

Winner of the 2008 Institute for Marketing, Advancement & Communication in Education (MACE) Excellence Award for Best Internal Publication

# Open Day 2009

**W**ith only seven months to go before matriculating hundreds of Grade 12 learners and their parents took advantage of UKZN Open Days on the Howard College, Pietermaritzburg and Westville campuses to learn more about future career options.

The Open Days were organised by Corporate Relations' Schools Liaison Unit.

Staff and students went the extra mile in Pietermaritzburg with many entertaining and eye-catching displays. Learners from different schools were entertained to the fullest with jokes and music provided by several entertainers.

Lecturers and staff from different Faculties played a crucial role in setting up eye-catching displays and providing information which will help prospective students decide on their career path.

"This is a wonderful day for us as learners. I know now what I am

going to study next year. Before coming here I was not sure of which career I was going to pursue. Now I have all the information that I need and I will be heading for UKZN next year, that's for sure," said Ntombizodwa Zungu of Thandolwethu High School in Sobantu.

On the Howard College campus, prospective students were informed of study opportunities and admission requirements within the Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing and Law.

Interactive exhibits, video presentations and information stalls manned by staff within the respective disciplines caught the attention of learners who left with a better understanding of the degrees they hoped to pursue next year.

Grade 12 learners, Miss Winile Goba and Miss Senamile Magwaza of the Sacred Heart High School in Oakford, both aspirant doctors, agreed that Open Day provided an insight into a career in medicine



Learners at Open Day on the Westville campus.

Picture: Madoda Mahlangu

and the necessary qualifications in achieving their goals. Miss Goba, who is interested in a career in cardiology, said: "At school we are informed about different careers. However, attending Open Day is an opportunity to get first hand infor-

mation on a medical career from people within the Medical School."

Classmate Miss Magwaza who always wanted to follow a career in medicine said a video presentation and a talk with a professor

within the Nelson R Mandela Medical School of Medicine had sparked her interest in anaesthetics.

- Neesha Maharaj and Sabelo Nyuswa

## UKZN alumni prove their worth

UKZN has proved its mettle once again, providing a remarkable number of alumni to serve in President Jacob Zuma's government. Eleven out of the 62 members of the Cabinet appointed by President Zuma are UKZN alumni. Four alumni are serving as Members of the Executive Council of KwaZulu-Natal, including the Premier.

### SOUTH AFRICAN CABINET MEMBERS

#### MINISTRY

Minister of State Security  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Deputy Minister: Home Affairs  
Minister of Finance  
Minister in the Presidency: National Planning Commission  
Deputy Minister: Correctional Services  
Minister of Health  
Minister of Higher Education  
Deputy Minister: Public Service & Administration  
Deputy Minister: Rural Development  
Deputy Minister: Basic Education

#### NAME

Cyprian Siyabonga, Cwele  
Nkosazana Clarice, Dlamini-Zuma  
Knowledge Malusi Nkayenzi, Gigaba  
Pravin Jamnadas, Gordhan  
Trevor Manuel  
Hlengiwe Beauty, Mkhize  
Pakishe Aaron, Motsoaledi  
Emmanuel Bonginkosi, 'Blade' Nzimande  
Radhakrishna, 'Roy' Padayachie  
Mathume Joseph, Phaahla  
Mohamed Enver, Surty

#### DEGREE

MBChB  
(Honorary) Doctor of Laws  
BPaed (Prim Ed), MA  
Bachelor of Pharmacy, (Honorary) Doctor of Commerce  
(Honorary) Doctor of Economics  
BA (Hon), MA  
MBChB  
BA, BA(Hon), MA, PhD(Arts)  
BSc  
MBChB  
BA, BA (Hon)

#### YEAR

1984  
1995  
1993, 1995  
1974, 2003  
2003  
1978, 1981  
1984  
1981, 1982, 1983, 1992  
1973  
1985  
1974, 1975

### KWAZULU-NATAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

#### MINISTRY

MEC: Finance, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government  
MEC: Health, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government  
MEC: Human Settlement and Public Works, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government  
KZN Premier

#### NAME

Catharina Magdalena, Cronje  
Sibongiseni Maxwell, Dhlomo  
Magashveri 'Maggie' Govender  
Zwelini Lawrence, Mkhize

#### DEGREE

BCom  
MBChB, PG Dip (Bus Mgmt)  
BPaed (Primary Education)  
MBChB

#### YEAR

1972  
1986, 2003  
1987  
1983

- Desiree Govender

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Howard College

Medical School

Pietermaritzburg

Westville

# Gcina Mhlope honoured

A state-of-the-art performing studio on the Edgewood campus has been named after actress, writer, poet, and storyteller of note Ms Gcina Mhlope.

"I feel very special and honoured to be recognised ... It is very rare that one gets honoured while still alive. It is a huge motivation not only for me but also for the students who want to emulate me in the field of drama," said Ms Mhlope.

The studio is a specialised lecture venue cum performance space located in the main tutorial building on the campus. It was designed as a large flat floor acting area which serves a variety of theatrical and educational functions. Currently the studio is used by students taking the Drama Education specialisation as well as Arts and Culture students. It also serves as a workshop venue for dance and performance classes.

The studio has recently been refurbished as a small proscenium style theatre and performing arts



Gcina Mhlope (middle centre) and the Deputy-Vice Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities Professor Fikile Mazibuko at the launch of the new performing art studio on the Edgewood campus.

and exhibition space with curtains, a new lighting system, sound proofing and a portable stage.

"The Arts Education Discipline and the Head of School have decided that we would like to give this

venue a name that is consistent with its purpose whilst profiling the work that is done there. We have agreed that it would be appropriate to name it *The Gcina Mhlope Drama Studio* in honour of one of KwaZulu-Natal's own artists," said

Professor Michael Samuel, Dean of Education.

"Currently there are lecture theatres and other venues at Edgewood which are named after people who have made a contribution to edu-

cation in previous decades. Whilst we acknowledge their achievements, we believe that it is time for us to reflect the changing demographics and ethos of our Institution. We believe that naming the drama studio after Gcina Mhlope will be an inspiration to students on this campus, in particular African female students. She is certainly a positive role model for teachers in the arts," he added.

Ms Mhlope has received numerous awards, including the Edinburgh Fringe First Award, the BBC Africa Service for Radio Award and the Josef Jefferson award in Chicago for her play *Have you Seen Zandile?* She received an honorary degree from the former University of Natal and the Open University of London. She has addressed numerous conferences and seminars on writing and the oral tradition. Her work in promoting literacy, especially in rural areas is well recognised.

- Sabelo Nyuswa

Picture: Madoda Mahlangu

## African Renaissance

THE African Renaissance Trust in partnership with Aspen has secured three bursaries for the 2010 and 2011 academic years for the benefit of UKZN law students.

The Deputy Dean in the College of Humanities Professor Sihawu Ngubane has served as the Core-Chair of the Trust since 2001 and has also chaired the Organising Committee of the African Renaissance Festival that attracts close to 10 000 participants.

Professor Ngubane believes that universities have a critical role to play in building cohesion in the African continent.

"If we are going to be the Premier University of African Scholarship, our vision must transcend to the African continent through our students and academics. The sector needs to produce students that will thrive for the economic, social and political development of this continent... maybe that might even combat the xenophobia that engulfed our nation in the previous year."

The African Renaissance has grown in prominence through the creation of regular platforms for engaging the public and private sectors and civil society and has actively promoted the development

of arts and culture by providing opportunities for artists from the African continent.

The theme of *Uniting the African World* provided a platform for delegates to get to the root of the global economic meltdown and its impact on Africa's business, tourism and heritage sectors during the 11<sup>th</sup> annual African Renaissance Conference at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli ICC from 25-28 May.

The conference was officially opened by the MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Mike Mabuyakhulu, who urged conference delegates to advance Africa's agenda to collectively improve the lives of the people.

"Africa must mitigate the impact of the economic situation by making compromises. All African countries must come up with innovative means to deal with the economic situation. What can we do collectively to reduce this economic turbulence in Africa?"

The festival which coincides with Africa Day started on a high note, with exciting performances from artists Oliver Mtukudzi, Thandiswa Mazwai and Stimela.

- Thembeke Dlungwane

## Strini Moodley Memorial Lecture

CELEBRATED scholar Dr Wangui wa Goro delivered the third Strini Moodley Memorial Lecture on *The Limits of Freedom* at the Westville campus on 14 May.

The annual lecture is organised by the Umtapo Centre and UKZN.

In her lecture, Dr wa Goro reflected on some of the questions which marked Moodley's life and which continue to bother society today.

"The question of Freeing the Mind, Freeing the Land in the Quest for True Humanity continues to challenge us. Umtapo's concern to Free the Mind, Free the Land was coined by the late Strini Moodley many years after African independence ... [these] are key concerns for Africans here in South Africa and people of African descent throughout the world. The question of Black Consciousness is inherently tied to the African identity because of our history, but also the histories of colonialism which link us all as black people across the world.

"We must embody the dream today and not postpone it through fear of limits and limitations. We salute Strini Moodley for making us realise that this was possible. We salute all those who paved the way for a true vision of Black Consciousness across the world... I salute those who



Dr Wangui wa Goro delivers the Strini Moodley Memorial Lecture.

actively engage to face those limits courageously..."

Dr Wangui wa Goro has worked as an academic for over 12 years in universities in the UK. She is currently an Associate Fellow at the Institute of Human Rights and Social Justice at London Metropolitan University.

She has served on several distinguished literary, translation and academic executive committees including as a Founding President of the Association for the Promotion of African Literary Translators and Subtitling (ALTRAS) and the President of the Translation Caucus of the African Literature Association (TRACALA). Dr wa Goro served as a member of the Jury of 100 best books of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and on the panel of judges for the Caine Prize 2007.

- Sabelo Nyuswa

Picture: Sabelo Nyuswa



KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Michael Mabuyakhulu; member of the US Civil Rights Movement, Miss Gloria Gaines; CED of Sogo Sun, Mr Jabu Mabuza; Professor Sihawu Ngubane, Core-Chair of The African Renaissance Trust; and Mr Logie Naidoo, Deputy Mayor, eThekweni Municipality.

Picture: Fiona Walters

# Focus on mother-tongue education

Developing and promoting teaching in mother-tongue languages at schools in South Africa required a shift in the attitudes of both parents and teachers.

This was the shared views of speakers who addressed the School of Education Studies Colloquium on Mother-Tongue Teaching in the Early Years at the Edgewood campus on 22 May.

Teaching experts from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (DoE), UKZN and the University of Cape Town whose presentations covered an Overview of the Language in Education Policy, the Challenges of Implementing the Language Policy at School Level, the Importance of Mother-Tongue based Bilingual Teaching, Training South African Teachers for (Linguistic) Diversity and Lecturers' Experiences with

Pre-Service Teachers at UKZN agreed that collective attitudinal shift of all role-players was needed to implement teaching in mother-tongue languages at schools.

While a Language in Education Policy drawn up by the Department of Education in 1997 made provision for the teaching of mother-tongue languages at Foundation Phase, on the ground implementation has been slow due to a series of challenges.

Monitoring processes instituted by the DoE observed as challenges: parent perceptions that their children were given higher status if admitted to study at schools where the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) is English, limited resources and a lack of skilled teachers to teach mother-tongue languages, poor attitudes among teachers who believe teaching in mother-tongue languages would lead to institutional racism, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) taking unilateral decisions on English being the LOLT at schools and school principals encouraging parents to promote English as the language of learning and teaching to increase learner enrolment.

In resolving existing challenges, Head of the School of Education Studies, Professor Thabisile Buthelezi believed it important for School Governing Bodies to be supportive of teaching in mother-tongue languages.

"School Governing Bodies need to change their attitudes towards teaching in mother-tongue languages. Transformation in the demographics of both teachers and SGBs must take place. The DoE has an important role to enforce the Language Policy into practice at schools.

"At university level we need to inculcate the right attitude in our students towards teaching in the mother-tongue languages. We don't have many teachers trained to teach in these languages because they don't have the enthusiasm to do so. It's not that teachers in schools are incompetent, but they don't have the necessary resources and the support structure at ECD (Early Childhood Development) level which needs to be addressed by the DoE," said Professor Buthelezi.

Dr Neville Alexander, the Director of the Project for Alternate Education in South Africa (PRAESA)

whose presentation highlighted the importance of bilingual education in South Africa said research showed both the black and white elite were comfortable with English and "believe that everyone can similarly become empowered through an English only or at best an English-mainly regime at schools."

Dr Alexander who believes the worst legacy of Bantu Education is its rejection of indigenous languages as official languages at school said parents who admitted their children to English medium schools needed to be made aware of the "market value" of African Languages.

"For parents to be the custodians of promoting mother-tongue languages among their children we need to make parents aware that their children can be successful in their chosen career through learning at schools that have a multilingual policy. We've got to demonstrate to parents that only a multilingual policy will bring us out of the economical and political ditch we are in," said Dr Alexander.

- Neesha Maharaj



Picture: Neesha Maharaj

(l-r) Dr Joyce Mashiya, Co-ordinator of the Colloquium on Teaching in Mother-Tongue Languages; Dr Neville Alexander, Director of the Project for Alternate Education in South Africa; Professor Thabisile Buthelezi, Head of the School of Education Studies; and Dr Hasina Ebrahim, Discipline Leader for ECD and Foundation Phase teaching.

## SIFE empowers learners

ABOUT 1 000 learners from schools around KwaZulu-Natal will converge on the Westville campus on 16 June to participate in the Learner Entrepreneur Challenge (LEC).

An initiative of SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise), the competition will see grade eleven learners pit their entrepreneurial flair against one another to determine the winning entrepreneur. SIFE embarked on the LEC in 2006 as part of its endeavour to inculcate a spirit of entrepreneurship among young South Africans. With job opportunities few and out of reach to most, SIFE decided to introduce this programme to assist youth in earning a living.

While the first LEC attracted 100 learners, participation has grown tremendously in the past three years.

In the past few months, SIFE members visited the 40 participating schools in Durban, Tongaat and Pietermaritzburg and offered learners financial literacy classes. Learner groups had to design a business plan and were given a 'business loan' of R300 to R400 to set up a business.

SIFE Vice-President, Mr Mpho Phukubye notes that the LEC on 16 June is the culmination of months of hard work learners have put in to build their businesses. The businesses range from catering companies to stationery shops.

Mr Phukubye added: "The response we got from schools over the years has been phenomenal. Learners enjoy the competitive spirit of the LEC and find it exciting working with real money to set up a business. They find the challenge of working on a project outside of the classroom stimulating."

Mr Phukubye said through SIFE's initiative learners have learnt the importance of team work, become more tolerant of one another and have become skilled communicators with stakeholders important to their business.

- Neesha Maharaj

## International students reach out

MEMBERS of the International Students' Association (ISA) on the Westville campus took time out on 21 May to give back to a community in the province that has played host to them while they study at UKZN.

The day was spent with the children from a home named Streetwise Durban in Marianhill. Streetwise is a home for boys who used to live on the streets. Its aim is to rehabilitate them and teach them skills that will help them build positive futures.

Children as young as five years of age are lost to a life of hunger and despair. They become victims of rape and sexual abuse, physical violence and disease. Begging does not bring in enough to survive thus they turn to crime. The international students realised that hunger, poverty and street kids are universal challenges that affect everyone.

The members met with Sister Helena McKinney who is the fundraising manager at the home. She introduced the students to a team of dedicated workers who educate, feed and care for the



Picture: Supplied

The students brought smiles to the children's faces.

children. The kids are reconnected with their families and return home after the rehabilitation course is complete.

The day was well spent with some kids challenging the visitors to short games of soccer and basketball. Others showed off their skills and tricks on the trampoline. Sister Helena and the boys were very happy when they were presented with the clothes and snacks that were brought by the students. A bond had clearly developed be-

cause the children were sad to see their new friends leave at the end of the day.

Community outreach has become a bi-annual fixture in the ISA calendar. Such work adds value, substance and character to the Association and priceless smiles to the faces of young children who need to feel loved, appreciated and recognized.

- Sikhanyiso Ndlovu and Prem Ramlachan

# French for Tourism Project

In the context of the 2010 World Cup, a partnership agreement has been entered into between UKZN, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, the French Embassy in South Africa and the Island of Reunion.

The project will prepare young people for the tourist industry by catering for visitors speaking French. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education approached the French Embassy in South Africa and UKZN's French Programme to assist with the provision of courses in French for Tourism at two of its FET Colleges, Umgungundlovu College in Pietermaritzburg and KZN Coastal College in Durban.

A pilot project, beginning in December 2008 and culminating in the international certification of approximately 100 tourism and hospitality industry students in June 2010, is now up and running.

The French Programme's role is recruiting and assisting in the training of teachers, the creation of materials, and conducting research on the project, which is the first of its kind in South Africa.

Postgraduate students in the French Programme are involved in the project. They participated in the training sessions at the *Centre International d'Etudes pédagogiques* (CIEP) on Reunion

Island, and at UKZN where trainers from the CIEP set up an e-learning platform. The students will work in partnership with the teachers as well as with the research team.

The estimated budget for the project is 141 000 Euros (R1.2 million): 70% of this will be provided by the KZN-Reunion Island partnership agreement, 20% from the Ile de France region (Paris), and 10% from the French Embassy in South Africa.

The agreement was launched at the Coastal FET College, Swinton Campus in Mobeni on 8 May.

Representing the French government were Mr Philippe Aldon, Attaché for the Promotion of French, Mr Philippe Orliange, Chef de Mission, and Dr Solange Marguerite, Chargée de Projet, CIEP, Reunion Island.

MEC for Education, Mrs Ina Cronjé represented the province. Also present were Dr Enoch Nzama, Chief Director for KZN FET Colleges, Dr Francesca Balladon from the School of Language, Literature and Linguistics, Professor Dasarath Chetty, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations and Mr Wilson Nzimande, Rector of the KZN FET Coastal College.

Dr Nzama thanked the French Embassy for its commitment and



Picture: Thembeke Dlungwane

Mr Wilson Nzimande, Rector of the KZN FET Coastal College; Mr Philippe Aldon, Attaché for the Promotion of French, French Embassy; Dr Solange Marguerite, Chargée de Projet, CIEP, Reunion Island; Minister Ina Cronjé; Mr Philippe Orliange, Chef de Mission, French Embassy; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations Professor Dasarath Chetty; Dr Francesca Balladon, French Programme; and Mr Enoch Nzama Chief Director for KZN FET Colleges.

positive response. He also urged the parties involved to commit themselves to the success of the project. He said: "The partnership is very important because it will enable FETs to work with universities. Colleges have a critical role to increase the pool of skilled students and I believe that the project will benefit our people."

Dr Balladon said: "This project is not only an opportunity for research in the field of teaching and learning French as a foreign language in

South Africa, it is ... a significant and relevant contribution to the development of the community in the field of tourism and adds value to the province."

Minister Ina Cronjé noted that: "It is important for young people to be the face of KwaZulu-Natal. Through this programme you become ambassadors of the country and province. I encourage you to be responsible and grasp this opportunity with both hands."

The significance of being able to speak French in a professional context was brought home by Mr Philippe Orliange, who said: "The heartland of the French language is no longer France: French is spoken by more people in the Democratic Republic of Congo than anywhere else in the world." He added that: "The project is contributing to building skills and fulfills the University's goals of training and contributing to communities."

- Thembeke Dlungwane

## Clinical Conference

DIVERSE issues from the challenges doctors working in the public sector encounter to the allocation of resources within the health care system came under discussion at the Medical Students Representative Council's (MSRC) Clinical Conference at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine on 21 May.

Targeting fourth year students, the annual Conference draws on the expertise of leading academics, medical practitioners and Department of Health officials in preparation for the medical profession they enter upon graduation.

Offering perspectives on the experiences of life as a rural doctor was Dr M Khutsoane, Chief Executive Officer at the Ngwelezana Hospital near Empangeni while Dr N Lunjani shared her views on interning at a State hospital.

According to Dr Lunjani newly qualified doctors who enter the public health sector have to contend with the initial challenges of

prescribing medication, patient management and high stress levels due to huge work loads.

"As an intern you are unsure of several things when you are in the hospital setting. You experience feelings of uncertainty. You may find it challenging offering advice to patients undergoing operations or prescribing the correct dosage of medication," she said.

Poorly serviced State hospitals placed great demands on interns who had to contend with huge work loads said Dr Lunjani, resulting in many "stressed out" doctors.

On the ethical issues of doctors currently protesting for better remuneration, Dr Lunjani who has also protested during her lunch breaks said: "Health professionals have not been given the recognition and rewards they deserve in terms of remuneration. It's a hard thing to be a part of but it needs to be sorted out now or things will never change within the public sector."



Picture: Neesha Maharaj

Medical Students Representative Council members at the annual student Clinical Conference at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine.

President of the MSRC, Mr Thulani said he was concerned by the low number of newly-qualified doctors practicing in the rural areas. He advised fellow medical students to use their clinical block work at State hospitals which commences in their second year of study as an opportunity to learn as much as possible.

A debate on the allocation of funding for medical research versus the development of primary health care informed students of the conflicting views medical professionals held. Debating the issue were Professor Willem Sturm, Dean of the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine; Professor Ncebe Gqaleni, Head of the

Department of Occupational and Environmental Health; Professor Steve Reid, Director at the Centre for Rural Health and Professor Edgar Mhlanga, outgoing Head of the Department of Gynaecology and Obstetrics.

All participants agreed that medical research and developing primary health care were equally important. However, some participants were concerned that a small percentage of healthcare resources were allocated towards the primary health needs of communities, thereby making the achievement of the World Health Organisation (WHO) goal of "Healthcare for All" more difficult. Those who leaned towards research and funding thereof stressed the importance of the need for knowledge generation as a means to "sustain" the nation and develop quality researchers to find solutions to medical conditions.

- Neesha Maharaj

# Collaboration with East African universities

At the end of May, Professor John Mubangizi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Law and Management Studies visited three East African universities (University of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, University of Nairobi in Kenya and Makerere University in Uganda).

The visits were in line with goal one of UKZN's Strategic Plan which aims at promoting African-led globalisation as well as the College of Law and Management Studies Strategic Plan which (with regard to internationalisation) states in part that "...the College will adopt the following strategic steps in contributing to the realisation of the University's goals:

- Explore international partnerships;
- Hold and attend international conferences, workshops and seminars;
- Initiate and maintain joint and collaborative research projects and publish with academics from other African countries and beyond;
- Facilitate staff and student exchange programmes;
- Create reciprocal visiting and guest lectureships/professorships; and

- Lead initiatives to create links with African and other international institutions".

The purpose and objectives of the visits to were:

- To explore possible areas of co-operation in terms of research, student and staff exchange programmes;
- To follow-up on any existing collaborative projects and initiatives;
- To market UKZN's newly-introduced fee-remission initiative for full-time Masters and Doctoral students;
- To explore and gauge interest in visiting lectureships/professorships;
- To look into possibilities of MOUs with these institutions; and
- To get a sense of how other African institutions of higher learning are dealing with specific challenges such as resource constraints, governance, curricula, etc.

Professor Mubangizi held meetings with senior management from the three institutions. Discussions ranged from governance and resource challenges to other issues such as staff development, academic freedom, retirement age and

government funding. Professor Mubangizi said: "It was acknowledged that most challenges facing our institutions are similar and that we hold similar views on matters of academic freedom, retirement age and the requirement of a PhD for academics among other things."

Professor Mubangizi informed his counterparts of UKZN's fee remission initiative for full-time Masters and Doctoral students. This was welcomed by all. They felt that it would be beneficial because some of their faculties were staffed by junior lecturers and the initiative would also help in increasing the academic profile of their staff. Professor Jacob Kaimenyi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) at the University of Nairobi was excited by the news and instructed their Public Relations Office to immediately publicise the initiative within the University.

Like UKZN, the University of Nairobi operates on a College model and Makerere University is also moving towards the same model. It was agreed that opportunities for collaborative multi-disciplinary research should be explored and exploited.

The visits to all three universities were fruitful and beneficial. All agreed in principle to establish Memoranda of Understanding. UKZN's Corporate Relations will be assisting in driving some of the initiatives arising from these visits. "Their involvement in following up on some of the outcomes of the visits will go a long way in helping to implement the decisions made and realising the objectives for which the visits were intended," said Professor Mubangizi.

- Hazel Langa

## Spotlight on youth development



Picture: Sabelo Nyuswa

Delegates at the round table discussion organised by HEARD.

THE Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD) hosted a roundtable discussion on the challenges of youth development, and information gaps in relation to youth and sexual and reproductive health on 6 May.

Research shows that the HIV and AIDS epidemic continues to increase the vulnerability of children and young adults in South Africa and elsewhere in the world. The roundtable was an urgent call to systematic and collective action on behalf of children and young adults affected by this epidemic.

The discussion was a follow-up to HEARD's recent work on Adolescents and HIV and AIDS, and was directed by HEARD's Adolescents Research Team comprising Professor Tim Quinlan, Dr Kwame Owusu-Amomah and Mr Nkosinathi Ace Ngcobo.

Participants represented government departments, the Youth Commission, trade unions, academic institutions, and civil society organisations.

"...For years universities have been seen as ivory towers – capable of alienating community members who by and large the research ought to benefit. As a way of do away with this assumption, we decided to invite all sectors that are relevant," said Mr Ngcobo.

Amongst the many resolutions taken at the meeting was the need for all sectors to systematically work together in the field of sexual reproductive health and youth development. This includes sharing resource material.

The roundtable gave birth to a research forum where these issues will be discussed.

- Sabelo Nyuswa



Picture: Supplied

Professor John Mubangizi in a meeting with senior management officials at the University of Nairobi.

## Remote sensing workshop

FOSTERING collaboration and developing common projects was the focus of a recent remote sensing workshop held in the School of Environmental Sciences at UKZN's Westville campus. Involving earth observation scientists from Reunion Island, France and South Africa, the workshop explored remote sensing as a tool for sustainable development in South Africa and the Indian Ocean. Images of the Earth, oceans and atmosphere taken from satellites are a routine and essential tool in our efforts to manage and protect natural resources and the environment.

For two days, 50 scientists from UKZN, Université de la Reunion, the Development and Research Institute (IRD), DST, CSIR, CIRAD, the Agricultural Research Council and Mondi exchanged data and findings from their ongoing projects in the fields of Land Management, Marine Resources Management and Environmental Monitoring.

The programme involved three parallel sessions featuring presentations on interesting issues such as the use of radar satellite for surveillance of fishing activities, papyrus mapping and marijuana detection, remote sensing of vegetation characteristics in South Africa and invasive species mapping.

Organised by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the French Embassy, the workshop formed part of the Reunion Island Season in South Africa Festival. Designed to celebrate the diversity and richness of this Indian Ocean French island, the festival also cemented partnerships between Reunion and South Africa in the spheres of culture, science, education and commerce.

Head of the School of Environmental Sciences, Professor Fethi Ahmed, was encouraged by the workshop and said that it achieved its main objectives. A joint committee has been established which will look at joint research proposals and projects. A follow up workshop is planned for May 2010.

- Vicky Crookes

# Merck Awards

Excellence was the order of the day at an awards ceremony where Merck honoured the top third year Biochemistry and Microbiology students from the Pietermaritzburg and Westville campuses.

Hosted by UKZN's School of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology on the Pietermaritzburg campus, the ceremony was an opportunity to congratulate the students who excelled and the staff who provided the conducive en-

vironment, mentorship and support. Professor Dean Goldring, in his welcoming address, said that despite the current financial constraints, the challenge for universities "is to produce excellent graduates and to push back the frontiers of science."

The recipients of the Merck awards were: Ms Karyn Pretorius (Biochemistry, Westville); Ms Justine Borain (Biochemistry and Microbiology, Pietermaritzburg); Ms Pervashni Padayachee (Microbiology,

Westville) and Ms Bronia Vollebregt (Microbiology, Pietermaritzburg).

National Sales Director for Merck, Ms Fiona Hall said that it was an honour and privilege to be representing industry and to be associated with the University. She highlighted the need in industry for highly qualified young people, such as the Merck awardees and added: "Don't forget us when you are looking for jobs".

The awardees attributed their academic success to "hard work". Justine Borain said that "you get out what you put in" and Karyn Potgieter emphasised the importance of knowing when to work hard. All are currently studying towards honours degrees in their respective fields.

The ceremony was closed by Head of School, Professor Bala Pillay who thanked the parents for supporting their children in their academic endeavors. He expressed his appreciation to Merck for their support and said he hoped it would continue into the future.

- Vicky Crookes



Picture: Louis Tifshah  
Winners of the Merck awards pictured with Merck representatives (l-r) Mr Jayson Kuppusamy, Merck; Ms Karen Pretorius; Ms Justine Borain; Ms Bronia Vollebregt; Ms Pervashni Padayachee; and Ms Fiona Hall, Merck.

## Student praise singer at Inauguration

The honour of praise singing at the inauguration of President Jacob Zuma on 9 May went to UKZN's Mr Siphamandla Xaba, a final year Bachelor of Arts in Cultural and Heritage Tourism student.

A three and a half minute praise poem in isiZulu and English congratulating Mr Jacob Zuma immediately after he was sworn in as South Africa's president at the Union Buildings in Tshwane, has been described by Mr Xaba as "the best experience of my life". This opportunity came about after an invitation by the Office of the Presidency two weeks prior to the inauguration.

"It was an honour to be selected out of all other praise singers in the country to perform at the inauguration of our new President. I was a little nervous a few minutes before delivery but I told myself not to let fear overcome me," said Mr Xaba.

While extolling the virtues of the new President in his poem, Mr Xaba asked the people of South Africa to offer Mr Zuma their

support and "give him a chance as President".

Performing before dignitaries was not a new experience for Mr Xaba who praise sang at the opening of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature and before President Thabo Mbeki at the opening of Parliament in Cape Town in 2007. However, Mr Xaba considered this occasion special because he praise sang in the presence of hundreds of Heads of States from around the globe.

"Praise singing for a Presidential Inauguration was the best experience of my life – an occasion in my life I can relate to my children and grandchildren. It was a special moment because I was the first to congratulate Mr Zuma through my praise poem immediately after he was officially declared President," said Mr Xaba.

Mr Xaba said his performance was well received by guests and President Zuma thanked him.

Elements of a good praise singer according to Mr Xaba were a



Picture: Xoliswa Zulu  
Mr Siphamandla Xaba.

thorough knowledge of and respect for the individual being praised and training the voice for an eloquent delivery of the praise poem.

His talent as a praise singer was recognised in 2006 after he was invited to deliver a praise poem at the burial of Moses Mabida in the presence of politicians such as former Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr S'bu Ndebele.

Mr Xaba who has set his sights on a career within the Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism said he developed a love for praise singing because it afforded him an opportunity to delve into historical happenings and learn new things about his own African culture.

- Neesha Maharaj

## Mental health initiative

UKZN's Programme of Bio Research Ethics and Medical Law, led by Professor Sylvester Chima has joined forces with the KwaZulu-Natal Mental Health Board (KZNMHB) to educate South Africans on the rights of mental health care patients.



Picture: Supplied  
Professor Sylvester Chima.

The Community Mental Health Outreach Programme, intent on creating awareness of the Mental Healthcare Act of 2002 among stakeholders, began in Harding in early May and is set to continue around KwaZulu-Natal. Medical practitioners, the police, community leaders and ordinary South Africans are being made aware of the rights of mental healthcare users to halt any possible infringement of their human rights.

Professor Chima's involvement in the Programme stems from a lecture series he delivered on mental health in the Eastern Cape last year, prompting the KZNMHB inviting him to present similar talks to stakeholders responsible for treating people with mental disorders in KwaZulu-Natal.

"The primary problem identified in mental health care practice in South Africa is that most mental health care users and their families are not fully aware of their rights under the law. Stakeholders responsible for implementing the Mental Health Care Act are also not too familiar with the rights of mental healthcare users and how to protect them."

In South Africa a lack of understanding of the existing law which in turn hindered implementation was the challenge, said Professor Chima. He was behind initiatives designed to enhance stakeholders' awareness of legislation.

In addition to a limited knowledge of legislation was the ethics surrounding research which included mental health care users' participation in clinical trials in the development of drugs for mental disorders.

"It is important to look at issues regarding stigmatisation and discrimination against mental health care users whether in the context of employment, housing and provision of health care services. To what extent are individuals with mental disorders being discriminated against and what mechanisms could be put in place to ameliorate this situation?" said Professor Chima.

Overcoming the current challenges Professor Chima believes will take an increase in community engagement initiatives, and the need for capacity building among healthcare professionals, especially mental health nurses and social workers.

"It may also be useful to look at issues surrounding the involvement of traditional healers in the management of mental disorders because in South Africa they are the primary point of contact for individuals with mental disorders at the community level," he added.

Professor Chima called for further investigations into the extent of mental disorders in South African communities and other African countries.

- Neesha Maharaj

# Support for science access students

Two hundred students from the Centre for Science Access (CSA) have been thrown a lifeline in the form of bursaries from the newly established Moses Kotane Institute. A total of R9.6 million will allow 134 students on the Westville campus and 66 on the Pietermaritzburg campus to realise their true potential.



Picture: Supplied

Centre for Science Access students on the Pietermaritzburg campus with Dr Thembinkosi Albert Modi and Dr Terry Davis from the Moses Kotane Institute (centre).

Enrolled in one of three access programmes, the BSc4 Augmented, BSc Foundation or Science Foundation, the students are required to perform 25 hours community service per annum. They are obliged to seek opportunities to apply what they have learnt and take it back to their communities. Part of the agreement also involves participation in a parallel enrichment programme designed to stimulate innovation, leadership and competency.

Launched in January, the Moses Kotane Institute is the brainchild of Drs Zweli Mkhize and Nqaba Ngcobo. It takes its name from liberation veteran, Moses Kotane who, while in exile, took it upon himself to ensure that his comrades received quality education. The Institute recognises the dire need for a highly skilled workforce to sustain the economy and is committed to “orchestrating innovative science, technology, engineering and mathematics interventions that render efficient and sustainable service delivery”.

At a celebratory function at the CSA, CEO of the Institute, Professor Thembinkosi Albert Modi emphasised that the Institute is for everyone in South Africa and not

just black Africans. He highlighted the “need to be liberated by being educated”. He said UKZN had been chosen to receive the funding because the Institute trusted the quality of education offered at the University.

Science Access student leaders expressed their gratitude to the Moses Kotane Institute for pro-

viding them with this educational opportunity. Speaking on behalf of the BSc4 Augmented students, Mr Nkululeko Mkhize said that he had read about the Institute in the newspaper but never imagined that that he would be at the receiving side of this opportunity.

Dr Terry Davis from the Moses Kotane Institute encouraged the students to adopt the values espoused by the Institute: *ubuntu*, people-oriented, egalitarianism, world class standards, responsibility, accountability and sustainability. She said the focal issue should be: “what are you going to give back” and not “what is in it for us”. She added, “You have a great name to uphold... and you need to be worthy of a Moses Kotane bursary”.

- Vicky Crookes

## AIDS crusader

LIVING with AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) for the past 12 years, Ms Thandi Ngcobo, the newly appointed Project Manager at the PEPFAR (President’s Emergency Plans for AIDS Relief) Traditional Healers Project at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine is determined to increase the Project’s visibility among traditional healers in KwaZulu-Natal.

Ms Ngcobo is in the process of planning a public AIDS awareness campaign that’s expected to draw thousands of traditional healers and others with an interest in the fight against the disease this July in Pietermaritzburg. The Traditional Healers Project funded by the US-based organisation, President’s Emergency Plans for Aids Relief is a collaborative initiative between traditional healers in the districts of Umgungundlovu, Ilembe and eThekweni and medical professionals within the NRMSM, aimed at expanding their (traditional healers’) knowledge of HIV and AIDS.

Advocating AIDS awareness through a weekly radio show, *Siphilisa Ithemba* on UkhoziFM and counselling the youth on the weekends, Ms Ngcobo said: “I’m honoured and humbled by my appointment. I feel blessed to be part of a project involving work

with traditional healers on AIDS awareness which I’m passionate about. While I bring in a range of skills this experience is also a learning curve for me and I hope to expand my knowledge of the disease.”

Turning to a traditional healer for advice herself, 12 years ago when she learnt she was HIV positive, Ms Ngcobo believes the way forward in curtailing the impact of HIV/Aids is a mix of advice from traditional healers and modern medicine.

Ms Ngcobo who openly speaks of her HIV status said she was in denial for six years before accepting she had the disease in 2003 and upon the advice of a young woman traditional healer, sought medical assistance.

“Through this project they (traditional healers) now understand the importance of working closely with doctors at clinics and hospitals in promoting the prevention and spread of HIV,” said Ms Ngcobo.

Her plans for the Project’s growth include showcasing this collaborative partnership and increasing its visibility in and around KwaZulu-Natal through broadcast media and expanding on HIV prevention messages.



Picture: Supplied

Ms Thandi Ngcobo.

Ms Ngcobo who is in the process of penning a book on her experiences as an individual living with AIDS advised youth to: “Stay HIV negative by abstaining from sexual activity until you find the right partner. Those who are HIV positive shouldn’t spread the disease. Instead take your medication and eat healthily.”

Hoping to complete her Bachelor of Arts in Communication degree through the University of South Africa by 2010, she was part of a production team responsible for the reality programme, *Imagine Africa* which was screened on SABC television last year. She has produced a documentary, *My Life, My Story* on her own experiences living with AIDS which is expected to be broadcast in the near future.

- Neesha Maharaj

## UKZN student President of SAUS

UKZN continues to be well represented among student representative leaders in the Higher Education sector following the appointment of UKZN’s Central Student Representative Council (CSRC) President Mr Sandile Phakathi as President of the South Africa Union of Students (SAUS).

Mr Phakathi was appointed at the SAUS National Conference held at the University of Pretoria from 26-30 April. Also serving the Union is former Medical School SRC member Miss Mpho Bikitsha, who was appointed as the HIV and AIDS and Community Development Officer.

Mr Phakathi follows in the footsteps of his predecessors – UKZN alumnus Miss Sibuyi Sibuyi, former President on the Howard College campus and inaugural president of SAUS, and Mr Sbu Ngwane, former CSRC President and SAUS President.

“The appointment comes with pressure and means I must juggle my role as CSRC president of UKZN with this new position,” said Mr Phakathi.

SAUS operates as the SRCs’ liaison body with the Department of Education as well as representing student views in the Council of Vice-Chancellors and working directly with the Minister of Edu-



Picture: Thembeke Dlungwane

Mr Sandile Phakathi.

cation. SAUS was formed through a merger process between the South African Universities SRC and the South African Technikon Students.

“As President of SAUS, one of my key objectives is to bring all Further Education Training (FETs) under this body. It is critical to popularize the FET sector to school-leaving youth. FET Colleges provide vocational training and scarce skills trades,” said Mr Phakathi.

“With regard to universities, we entered office with a new Cabinet and we need to be in close contact with the new Minister of Education.” Mr Phakathi, who is also Chairperson of the South African Students Congress (SASCO) KZN, is studying for a Master’s Degree in Social Policy.

- Thembeke Dlungwane

# Cultural exchange

Partnerships between Durban's art community and the City of Le Port on Reunion Island are set to be strengthened following a meeting on 7 May held at the Centre for Creative Arts (CCA) at UKZN.

Representatives of Durban's art and cultural community explored artistic and cultural linkages between the two cities at the "Meeting of Cultures" programme organised by the eThekweni Municipality's International and Governance Relations Unit in conjunction with the CCA.

Mr Eric Apelgren, Head of the International and Governance Relations Unit at eThekweni

Municipality hoped this twinning project would solidify arts and cultural initiatives between Durban and Le Port.

"An investment in arts and culture is the glue that holds us together during tough economic times," he said.

Mr Peter Rorvik, Director of the CCA who welcomed further linkages with Reunion Island, said inter-cultural exchange outside of South Africa was an important element incorporated into the Centre's programme.

"The CCA was pleased to facilitate an event that furthers the possibility of cultural exchange between artists,

organisations and countries as much of our work involves cultural exchange," said Mr Rorvik.

In the past the CCA has hosted dancers from the City of Le Port as part of the Jomba Contemporary Dance Experience in Durban and will now turn its attention to developing mutually beneficial programmes for the two cities respective annual film festivals. He supported the idea of identifying areas of interest among artists in Durban in furthering cultural exchange between the two cities.

According to Mr Rorvik determining the availability of infrastructure, cultural and art programmes would measure the

interest and capacity for future partnerships.

The City of Le Port was represented by its Deputy Mayor, Mr Michel Seraphine; Head: Cultural Services of Le Port Municipality, Mr Paul Mazaka; and the Director of Karbardock Theatre, Mr Stephane Rochecouste.

With 50 percent of its population of 700 000 constituted of individuals under 25 years old and a 40 percent unemployment rate, the City of Le Port placed much emphasis on promoting arts and culture.

Mr Seraphine said: "We come here today interested in

establishing sustainable arts and cultural links between our two cities. For us the best expression of our twinning is through the arts. Reunion Island has a mix of cultures and we view this project as an act of sharing our cultures."

A suggestion made by Durban's art community was categorising areas of interests in the arts as the way forward in formulating concrete projects with the City of Le Port.

- Neesha Maharaj

## Student wins new car

WHEN Prevashe Pillay took a life start student study loan from First National Bank (FNB) he did not envisage the good fortune about to come his way.

This shy lad from Queensburgh received the keys to a brand new Opel Corsa Lite on 8 May.

Mr Pillay (22) is a final year Media and Marketing student on the Howard College campus.

Still in shock and unable to hide his excitement, he said he thanked FNB: "I still can't believe that I now own a car ... this competition ... has really changed my life."

The FNB Life Start Student Loans "Win a Car" competition ran from

October last year to the end of March. The names of all the students whose loans were approved were automatically entered. The

draw was done by FNB's Internal Auditors in the beginning of April.

- Sabelo Nyuswa



Mr Prevashe Pillay poses proudly with his brand new car.

## Business Management Conference

THE Faculty of Management Studies will host a multi-disciplinary international conference from 5-7 November at the Graduate School of Business. The conference theme is *Business Management Challenges in Turbulent Economic Times*.

The conference will bring multi-disciplinary experts together to discuss business and management-related problems in Africa and beyond.

To date, 44 international and 132 delegates from South Africa have agreed to present papers at the conference. The Conference Gala Dinner promises to be a

great opportunity for networking between local and international academics and business leaders.

"The [Conference] promises to be a highlight in our calendar with opportunities to meet and network with participants from all over the globe. This is our inaugural conference and we are excited with the excellent positive response that we have had thus far", said Professor Lesley Stainbank, Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies and Conference Chairperson.

"This Conference has brought out the collective energy of the Faculty and will surely make a

milestone in the Faculty's history. The overwhelming response from within South Africa and abroad confirms my faith in the UKZN as the Premier University of African Scholarship," said Professor Dev Tewari, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies

For bookings and more information on the Conference, please visit:

<http://bmc2009.ukzn.ac.za>, email: [bmc2009@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:bmc2009@ukzn.ac.za) or telephone +27 (31) 260 1584/1607.

- Hazel Langa

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TRADITIONAL MUSIC (ICTM)**  
**40<sup>th</sup> WORLD CONFERENCE**  
 1 - 8 July 2009  
 Shepstone Building, level 6  
 Howard College Campus  
 University of KwaZulu-Natal

**OPENING CEREMONY**  
 2nd July 2009  
 9h00 - 10h30  
 Rick Turner  
 Students' Union

RSVP (Essential for opening ceremony only) by Friday, 19th June 2009  
 For further details and registration please contact:  
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 Tel: 031 260 1604  
 Fax: 031 260 1606  
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