

eish!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

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Staff newsletter for the NWU



NWU and Press
Club share
Madiba magic

New vice-rector
ready to realise
untapped potential

Spokespeople
are **valued**

CONTENT

- 2 Meet the NWU web office
- 3 Message from the vice-chancellor
Eish!, we appreciate the media!
- 4 NWU salutes the best in journalism
- 6 SA's story is still being written
- 7 Top spokespeople have their say
- 8 Focus on colleagues with disabilities
- 9 System will sound human and speak your language
- 10 Be proud and achieve your goals
- 12 Campus news: Mafikeng
- 13 Campus news: Potchefstroom
- 14 Campus news: Vaal Triangle
- 15 These NWU experts know their stuff
- 16 Our people – His poetry has social media impact
- 17 Items I always have in my shopping basket...
- 18 And the winners are...
- 19 NWU enhances interpreting



Front page: Ms Ndileka Mandela, granddaughter of the late Mr Nelson Mandela, and Prof Dan Kgwadi enjoy the National Press Club's award ceremony (article on p 4).

PLEASE NOTE:
To reduce our carbon footprint, Eish! is now distributed electronically to all staff, while those staff members who do not have access to computers, receive printed copies. You are welcome to contact our Eish! journalist, Willie du Plessis, should you have any news tips or enquiries.

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Meet the NWU Web Office

The NWU Web Office was established in 2011 to take ownership of the university's enormous website (currently consisting of roughly 14 000 pages), and to provide support to the more than 200 NWU publishers.

But who exactly are the Web Office team members?

Mr Cobus Steenkamp, web manager, is responsible for website governance. He is the strategist of the team and determines the best courses of action from a business perspective to ensure long-term sustainability of the site. He liaises with the three campuses to put web processes and procedures in place.

Ms Ronel Röscher, data analyst, uses web analytical tools such as Google Analytics and ranking models such as Webometrics to gather information and to measure the NWU's website performance against other higher education institutions.

Publishers contact her with technical queries or for help with statistical analysis. Ronel also works closely with IT on the development of the web platform, Drupal.

Ms Moira Müller is the online content specialist, focusing on content development. Content includes text, links, images and video. Moira also presents training workshops and practical sessions to assist publishers.

Ms Géna Thompson is the IT representative for the Web Office and has become our resident Drupal expert.

She is constantly investigating new ways to further develop the Drupal environment to best suit the needs of our vast website with its many role players.

Should you have any web-related queries, you are welcome to contact us at at: x85 2010 (Cobus), x85 2011 (Ronel), x99 4913 (Moira) and x99 4623 (Géna).

EDITORIAL

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Dear colleagues,

It is a time for us to reflect deeply on our role as agents of change.



In the meetings I have had with some of the faculties and support departments on our campuses, I have frequently been struck by the excellence we demonstrate in many of our activities in our effort to make a difference in the lives of all whom we serve. In our core mission of teaching and learning, research, innovation and the implementation of our expertise, and in our community engagement, we have made great strides.

We recently received the international review panel's report on the progress we have made toward achieving the objectives of the merger and fulfilling the goals we have set in our mission over the last 10 years.

Meanwhile, we have also received feedback from the Council on Higher Education after the submission of our progress report in respect of the institutional audit which was conducted in 2009.

In another important development, Council recently received the report of the Independent Investigation Task Team on the welcoming and introduction programme for first-year students.

All of these serve as mirrors for us which paint a picture of how others see us. Whether these reflections are based on perceptions or reality, they require our close attention.

I would caution against an approach which seeks to question the integrity or bona fides of those bearing the message. We are sufficiently mature to engage robustly on these issues and determine the best course forward. Let us embrace this opportunity for change and make this an even better university than it already is.

As an academic institution, we are all about change – the transformation which we bring about in the lives of our students as we prepare them for the future; the transformation which we contribute to the economy of our country as we partner with others to implement our expertise; and the lives we affect in the way in which we engage with communities that surround us.

Kind regards

Prof Dan Kgwadi

Eish!, we appreciate the media!

The media elicits different reactions from people. These vary from annoyance and suspicion to appreciation for a daily "conversation partner" that tells you about the world and its woes (and occasionally its joys).

The NWU recently confirmed the value we attach to a responsible and free media when we sponsored the National Press Club's prize-giving function for the fifth consecutive year (article on p 4).

At this event, Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, vice-principal of the NWU and rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, described media freedom as one of the cornerstones of our democracy.

Indeed, with a muzzled media, free expression and freedom of the press are impossible. This is a truth that we've been instilling in our journalism students for many years. However, we also teach them that freedom of speech

demands responsibility and accountability. Many of these students and graduates still take this good advice to heart and now occupy top positions in the media.

During the National Press Club's prize-giving function, one of them, Ms Daniëlla van Heerden from eNCA News (television news), was the winner in the category for electronic media. She acknowledged her alma mater with great appreciation when she received her prize.

Another reason why the NWU has so much respect for the media is the opportunities it offers experts to share their knowledge with the public.

You can read on p 7 how we recognised and rewarded our top spokespeople for the media exposure that they generated for the NWU.

Of the 9 290 media items that appeared last year, 5 025 appeared in the print media, 1 311

in the broadcast media and 2 954 in the online media.

Eish! wishes to congratulate our spokespeople on their enormous contribution towards promoting a positive image of the NWU.

Happy reading,

Nelia and the Eish! team



NWU salutes the best in journalism

The NWU has sponsored, for the fifth consecutive year, the National Press Club – North-West University Journalist of the Year award, as well as the Editor of the Year award.

For the first time, the NWU has also sponsored the Newsmaker of the Year award. The winners received their awards during a special ceremony at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) convention centre in Pretoria on 29 May.

Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, NWU vice-principal and rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, presented the awards. “The NWU’s involvement in tonight’s event and our pride in this sponsorship are proof of the fact that we embrace opportunities to prepare intellectually disciplined and enlightened graduates to become citizens of South African society,” he said.

“Simultaneously, we keep on attending to the changing environment in which we conduct our

research, teaching-learning and the implementation of our research.”

Prof Herman said this enabled the NWU to be responsive to the challenges of national and international markets.

He said it is of utmost importance that media freedom is acknowledged and independence and high standards of ethical journalism encouraged.

“We salute the endeavour by the National Press Club to raise the bar when it comes to standards of journalism.”

The overall winner of the National Press Club – North-West University’s Journalist of the Year award is the late Mr Dudley Saunders of *Carte Blanche*.

It is the first time in the history of the competition that this award has been presented to a television cameraperson.

Mr Ryk van Niekerk of *Moneyweb*, the dominant online source of investment information, received the Editor of the Year award.

Former South African president, Mr Nelson Mandela, was honoured as the Newsmaker of the Year 2013.

“Nelson Mandela’s death riveted the attention of the world for 10 days. It consumed South Africans – and much of the world – as the country pulled out all stops to bury the father of the South African nation with military precision and ancient Xhosa customs,” said Mr Jos Charle, chairperson of the National Press Club.

He said Mr Mandela is the best-known black man in the world and probably the most photographed man in the world. “He leaves behind a living legacy – truly a man for all seasons.”

Jos says the award is made on the grounds of impact, news value and media attention in electronic, print, online and social media.

◀ Prof Herman van Schalkwyk congratulates Mr Ryk van Niekerk of the online publication *Moneyweb*, who won the Editor of the Year award.

▼ Ms Botho Molosankwe, an alumna of the NWU and journalist at *The Star*, won the category for Print Media – News.



▲ The late Mr Dudley Saunders was named the Journalist of the Year. His partner, Ms Bernadette Maguire, received the award on his behalf. With her is Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, vice-principal of the NWU and rector of the Potchefstroom Campus, and Mr Jos Charle, chairperson of the National Press Club.

◀ Ms Daniëlla van Heerden, also an NWU alumna, was the category winner for Electronic Media – TV news, for the second consecutive year. She thanked the NWU for sponsoring the event and jokingly added that by winning the award she got some of her study fees back.

Here are the category winners of the Journalist of the Year awards. Every category winner received prize money sponsored by the NWU.

Print media – news:
Botho Molosankwe, *The Star*

Print media – features:
Mia Malan, *Mail & Guardian*

Print media – photography:
Paballo Thekiso, *The Saturday Star*

Electronic media – radio news:
Alex Eliseev, *Eyewitness News*

Electronic media – radio features:
Melini Moses, *SABC*

Electronic Media – TV news:
Daniëlla van Heerden, *eNCA*

Electronic Media – TV features:
Kate Barry, *Carte Blanche*

Electronic Media – cameraperson:
Dudley Saunders, *Carte Blanche*

Online Media:
Christa Eybers, *Eyewitness News*

Media Liaison Officer of the Year:
Nandi Mokoena, Competition Tribunal

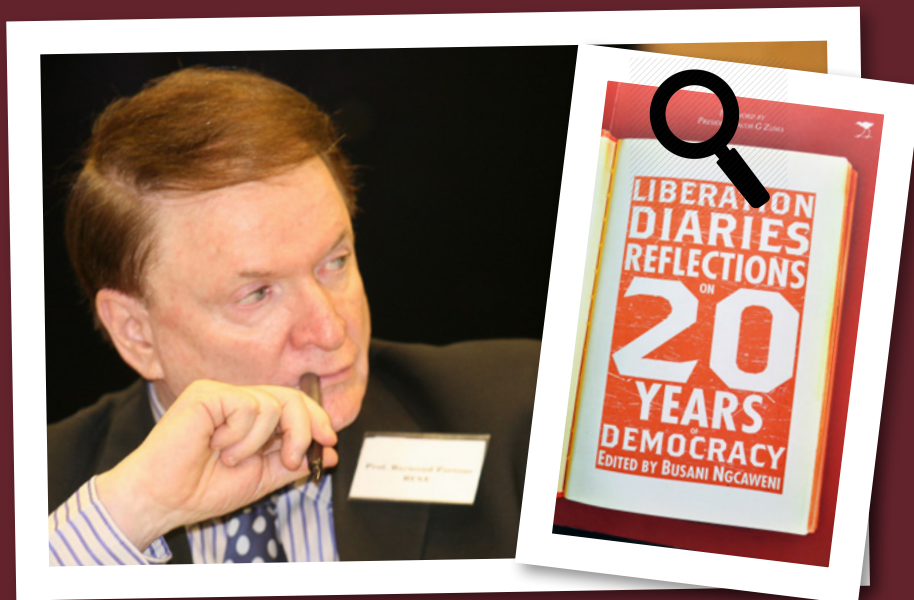
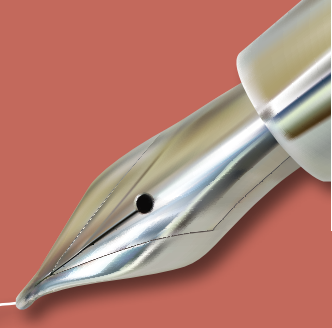
Did you know?

- The world’s news media reported extensively on Nelson Mandela’s life and his role in South Africa’s liberation for weeks following his death.
- One hour after the announcement of his death, two million tweets were generated with over six million tweets recorded on 5 December, the day of his death. The hash tags #RIPNelsonMandela, #Madiba and #RIPMandela were the top three topics on the social network on that morning – at one stage there were 95 000 tweets per minute – more than 13 million over a month.
- The Nelson Mandela Facebook page garnered over 2, 2 million likes and several posts, including tributes from the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Source: The National Press Club.

SA's story is still being *written*

The book *Liberation Diaries: Reflections on 20 Years of Democracy* contains essays that reflect the trials and tribulations, highs and lows of the past two decades of democracy.



Prof Raymond Parsons says the overall message of the book is that, despite achievements to date, the nation as a whole still has much unfinished business on its agenda.

This year marks two decades of democracy in South Africa.

Prof Raymond Parsons, economist and lecturer at the Potchefstroom Business School on the Potchefstroom Campus, contributed an essay to the newly published book, *Liberation Diaries: Reflections on 20 Years of Democracy*. Eish! spoke to him about the significance of this book.

Liberation Diaries: Reflections on 20 Years of Democracy is a book of personal reflections on the new South Africa. It was launched on the eve of the elections marking 20 years of democracy.

The book contains 50 essays by people from all walks of life, including politicians, researchers, activists, journalists and NGO workers, amongst others. It was edited by Busani Ngcaweni, a public servant in the Presidency. President Jacob Zuma wrote the foreword to the book.

Q: How did it come about that you were asked to contribute to the book?

A: When my own book, *Zumanomics Revisited – the Road from Mangaung to 2030*, got published, former deputy president Kgalema Motlante agreed to launch it.

As the editor of *Liberation Diaries*, Busani was one of the senior officials who made it possible to get the deputy president involved.

Busani said I owed him a favour and that favour would be for me to contribute an essay of 4 000 words to the book.

Q: What is your essay about?

A: The book contains both conceptual and anecdotal essays.

My contribution, "Social dialogue: New light on an old story" is more conceptual. I was there when former president Nelson Mandela launched the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC).

I focused on the important role which social dialogue has played in South Africa since 1994 as a mechanism for change, especially through NEDLAC.

NEDLAC was the socio-economic dimension of Mr Mandela's commitment to reconciliation and nation building. I explored the successes and failures of social dialogue in South Africa and the extent to which big challenges still remain that require more effective social dialogue in the future.

Q: What do you think the book will mean to the ordinary citizen?

A: The book will resonate with the experiences of many South Africans of the past 20 years as the range of subjects dealt with in the essays touch on virtually every aspect of South African society and economy.

Q: Are there any essays in the book that you consider specifically important?

A: I think the group of essays that focuses specifically on education is important in the university context.

The group includes "A reflective essay on transformation in South African universities" by Edith Phaswana, "Higher education and training 20 years into democracy" by Siphelo Ngcwangu and "In education, money still matters" by Mpho Tshivhase.

Q: What have you learned through your participation in the book?

A: One of the major lessons in participating in such a book is to recognise the work that still has to be done to develop a truly shared vision for South Africa's future.

Our country's story is still unfolding; a book such as this confirms that it remains largely in our hands to write our own story from now on.

Top spokespeople have their say

Silence may be golden but words of wisdom are priceless. The experts of the North-West University are frequently contacted by the media to share their expertise and to comment on issues of importance.

The most quoted in the media of these experts were honoured during the annual Spokesperson of the Year Awards which took place on 22 April at the Institutional Office.

Academics, researchers and other NWU faculty members were recognised at the event for their positive contribution to the media landscape in an effort to uplift and enhance the image of the NWU.

KNOWLEDGE WORTH MILLIONS

In 2013 a total of 9 290 media items were published, with a staggering total advertising equivalent value of R263 415 047.

"The number of articles in the media followed a concerted effort of the Institutional Office in conjunction with the marketing and communication departments on the three campuses – Mafikeng, Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle – to improve the profile of the university," says Ms Phumzile Mmope, executive director for institutional advancement.

THIRD WIN FOR EXPERT

The person quoted the most in 2013 of all NWU spokespeople in all the categories combined, being print, broadcast and online, was Prof André Duvenhage, director in the research

focus area Social Transformation and professor in political studies on the Potchefstroom Campus.

He was quoted more than 400 times across all different media.

"I am very excited to have been announced as the North-West University's spokesperson of the year for the third year in a row. It is an honour to be able to engage with the media about our university, and how it positively impacts our country," says André.

He received R20 000 in prize money and a floating trophy for his valuable contribution.

SPECIALISTS ARE MEDIA FAVOURITES

Mr Theo Venter, lecturer at the Potchefstroom Business School and advisor in the office of the vice-chancellor, received the award for the second most-quoted person. He was quoted 320 times and received prize money of R15 000.

The person quoted third most, Prof Tommy du Plessis, director of the Potchefstroom Business School, was quoted 100 times and was awarded R10 000 in prize money from the university.

In the subcategories, winners received prize money to the value of R5 000 each. These winners included:

- Mr Theo Venter, the most-quoted person in the category "print media", who was quoted 76 times;

- Prof André Duvenhage, the most-quoted person in the category "broadcast media", who was quoted 343 times, and

- Mr Theo Venter, the most-quoted person in the category "online media", who was quoted 104 times.

AWARDS IN NEW CATEGORIES

Two additional categories were added for 2013. The first new category is the "New voice of the NWU". This category gives recognition to an individual who was previously quoted very seldom and whose profile has now increased. This award, also with prize money of R5 000, went to Prof Pieter du Toit from the Faculty of Law on the Potchefstroom Campus.

The second category acknowledges an individual who during a short space of time has created a noticeable spike in coverage as a result of research or comment on a specific issue. The award, also with prize money of R5 000, went to Prof Cilas Wilders from Biokinetics at the Faculty of Health Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus for his comments on the research done with regard to Bullejtjie rugby.

TRIBUTE TO THE NWU

"It is always a tribute to our university when the media call upon our experts for comment. The fact that the number of articles published in especially specialised publications has increased since the beginning of 2012 shows that our contributions are shaping our society," said Prof Dan Kgwadi, vice-chancellor, as he congratulated the winners.



The NWU recently hosted the annual Spokesperson of the Year Awards. Academics, researchers and other NWU faculty members who were recognised for their contributions in the media are Prof Tommy du Plessis, Prof Cilas Wilders, Prof André Duvenhage and Prof Pieter du Toit. Prof Susan Visser (centre) received Mr Theo Venter's award on his behalf.

Focus on Colleagues with disabilities



In this edition of Eish! we focus on ways in which we and the NWU can make life easier for colleagues with disabilities. We spoke with Ms Blanch Carolus from the Office for Students with Disabilities on the Potchefstroom Campus and Mr Zaan Strydom from the Employment Equity Office in the Institutional Office.

How many colleagues with disabilities are there at the NWU?

Zaan: They currently make up 0,7% of the total number of permanent staff members. According to the report of the national Commission for Employment Equity, the average for organisations with more than 150 employees is 1%, but we are aiming for 2%.

How should we approach our colleagues with disabilities?

Blanch: Focus on the person first and then on the disability. Be sensitive to their disabilities, but also be aware of their skills and talents.

What can we do to help colleagues with disabilities?

Blanch: Do not be overprotective – wait for them to ask for help. You can have empathy with them, but do not pity them.

What can we do to improve the work environment for colleagues?

Blanch: If you expect a visit from somebody in a wheelchair, arrange your office furniture in advance so that the person can get in easily. Remember that the wheelchair is part of the person's personal space – don't lean on it or push it without asking permission. Try to position yourself in such a way that the two of you can communicate on eye level.

Which guidelines should we follow when a colleague is blind or visually impaired?

Blanch: Identify yourself when you greet the person. When you speak to a blind person in a group context, use his or her name. Also describe the environment and furniture and do not move things around without telling the

person about it. Tell the person when you leave the room – don't just disappear. Ask permission before you touch a guide dog – they are service dogs, not pets.

How should a person deal with colleagues who are deaf or hard of hearing?

Blanch: Do not shout. Look the person straight in the eye and speak clearly and at a moderate tempo – especially if the person lip-reads. Address the person directly, even if there is an interpreter present. Make sure that you are never between the person and his or her interpreter.

What is important in the case of a colleague with a speech impediment?

Blanch: Be patient – don't finish the person's sentences. Ask the person to repeat if you don't understand. Be prepared – keep a computer, tablet or cellphone handy if the person prefers to use it.

What equipment does the NWU make available to staff with disabilities?

Zaan: Staff with visual impairments get computers with hardware and software that enlarge the font – also special computer screens and Braille printers.

To help staff with hearing disabilities the NWU contributes to the cost of hearing aids and buys special telephones.

What should the NWU do to make our buildings accessible?

Zaan: At the request of the Department of Higher Education and Training we are doing a survey in collaboration with colleagues from Physical Infrastructure and Planning to

find out what upgrades will cost to make our buildings more accessible to people with mobility issues.

When such a person visits a building there should be special parking close to the building and a ramp so that the wheelchair can get onto the pavement. There must be a ramp to get into the building, as well as a lift and special toilet facilities.

Even door handles are important, because people with limited movement in their hands often struggle with round doorknobs.

Does the NWU already have some of these facilities?

Zaan: We do. We recently installed five additional lifts or wheelchair-lifting devices at buildings on the Potchefstroom Campus.

For some time now there has been a special device in the Great Hall on the Mafikeng Campus which can be used to hoist wheelchairs onto the stage. On the Vaal Triangle Campus we recently appointed a temporary assistant for a lecturer who suffers from hearing loss.

How do you know about people with special needs?

Zaan: It should be brought to managers' attention that it is already indicated on the Human Capital shortlist forms if an applicant has a disability.

Managers should notify me immediately when a person with a disability is appointed, so that we can determine the specific needs of the person. They can call me at x99 4489 or send an email to zaan.strydom@nwu.ac.za.

System will sound human and speak your language



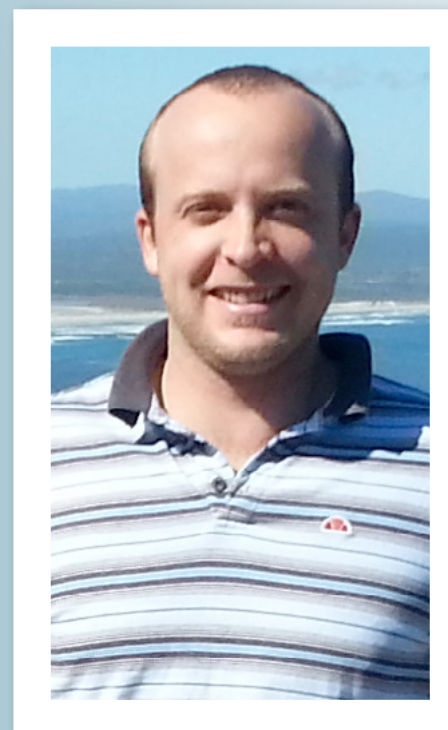
When speaking English, South Africans have a fascinating range of different accents, so much so that we sometimes have difficulty understanding each other.

Imagine how smart a machine would have to be to decipher in a split second what is being said and instantly respond with the correct answer.

The ability to understand all South Africans when speaking English, regardless of their mother tongue, is one of many attributes that an automated directory enquiry system must have to succeed in the marketplace, says Vaal Triangle Campus researcher Dr Charl van Heerden.

"It should also be able to mimic human interaction so naturally that callers do not get annoyed when talking to a computer," says Charl, a researcher at the research niche area, Multilingual Speech Technologies (MuST).

Obviously, such a system must also be able to do what it was designed for – immediately give callers the information they want.



Considering all these requirements, it's no surprise that local companies still use directory enquiry systems that either rely on human operators or leave callers in no doubt they are talking to a machine.

Charl and his fellow researchers at MuST are taking the concept of an automated, South African-developed directory enquiry system much, much further.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

With seed funding from the Technology Innovation Agency, they are pioneering a system that, apart from being automated end to end, should ultimately be able to understand all 11 of South Africa's official languages.

It's a tall order, even for researchers who have been in the field for well over a decade.

Fortunately, the MuST team are not starting out from a zero base. Using building blocks already in place, they are taking existing technology to the next level.

"The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) has been generously supporting speech research and development for several years.

"This has laid the foundation for what we are doing now," says Charl. "We are also drawing on open-source toolkits that are freely available for research."

One DAC-funded project that is proving so useful now was delivered by a joint NWU and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research team and comprises over 600 hours of recorded speech in all 11 official languages of South Africa. "There are approximately 56 hours of recordings from approximately 200 speakers per language."

The significance of this project, known as the National Centre for Human Language Tech-

Dr Charl van Heerden and his colleagues at the research niche area, Multilingual Speech Technologies, are developing a directory enquiry system that will be able to understand all 11 official languages of South Africa.

nologies (NCHLT) corpora (collection), is that it provides essential speech resources for speech technology development. "Without such resources, we would have to start our research from scratch, which would take many years and be very costly."

Another valuable DAC project, also involving MuST, resulted in a prototype of an end-to-end automated directory enquiry system. "It can handle about 10 simultaneous calls. What we need to do is get closer to the point where it can be deployed at a call centre."

PREPARING FOR THE MARKETPLACE

Charl, together with Prof Etienne Barnard and Prof Marelise Davel, is improving two specific parts of the prototype.

The first is the voice activity detector, which must be able to judge when the caller is speaking and when he or she is silent. "The system should not interrupt when the caller is talking and should prompt the caller when there is a long silence," he says.

This part of the TIA project is close to being finished. "Our version of the voice activity detector works better than the previous model and we are happy with it."

Now the team is working on the "confidence scoring" part. This is a statistical technique for determining how sure the system is that it understood the caller's request.

"If the system returns a low confidence score, it will ask the caller to repeat the request, just as a human would do. A high confidence score means the system is very sure and will respond immediately."

This part should take four to six months to complete. Then, with the assistance of the Technology Innovation Agency, the team will explore the possibilities for taking the system to the market.

Be proud and achieve your goals



Eish! talks to Prof Lumkile Lalendle, the newly appointed vice-rector for teaching-learning and quality assurance on the Mafikeng Campus. This former director of quality promotion and assurance at the University of KwaZulu-Natal says he is excited about tackling the challenges his new position offers.

Prof Lumkile Lalendle has considerable experience and knowledge of strategic planning, development of high-performance work systems, diversity and equity, human resource management and labour and industrial relations.

There is nothing that makes Prof Lumkile Lalendle happier than seeing South Africa, higher education institutions, staff and students achieve their goals to the best of their ability.

"To me one of the greatest things is to hear how people from other countries believe in South Africa and what we have

managed to achieve since 1994. It is heart-warming to see how our country is successfully competing internationally on various levels.

"I am specifically referring to the quality research that South Africa produces and which is held in high regard all over the world."

It is with this pride in higher education and determination to realise untapped potential that Lumkile wants to take the Mafikeng Campus to further heights.

PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY TO PROSPERITY

If there is one thing Lumkile says he wants to change, it is the perception that the Mafikeng Campus is the little brother of other NWU campuses because of its historical legacy.

He intends to motivate the campus towards achieving the status that everyone will be proud of. "Mafikeng Campus is an important part of the NWU. We have good governance and leadership and my aim is to maintain and improve what has been done well in the past."

Lumkile says his dream is to see collaborations between the various NWU campuses. He



Prof Lumkile Lalendle is a proud husband and father. Here he is with his wife, Tabitta, their daughter, Chuma, and their son, Mbasa.

would also like to see the Mafikeng Campus establishing strong partnerships with businesses and government agencies to create more funding and placement opportunities for students.

"It is very important to be competitive with other institutions and I believe partnerships on all levels will give the NWU as a whole the competitive edge."

POSITIVE VIBES AT MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Since he took up office on 1 May, Lumkile has been pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm of everyone at the Mafikeng Campus. "It can be seen everywhere, from the commitment of teaching staff to the professionalism of everyone in the administrative departments."

Lumkile says it is wonderful to be given the opportunity to join such a successful, positive team. He adds that the positive attitudes of staff are complemented by the mind-set of the students.

"The students are happy and it is clear that they are serious about their studies. The

Mafikeng Campus gives them value for their study fees by preparing them for the demands of the professional world and it is clear that they realise this."

UNITY IS PARAMOUNT

Lumkile wants to ensure that there is some level of uniformity in what the Mafikeng Campus does as part of the NWU.

"I would like to promote a common-held vision and a set of values that will result in the development of good-quality services to students and stakeholders of the university.

"Most importantly I want to see improvements in our research output and expand scholarship in teaching and learning. The Mafikeng Campus must, on an ongoing basis, improve the quality of the student experience in order to transform our education landscape so that the university can provide equity of experiences for its students and serve our nation better."

He says his motto is to keep things simple and to do them well. This is exactly what he plans to do as the new vice-rector.

Interesting facts about Prof Lumkile

Best quality:

I consider myself a good listener.

Favourite book:

The eight habits of highly successful people by Stephen Covey.

Favourite music:

Classical music and jazz.

Favourite food:

Samp and beans.

Favourite holiday:

I love the Drakensberg.

Members of my family:

My wife, Tabitta, is an educator who runs skills development and learnership programmes for disabled children.

I have three children. My eldest daughter, Nontyatyambo (28) studied Public Administration with the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and Chuma (17) is a first-year student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

My son, Mbasa (18), started his studies this year with Unisa.

Mbasa and Chuma are studying politics, philosophy and economics.

What kind of child I was:

I was a very balanced child. I could be inquisitive but also sometimes quiet, conforming and naughty at times.

What makes me happy:

To see the commitment of our government in supporting education in the country.

New residence opens its doors

The first phase of a new two-storey residence providing 250 beds for students was recently completed on the campus. Unlike the other 10 residences, the new one is divided into blocks with nine bedrooms each. Six of these are double rooms, and the others single rooms. Construction on the second phase has already started and should be completed by the end of this year. This will add another 250 beds, bringing the total number of rooms occupied by students on campus to more than 3 000. According to the residence manager, Ms Loraine Nel, only first-year students who meet the set criteria are accommodated in the new residences. They are mainly students who have been on a waiting list since January 2014.



This is the new residence recently completed on the Mafikeng Campus.

Campus reaches out to foundation phase teachers

The Faculty of Education and Training recently organised and sponsored a two-day community programme to assist foundation phase teachers. Ms Rita Strydom, programme manager, says the aim is to improve the knowledge and skills of foundation phase teachers to better equip them to look after children between the ages of three and six. She says they use the Cross Training programme, which is presented free of charge. According to Dr Myrtle Erasmus, subject group coordinator, 30 foundation phase teachers from 14 centres across the North West Province participated. "These foundation phase teachers do not receive any help from the Education Department. They do not get salaries or benefit from school feeding schemes because they cannot afford buildings and equipment that comply with the requirements of the Education Department." Myrtle says this is why the programme is not only part of the NWU's community involvement but is also an important investment in the education of small children.

Lecturer co-authors book on biographies

Dr Muchativugwa Hove, a lecturer in the Faculty of Education and Training, has co-authored a book with Unisa lecturer Dr Kgomotso Masemola.

The book is titled *Strategies of Representation in Auto/biography: Reconstructing and remembering*.

"The book develops specific perspectives on the genre and views inherently expressed through the re-imagined, re-membered and re-constructed self that speaks through the pages of autobiographical scripting," says Muchativugwa.

"The focus on auto/biographical writings from Southern Africa, specifically South Africa and Zimbabwe, offers a fresh reading of the work of significant figures in the political, economic and sociological spheres of these states.

"This collection shows that the socio-cultural memory of a people is a core aspect influencing individual self-representation," Muchativugwa adds.



The book that Dr Muchativugwa Hove co-authored introduces readers to various ways of reading and analysing auto/biographical writings.

Cities impact on biodiversity

Two researchers participated in the compilation of the largest international database of its kind to determine the impact of urbanisation on biodiversity across the world.

Prof Sarel Cilliers and Prof Stefan Siebert from Botany in the Faculty of Natural Sciences are the only South Africans in a group of 24 researchers from 10 countries who studied the data of plants in 110 cities and birds in 54 cities.

Sarel and Stefan made available data collected during many years of research in Potchefstroom and Ganyesa in North West.

The study showed that 20% of the world's bird species and 5% of plants are found in cities. Sarel says it is encouraging that there are still

many indigenous species that are typical of the natural environment in which the cities were developed, despite the impact and change of urbanisation.

Only one bird species, the rock dove (*Columba livia*), occurred in all the cities studied. Among the plants, the common denominator in all the cities was annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*).

He says that their research is also about the meaningful planning, conservation and management of biodiversity.

"Every city should have a well-structured biodiversity conservation plan in place, not only to protect our natural and cultural heritage, but also because it affects human health and wellness."



Prof Stefan Siebert and Prof Sarel Cilliers are part of an international team studying the impact cities have on biodiversity.

Faculty signs agreement with theological institute in Italy

The Faculty of Theology has signed an agreement with the Facoltà Pentecostale di Scienze Religiose in Aversa, Italy.

According to this agreement the institute will operate as an open learning centre where the NWU's BTh, Hons BA in theology and

master's degrees will be taught. The study material is being translated into Italian for this purpose.

Translated into English, Facoltà Pentecostale di Scienze Religiose means Pentecostal Theological Training Institute.



Present at the signing of the agreement are at the back Prof Marianne Dirksen, Prof George Lotter, Ms Antoinett Moerdyk and Prof Gert Breed, all from the Faculty of Theology. In front are Mr Mathys Bornman (manager of theological open distance learning programmes at the NWU), Pastor Mark Hodgetts (Apostolic Faith Mission pastor and facilitator), Prof Carmine Napolitano and Prof Paolo Mauriello (from the institute in Italy) and Prof Fika Janse van Rensburg (dean of the Faculty of Theology).

Students first in dagga debate

Legalise the use of dagga. This is the topic that made students from this campus the debating champions of 2014.

Their creatively presented argument won them the first place in the final round against the University of Pretoria in the *ATKV's university debating competition in Bloemfontein.

Mr Paul Maritz, a member of the NWU team, says for the final round a coin was tossed to decide who would be the "government" standing for the legalisation of dagga, and who would be the opposition.

Paul and fellow students, Mr Martin Hattingh, Mr Christo Slabbert and Ms Lizeri Mitchell then had to advance arguments in favour of the legalisation of dagga.

Paul, a fourth-year theology student, was chief whip of the "government", and was also named best language user. Six universities and 12 teams participated in the debating competition.

*The ATKV is an Afrikaans language and cultural organisation.

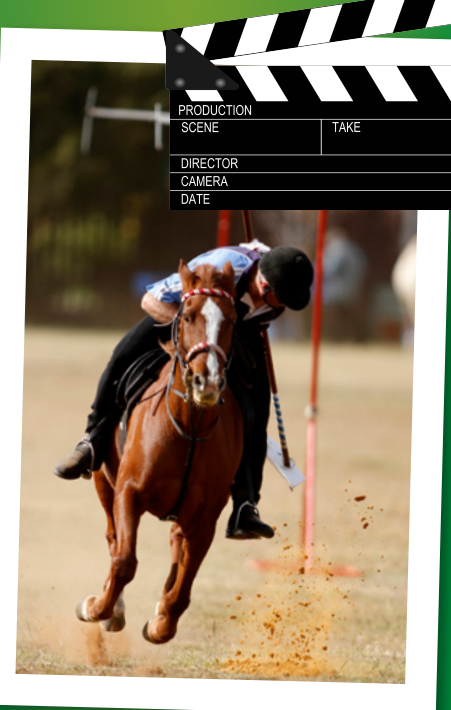
Horses and riders make history in harmony

Horses and riders moving in perfect harmony had spectators in awe during the first-ever Intervarsity Equestrian Tent-pegging Championship recently hosted by the campus.

This historic event saw the NWU triumphing over the team from the University of the Free State with 827 points against 794.

"It has always been my dream to see an event such as this taking place and I am happy to say that the students and the supporters thoroughly enjoyed themselves," says Mr Annas van Graan, organiser and chairperson of the South African Equestrian Tent-pegging Association.

Annas says this event is set to become an annual occasion. South Africa is currently the equestrian tent-pegging world champions.



An internet search reveals that the game of tent pegging has a mounted horseman riding at a gallop and using a lance to pick up and carry away one or more small ground targets (symbolic tent pegs).



Through the Survivor2Thriver programme, Dr Ansie Fouche (left) and Dr Hayley Walker-Williams help survivors of child sexual abuse to make sense of their childhood experiences.

How survivors become thrivers

When survivors of child sexual abuse are introduced to a reconstructed perspective which reinforces their emotional and spiritual abilities, their childhood experiences can create an opportunity for growth.

Two researchers are conducting long-term research into their Survivor2Thriver programme's effectiveness in facilitating this process.

Dr Hayley Walker-Williams from the subject group Psychology and Dr Ansie Fouche from the subject group Social Work conduct this research under the auspices of the Optentia

research focus area. The Survivor2Thriver programme strives to give participants the necessary tools to tackle life successfully from a positive psychological perspective, without thinking of themselves as victims.

Every second Saturday for a period of three months, a small group of participants meet on the campus to take part in activities and discussions with Ansie and Hayley.

These sessions help participants to make sense of the sexual abuse that they experienced as children and find ways to overcome the consequences of this abuse in their everyday lives.

Campus and ArcelorMittal unite for skills development

The campus has joined forces with steel industry giant ArcelorMittal South Africa to teach financial and managerial skills to representatives from several non-governmental organisations.

The first of its kind in the country, the ArcelorMittal Sustainability Accelerator Training Programme includes a cash injection of R200 000 from ArcelorMittal SA. This will fund the training by the Centre for Continuing Professional Development on the campus.

The six month-training programme will see participants receive interactive and practical learning that will enable them to manage their businesses, acquire and develop sustainable community development projects, attract and retain large corporate funders and drive impact-driven projects.

Each participant will also be assigned a personal and professional mentor in the form of a qualified and registered industrial psychologist from the Faculty of Humanities.

These NWU experts know their stuff

Members of the NWU are constantly sharing their expertise with the community on different occasions – be it during speeches or in interviews with the media. In this ongoing series, we would like to share the following quotes with our readers.



A business risk can transform itself over time from being an unlikely event into a threat which is more likely to occur, and subsequently into a danger that is almost certain to impact on the entity.

"Management's response to this scenario, also called a Black Swan event, should be to take immediate steps to avoid the danger if at all possible, otherwise to limit the significant damage that the danger can cause the business to suffer."

Mr Theo Triegaardt, School of Accounting, Mafikeng Campus.

Presentation at the Institute of Internal Auditors' Conference, 23 May 2014.

20 years into democracy, we are certainly seeing some positive changes, but there is a lot more that still needs to be achieved. There is a positive movement at this stage, but one should not sit back and relax... We have to work on merit. We have to deserve, and in that manner you are proud of where you are.



Prof Rantosa Letšosa, vice-rector for teaching-learning, Potchefstroom Campus.

"Educational insights", Black Business Quarterly, 23 April 2014.

Water is used internationally as a political tool and its availability or scarcity often plays a pivotal role.

"South Africans have this sense that there is enough water, especially groundwater.

"The problem arises with the management of water and the conservation of the water quality.

"In countries with political problems or disputes, this type of provision or service-delivery is usually pushed into the background."

Dr Ina Gouws, Faculty of Humanities, Vaal Triangle Campus.

Sound clip on the importance of water, RSG, 28 May 2014.



Agriculture plays an important role in the government's National Development Plan, which aims to create 11 million new jobs by 2030, with one million of those in agriculture. There is a huge need to upskill workers in farming, agro-processing and downstream development.

Mr Theo Venter, lecturer, Potchefstroom Business School, and advisor in the office of the vice-chancellor.

"A state of missed opportunities", Sunday World, 18 May 2014.



His poetry has social media impact

The NWU's people are talented and artistic. They appreciate life and continuously find creative ways to showcase this appreciation. In our series on interesting NWU staff, we talk to an accomplished poet who successfully uses social media as one of the platforms for his poetry.

Prof Damian Garside, programme coordinator of the School of Human Sciences on the Mafikeng Campus, started writing poetry in his late teens. His work has since been published in key South African literary journals and poetry magazines.

He was also part of a National Research Foundation-funded cultural heritage project which documented the writing and writers of KwaZulu-Natal. For this, Damian was the subject of two videos which are now housed in the National English Language Museum at Rhodes University.

PERSEVERANCE RESULTS IN RECOGNITION

"Some of my first poetry was very bad and self-indulgent. I only developed my distinctive voice later, in the 1980s. It was then that my work got published and also anthologised in significant publications such as Michael Chapman's *The Paperbook of English Poetry in South Africa* and *Broken Strings: The Politics of Poetry in South Africa*."

Since 2005 the number of his poems published in journals has steadily increased and Damian was mentioned in the introduction to the book *Twenty-Five Years of New Coin*, which com-

memorated the existence of the *New Coin Poetry* magazine. Damian says in the last couple of years his poetry has changed a lot. "I have developed to a level of confidence and control now. This allows me to produce the kind of poetry that I feel few others writing poetry here in South Africa at the moment can match."

A POET FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

He has embraced the digital age and has turned to writing poetry for social and new media.

Damian has a poetry blog on WordPress.com called the *Best Poetry Blog in the Cosmos*, and three Twitter accounts. One of these accounts promotes his self-published collection of poetry, *Zero Gravity* which came out in February.

He says the popularity of the poetry blog and twitter accounts is growing at a rapid rate. He can boast a total Twitter following of more than 3 300 and has 170 blog followers.

"Unlike most South African poets whose readership is primarily or exclusively local, my readership is primarily international with more than 50% of my Twitter followers and 70% of my blog followers based in the United States."



▲ Prof Damian Garside believes it is important for aspirant poets to take risks and to think outside the box.

THE ART OF HIS POETRY

Damian describes himself as more of an intuitive "flow" poet than a careful sculptor shaper. "Typically a phrase will come to mind and I try to explore its implications, or an idea will come to mind and I try to get a linguistic fix on it.

"The poem needs to show a flow, if not in sound and rhythm, then in the argument and the images. Rather than tinker with a poem, I would turn it on its head. I approach it from a completely different direction that seems to make much better sense or to work much better."

* If you know of a colleague who does something extraordinary or interesting in his or her life outside the university, please send the information to Willie du Plessis at willie.duplessis@nwu.ac.za.



One of Damian's poems

"This poem is an example of the short, fast and furious poetry that I write for social media (in this case Twitter).

"It was tweeted a couple of days ago and was retweeted and favourited about 20 times, including retweeted by my most illustrious follower: poet, actress and producer, Lebo Mashile. It's a slight poem which absolutely hangs on the 'pow' impact of the ending."

*A poem
is not like
a news story
it does not
need a
who, what, when, where
and how
all it needs
is a
POW!*



ITEMS I ALWAYS HAVE IN MY SHOPPING BASKET...

What items do staff members never leave the supermarket without? Some staff members say they have good reasons for ensuring that a specific item is always in the shopping basket. They shared their choices with Eish!

Ms Mariaan Kloppe, institutional manager for teaching-learning, Institutional Office: "I always have bags and bags of cat food in my trolley. This includes the dry and wet variety. The reason is that I am 'mother' of 11 homeless cats."

Mr Lionel Eksteen, human capital assistant, Human Capital, Institutional Office: "I always buy jelly babies. In this grown-up world, it always makes me feel like a kid again."

Dr Eva Manyedi, campus quality coordinator, Mafikeng Campus: "I always have cayenne pepper on my shopping list. The reason why this is an essential item for me is because cayenne pepper has special health benefits.

"According to the author of *God's Pharmacy*, Rev Herman Uys, research has proven that cayenne pepper can, amongst other things, reduce blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.

"It has a soothing effect on ulcers and heartburn. It is also an anti-aging agent, a body alkaliser and reduces headaches and arthritis pain."

Ms Mamokete Mokoko, personal assistant to the campus rector, Mafikeng Campus: "I always have raw almonds in my shopping basket.

"I believe raw almonds enhance brain activity and are very good for you. I love them so much."

Ms Beula de Beer, programme coordinator, School of Natural Sciences and Technology for Education, Potchefstroom Campus: "I have three items I never leave the supermarket without: bread, coffee and toilet paper.

"I buy bread because I have three teenagers who are always hungry and coffee and toilet paper because it is always finished in our house."

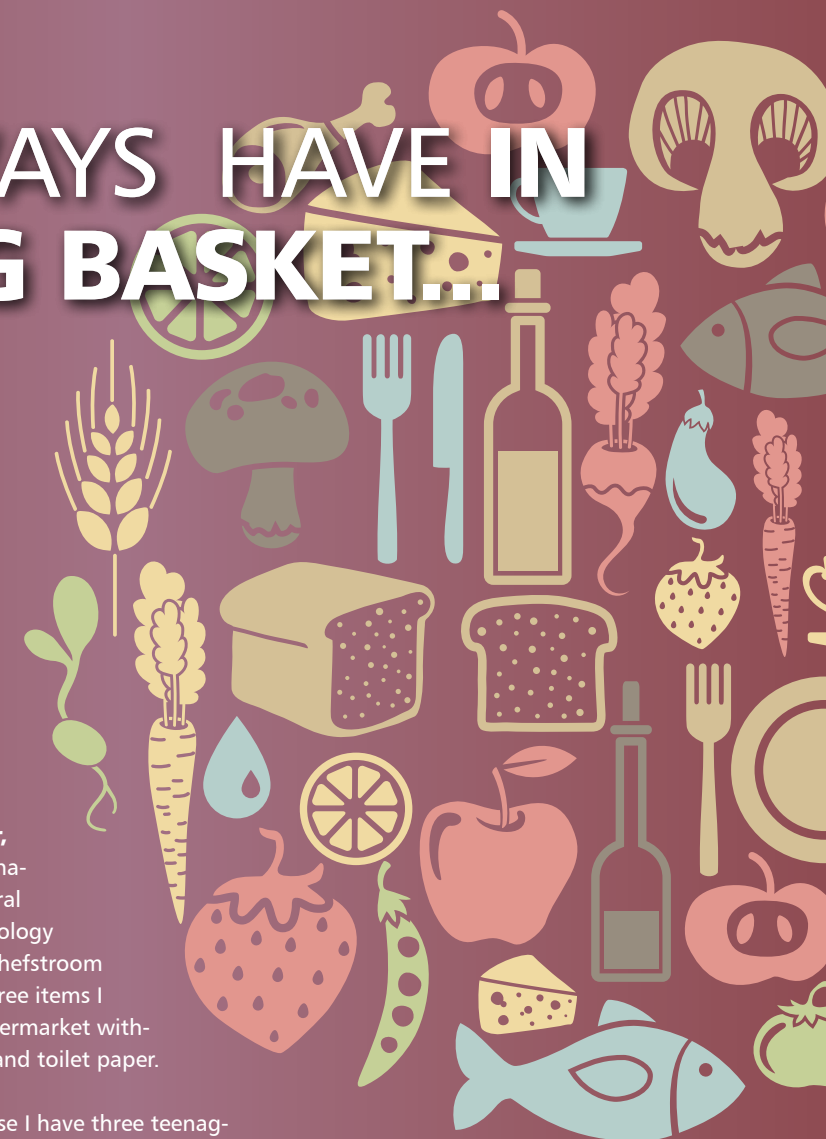
Ms Augusta Cloete, administrative manager, Faculty of Education Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus: "Because we are always very busy, I try to only do shopping once a week. On that occasion it is very important to me to make sure there is a very special treat, not necessarily chocolate, for every person in my family.

"It can be anything from ingredients for a special meal or something for the dog or our rabbit. It is always wonderful to see how everyone in my family appreciates this gesture."

Mr Re-an Müller, lecturer in marketing, Vaal Triangle Campus: "You will always find a bottle of nice red wine in my shopping basket. In the words of the French-born wine merchant Andre Simon, wine makes every meal an occasion, every table more elegant and every day more civilised."

Ms Kinga Siejek, editor of the student newspaper, Student 24/7, Vaal Triangle Campus: "I will always buy Steri Stumpie flavoured milk whenever I go to the shop.

"It reminds me of my childhood. It is fun to be a kid once in a while and that is why I never leave the shop without it."



MARIAAN



LIONEL



EVA



MAMOKETE



BEULA



AUGUSTA



RE-AN



KINGA

And the winners are...

Congratulations to the following colleagues who each won a corporate gift:



Potchefstroom Campus:
Ms Laetitia van Aswegen, analyst,
RIPP Laboratory



Mafikeng Campus:
Ms Nosipho Dladlu, lecturer,
Department of Computer
Science



Potchefstroom Campus:
Mr Riaan Cremer, supervisor,
Protection Services



Vaal Triangle Campus:
Ms Deliwe Msibi, intern, Marketing
and Communication Department

We would like to thank everyone who participated. If you were not so lucky this time, here is another opportunity to take part in our exciting competition:

Win! Win! Win!

You can win a corporate gift – just find the answers to the following 10 questions!



Identify the close-ups and provide the relevant page numbers:

6. Who is the newly appointed vice-rector for teaching-learning and quality assurance on the Mafikeng Campus?
7. Which person should managers notify when a person with a disability is appointed at the NWU?
8. Who are the two Potchefstroom Campus researchers who participated in the research to determine the impact of urbanisation on biodiversity?
9. What kind of system is being developed by Dr Charl van Heerden of Multilingual Speech Technologies (MuST) on the Vaal Triangle Campus?
10. Name one of the awards that the NWU sponsored at the National Press Club's event on 29 May 2014.

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO:

Post: Marelize Santana

Internal box 260

Email: marelize.santana@nwu.ac.za with Eish! in the subject field

Remember: Please supply your staff number, title, name, surname, job title, and the name of your division and campus.

The first correct entry per business unit that we receive, will win a prize!

NWU enhances interpreting

The Mafikeng Campus has recently welcomed six new interpreters and the NWU has also started with South African Sign Language interpreting on the Potchefstroom Campus.

The interpreters have been appointed to interpret two mathematics modules of foundation phase education into Setswana.

Ms Gomolemo Gabanakgosi, Ms Mmaserole Molefe, Ms Mmakhuduga Mosenogi, Ms Nomasonto Ratshikana, Ms Tshegofatso Thabeng and Ms Nozizwe Ximba have been doing group interpreting at the Mafikeng Campus for several weeks now.

"What makes the appointment of these six interpreters exceptional is that all of them are students who were recruited, selected and trained on campus," says Mr Johan Blaauw, manager of the Language Directorate in the Institutional Office. Last year the NWU also started with sign language interpreting. A Deaf



▲ A Deaf student, Mr Qobo Ningiza (left), is having his classes in BA Law interpreted for him in South African Sign Language. With him is SA Sign Language interpreter, Mr Pusuletso Kopa.

student, Mr Qobo Ningiza, is having his classes in BA Law interpreted for him in South African Sign Language. This is the first time that a sign language interpreter has been made available to a student at the NWU.

Qobo, a second-year student, initially enrolled at the Mafikeng Campus. However, this campus could not accommodate him and referred him to the Potchefstroom Campus, where funding for a sign language interpreter was promptly

obtained from Prof Herman van Schalkwyk, campus rector – with the help of the Language Directorate and Prof Rikus Fick, dean of students.

Mr Pusuletso Kopa is at present the only SA Sign Language interpreter in the service of the NWU. Ms Ananda van der Walt, a former employee of the Language Directorate, will rejoin the ranks of the Directorate as a sign language interpreter in the second semester of 2014.



Numerous vervet monkeys have been making the Potchefstroom Campus and the Institutional Office their home lately. Human activities offer them an easy food source and encourage them to encroach on the urban environment. Their relocation is currently being investigated.



24 years ago Nelson Mandela took the first steps to **freedom**.

20 years ago our country marked its first day of
freedom for all our people.

10 years ago our journey started as two different **universities**
united to deliver on the true needs of our country.

In these intertwined landmark journeys, we have always known that progress is only possible through **change**, and that **change has to start with us**.

We have been part of the success of the
evolving and growing South Africa ever since.

As we make our **journey into the future** we will continue to **embrace the transformation** that we as the NWU and our country face.

The truth is in the facts – what our staff, our students and our alumni have achieved and what our research is contributing to.

"It all starts here" – with us as individuals and as an institution.