality, perception, fear and ignorance of society regarding

If there is one thing I could change ... it would be the mentality, perception, fear and ignorance of society regarding disability

disability," says Nomawethu.

Apart from educating people with disabilities on how they can get assisted, Nomawethu is also the founder of the Fusion Society at NMMU which educates non-disabled students about disability, and assists management in making the university accessible for disabled students.

Disability does not mean inability, it just means getting things done a bit differently, is her motto. - **Jennilee Peremore, Disability Office.**

LEADER WITHOUT LIMITS ... Disability does not mean inability. It just means getting things done a bit differently, says third-year LLB student Nomawethu Sifumba.



Dream come true for basketball player

GROWING up with his grandmother in Zwide, third-year law student Andile Gova (below) never dreamt that he would one day travel to America to play with the Michigan State University basketball team.

He never even participated in sport before he started playing basketball at the age of 17.

In 2008, he was NMMU's basketball player of the year.

In June, Andile had the opportunity to travel to the USA with the NMMU

society, Athletes in Action, focusing on Christian athletes who live their faith on the sports field.

In Lansing, Michigan, Andile met with the partner society at Michigan State University where he played with the team he normally watches on television. He also helped them plan a visit to South Africa next year.

Thereafter Andile spent five weeks as the only South African at the Colorado project training Christian athletes to become leaders on their campuses.

"It was a great experience for me to meet students from America and to learn from them and their different culture, especially regarding sports like basketball, which they hold in very high esteem," he says.



FUTURE LEADERS ... SOME 23 students recently celebrated their learning in the voluntary Beyond the Classroom Leadership programme through presentations titled "This is my story" at a breakfast function on 18 August in which they used video clips, power point and poetry to express their progress through the programme. They shared their experiences with Vice-Chancellor Prof Derrick Swartz, DVC Research and Engagement Prof Thoko Mayekiso and DVC Academic Prof Christo van Loggerenberg. Other skills fostered in the programme include appreciation and sensitivity for cultural diversity, volunteer work, interpersonal communication, citizenship, preparation for career development and respect for others.

Go-getter for Ghana

LLB student Bulelani Mkonto (right) was one of only five South African delegates invited to attend the second African Youth and Governance Conference in Accra, Ghana, early last month.

The conference coincided with international Youth Day on 12 August bringing together 250

young people from all over the world to discuss ways in which they can make a difference.

Bulelani, 27, graduated with a BCom Law degree from NMMU in 2005 and decided to continue with his studies.

Apart from leadership positions at NMMU, he was also selected as one of the Top 100 Brightest



Young Minds at South African universities in 2007, and one of only two chosen from NMMU.

He also founded the Go-Getters Society at NMMU, a society for aspiring individuals searching for intellectual maturity.

► Sport

Hosts win soccer, rugby, cricket with 423 points

Intervarsity victory for NMMU

NOT only did NMMU win intervarsity overall, but it also clinched the popular spectator sports - soccer, rugby and cricket.

The visitors – Rhodes, Fort Hare and newcomers Walter Sisulu - did manage to outshine NMMU in the women's soccer and table tennis and men's volleyball.

Rhodes came second overall with 369.5 points, followed by Fort Hare with 227 and Walter Sisulu 208.5. NMMU won with 423 points.

The two "thrillers" were the first men's team soccer and rugby games.

NMMU's soccer team beat Fort Hare with a penalty shoot out (4-1) and Walter Sisulu beat Rhodes 4-2.

In the first men's rugby match NMMU won 39-32 against Rhodes, while Fort Hare beat Walter Sisulu 12 - 0.

Hundreds of students from all four Eastern Cape institutions gathered at the sports grounds to watch these games.

Other results:

- Our club champion cricket team beat Rhodes by 149 runs in the final of the Pro 20 format, while Fort Hare beat Walter Sisulu by 88 runs.
- Our men's first hockey team beat Rhodes 5-1, while the women won their game 1-0.
- Our netball girls scored 24-9 against Walter Sisulu, while the men's basketball beat Rhodes 33-20.
- On the squash court, the NMMU women beat Rhodes 20-7, while the men's tennis team beat Rhodes 5-0.
- Both our waterpolo men's and women's teams beat Rhodes with 7-5 and 5-2 respectively.
- Other sports where NMMU came out tops were men's and women's athletics and surfing, men's golf, chess, swimming and cycling.
- Rhodes men and women were victorious in pool, rowing and volleyball, while their women toppled our basketball women, our table tennis and tennis teams and their men were the best squash players.
- Women's rugby and soccer and men's table tennis were Fort Hare's strong points while Walter Sisulu beat everyone at full contact karate.



WINNERS BY FAR ... Vice-Chancellor Prof Derrick Swartz holds the trophy while main sponsor First National Bank's Anrie Spanenberg congratulates Sport Bureau Director Dr Richard Stretch on our intervarsity victory.



FEEL IT... The "gees" was high as students came out in full force to support their teams.

League champs again

NMMU's cricket team has won the Nelson Mandela Bay Cricket Board Super league title for the second year in a row.

Our cricketers will now represent Eastern Province at the national club championship in Pretoria from 19 to 24 September, to defend their National Club Championship title.

National sportsman of the year



ABSA NMMU Athlon star Jon-Paul Raper (left) was crowned national Sportsman of the Year and won the award for best senior pentathlete in 2010 at the South African Modern Pentathlon Gala Awards evening in Alberton last month.

Raper, who is the current senior South African champion, competed in the International German Championships in Berlin, Germany, in June, where he competed against seven other nations and performed extremely well in the shooting and show jumping disciplines.

The second-year BCom student was also coached by former national Olympic coaches in Berlin and Bonn.

"It was an awesome experience, I learnt so much," said Jon-Paul.