

eish!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY[®]
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

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Staff newsletter for the NWU

Tell the world
about our research

Mandela Day activities
benefit communities

Prof Manie is synonymous
with *open distance
learning*

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Front page: Read on the back cover of Eish! about the interesting research that Prof Oziniel Ruzvidzo of the Mafikeng Campus is conducting.

PLEASE NOTE:

In order to decrease our carbon footprint, the Eish! will now be distributed electronically to all NWU staff members. Only those without access to computers will receive printed copies. You are welcome to contact our Eish! journalist, Willie du Plessis, should you have any news tips or enquiries. You can contact him at x99 4915 or willie.duplessis@nwu.ac.za.



A how-to web to-do

The Institutional Web Office recently hosted their first ever how-to web to-do, where industry experts shared some insights about the online world.

The aim of the event was to expose NWU publishers, graphic designers, journalists and other interested parties to the latest trends and thought patterns around social media (more specifically social business integration), blogging and creating quality web content.

Many members of senior management also took the time to attend.

This was particularly important, as managers are major decision makers when it comes to uploading new content on university web pages, and they were also made aware of some of the pitfalls associated with social media and blogging.

The influx of positive feedback afterwards was indicative of a very well received event.

The audience represented all three campuses and members of the Institutional Office, and although fields of interest were very varied, most people seemed to take something away from the day.

One of the speakers, Ms Dinesh Balliah, a new and social media lecturer at Wits University said a web presence is important to a university to:

- provide information and resources
- share research output
- engage with stakeholders
- increase the reputation of staff and students

She said social media should be used because:

- online content is about a conversation
- conversations can't happen on static web-sites
- social media make these conversations possible
- social media also "markets" your content for you

Editorial team: Staff from Institutional Advancement, and communication officers on the campuses. **Language editing:** Clairwyn van der Merwe. **Design and layout:** Graphikos. **Printing:** Ivyline Technologies. **Photography:** NWU colleagues and service providers. **Cartoon:** Mynderd Vosloo. **For further enquiries/correspondence:** Nelia Engelbrecht - Tel x99 4937 or Internal box 260. Eish! is produced and published in English, Setswana and Afrikaans by the Institutional Advancement department in the Institutional Office of the NWU.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Dear colleagues,



Ten years into the merger, it is time for us to reflect on the extent to which we have realised our vision since 2004, and – most importantly – to develop a new vision, mission and strategy for the next 10 years, 2015 to 2025.

To accomplish this, an expanded institutional management team (including the campus vice-rectors), have been doing the groundwork for the development of a strategic agenda for the NWU.

This team has been

making good progress during various “bos-beraad” sessions, which started in July and continued in August.

The compass we have been using during these sessions is the report of the international review panel (amongst other reviews and our own internal insight) that recently looked into our progress towards fulfilling the goals set in our mission over the last 10 years.

We considered the following strengths pointed out by the panel:

- Strong development of research capacity and outputs.
- Local and regional community engagement.
- Financial management and stability.

We also looked at the recommendations the panel made, namely:

- Issues of transformation, especially access and social integration.
- Structural issues about our business and management model to achieve an integrated institutional culture and identity.

- Employment equity in general and particularly in senior management.
- Ensuring that the research mission is in line with the context of regional and national needs.

However, we realise that the strategic process would not be complete without input from the significant stakeholders of the university. We are therefore committed to consulting with you as one of these important groups.

More information about the consultation process will follow shortly.

We, as the management team, invite you to join us on this exciting journey to find a new guiding light for the next decade. With your input and your continued enthusiasm, loyalty and support, we will be well on our way towards building an even brighter future.

Kind regards

Prof Dan Kgwadi
Vice-Chancellor

Eish, we have lots of stories!

The NWU has a treasure chest filled with research stories; but these stories should be thoroughly explored and presented in a reader-friendly way so as to achieve broader appeal.

In this edition of Eish! pages 4 and 5 describe how the NWU trains its researchers to successfully communicate their research stories to the media.

Big names in the world of media, amongst others Ms Ruda Landman, helped present the training on 19 and 20 August and explained how researchers should approach the media and communicate their research message so a wider audience will understand it.

Soon afterwards, in a web training session on 4 September, experts educated NWU staff members on everything related to online information.

Ms Emmerentia Nel, an expert in the field of online content development (especially in the academic sphere), explained how researchers could tell their research stories to the world by means of blogs. Read more about this training session in the article on page 2.

On page 19 and the back page of this edition of Eish! we briefly relate the stories of two research projects. One is about how research is addressing water issues in communities, while the other tells us what we can learn from the so-called “Cinderella” plant’s extraordinary abilities to adapt to extreme environmental challenges.

At the end of these two short articles you will find links to the full stories – in the NWU’s first research magazine, *Research Dynamics*.

This publication brims with interesting stories ranging from space research and climate

change to research on drugs that combat malaria and tuberculosis.

In the past 10 years the NWU has produced research of superior quality – let’s not hesitate to share it with the world by telling the stories that emanate from it.

Happy reading,

*Nelia and the
Eish! team*



Selling science and *research* to the *media*



Media expertise in action: Ms Yolandi Groenewald, Ms Ruda Landman and Ms Lizette Labuschagne give NWU researchers and scientists advice on how to engage with the media.

Scientists and researchers of the university learned the art of selling their research to the media during a skills workshop on 19 and 20 August at the Institutional Office. The aim of the workshop was to empower academics to get the message of their unique research and expertise across to a wider audience.

Every scientist and researcher will tell you that there is nothing more satisfying than when hard work pays off.

They will also tell you how excited they get when they make new discoveries or prove theories during the course of their work, but what good is unshared excitement and expertise? This is why it is so important for our hard-working academics to spread the word about their groundbreaking discoveries.

The skills workshop gathered the cream of the crop of the media industry to give scientists and researchers expert advice and guidance.

The workshop was presented by award-winning investigative journalist Ms Ruda Landman, researcher and lecturer Ms Marina Joubert, and journalist Ms Yolandi Groenewald.

The course material was written by Ms Jenni Metcalfe, a science and environmental communication consultant, and Mr Toss Gascoigne, president of the International Network for the Public Communication of Science and Technology. Two journalists, Ms Lizette Labuschagne of the SABC and Mr Dane Beisheim of OFM,

together with NWU spokesperson Mr Louis Jacobs, spoke to NWU scientists and researchers on a host of topics.

These included the media policy of the NWU, making friends with the media, science communication as a strategic tool in a research university and best practice media tips.

GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS

One of the biggest challenges for scientists and researchers is finding funding for their research. Involving the media does not only aid in getting people interested but also (hopefully) encourages them to give funding.

It also gives academics feedback on their ideas and stimulates public interest in research. This is why it is so important for researchers to make sure they get their point across during interviews with the media.

The key to selling research successfully is for scientists to answer three questions before engaging with the media:

- What problem or issue does the research tackle?
- What solution is the researcher seeking?

- Who will this research affect and how?

THE POWER OF MEDIA RELEASES

The NWU scientists learned that a media release is one of the most effective ways to tell the story of their research.

One of the advantages of media releases is that they ensure all the people with an interest in the story have agreed on how it should be told and who is to do the telling. It also allows scientists to reach a lot of media simultaneously with the same version of the story and helps journalists spell names and get the details correct.

THE STEPS IN COMPILING A MEDIA RELEASE ARE:

- Keep the aims of the release in mind when you compose your message.
- Find the angle by identifying the best way to interest the media.
- Write in the “inverted pyramid” style, where the most important information comes first.
- Include contact details of everyone who is quoted in the release.
- Distribute the media release either as an exclusive to a specific journalist or to every media outlet.

MEDIA DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER

As it is important to choose the right media for the right type of research, the workshop highlighted the unique characteristics of the different types of media.

For example, television is more visual and will need a lot of visual material, while the financial press focuses on the effect of researchers' work on industry and jobs and will need a lot of figures, tables and statistics.

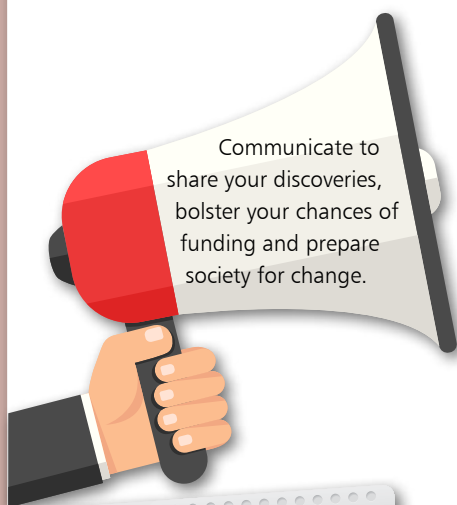
UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIA GIVES CONFIDENCE

NWU researchers did not only receive theoretical guidance but also had the opportunity to participate in mock television interviews with Ruda and radio interviews with Lizette and Dane. Mr Rudi van der Merwe from Community Engagement at the Institutional Office, who attended the workshop, says it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience to be able to sit face-to-face with the iconic Ruda Landman during a mock television interview.

"It is wonderful to know there are so many ways to get the message of research, community involvement and excellent work across. I believe every scientist and researcher should attend this annual workshop."

This is exactly what the university intends. By presenting the workshop each year, the NWU is giving its scientists and researchers the key to unlock many opportunities to promote the work that the NWU is proudest of.

Top tips for using the media



Communicate to share your discoveries, bolster your chances of funding and prepare society for change.

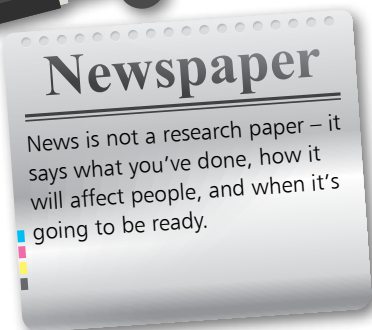


News is about the consequences of your story, not about the research – how does your work affect the man or woman in the street?



Journalists live for good stories – give them clear facts, good picture opportunities and plenty of time before deadlines, and they'll love you. Be deadline-conscious. When does the journalist need to have the story finished?

Fresh news is good news; old news is no news (unless you can dress it up).



News is not a research paper – it says what you've done, how it will affect people, and when it's going to be ready.



The media want to talk to the researcher, not an official spokesperson.



Don't lose your cool with the journalist.



Think of the reporter as an ally, not a threat.



Stick to the point – make your points briefly, quickly, clearly, then stop.



Use your media officer who is experienced in the media to help you rehearse and prepare.



When you have finished, be pleasant and friendly.



Be easily contactable.

Source: *Talking science with the media – get on the front foot* by Jenni Metcalfe and Toss Gascoigne.

NWU makes 67 minutes

The three campuses again showed their commitment to bettering the lives of communities by devoting 67 minutes of their time in honour of the late former President, Nelson Mandela, on 18 July. Here are some of the highlights.

PATIENTS AND CHILDREN RECEIVE THE NWU TREATMENT

Staff of the Mafikeng Campus divided into groups and devoted their 67 minutes to various special projects in the Mafikeng community.

Activities started at the crack of dawn when Prof Mashudu Davhana-Maselesele, rector of the Mafikeng Campus and also a qualified nurse, together with members of the Campus Student Representative Council, visited the Mafikeng Provincial Hospital. They assisted by cleaning wards, making beds and attending to patients.

Staff members of the admissions office supported their adopted school, Isibindi Day Care, by preparing breakfast and lunch for more than 300 orphans and residents of Magogoe Village.

Campus staff also distributed food parcels to the community and the campus's library staff members visited the Slurry Primary School

where they assisted with cleaning. Staff and students from the Foundation Phase in the Faculty of Education and Training washed and cleaned equipment, restored furniture and painted the Grade R classroom at the Madiba Primary School in the Rooigrond rural community.

The Faculty of Law held its own Mandela Day activities on 25 July with a special visit to the Tlale Primary School in Motlabeng Village.

CREATING SAFE, BEAUTIFUL SPACES IN POTCHEFSTROOM

On Mandela Day, the Potchefstroom Campus community demonstrated that the environment people live and work in really matters.

This they did by joining hands with other community members to clean up a street near the campus, and to create a beautiful park for the children of Ward 6 in Ikageng in Potchefstroom. Only a few blocks away from the campus, in Steve Biko Street, students and staff joined forces with the Potchefstroom/

Tlokwe Business Chamber and developers in a huge cleanup.

"The whole character of Steve Biko Street near the campus is changing as a result of blocks of flats that are shooting up like mushrooms," says Mr Jean-Marc Stidworthy from Marketing and Communication on the Potchefstroom Campus.

Jean-Marc says traffic has been disrupted by construction vehicles while the historic oak avenue in the city is being threatened by holes, bricks, building rubble and concrete blocks that are dumped or stacked against the trees.

This has prompted the various parties to take action to make the environment safer and cleaner – not just for the residents but also for students and staff.

Together with workers from three developers, Unilofts, Campus Key and Brickvest, they swept the street and pavements, picked up broken bricks and cleaned up around the oak trees.



Making a difference: Staff members of the Mafikeng Campus showed their dedication to bettering lives by taking part in various community projects on the birthday of the late Nelson Mandela.

Prof Robert Balfour, dean of Education Sciences on the Potchefstroom Campus, together with staff members Ms Dalene Ackerman, Dr Louise Postma and Ms Louisa Knight had fun on Mandela Day in Kereke Street, Ikageng by painting and creating a beautiful park for the children of Ward 6.

count on Mandela Day



Students, developers and members of the Potchefstroom/Tlokwe Business Chamber made a difference on Mandela Day. On the site are from left Mr Bertus le Roux, Potchefstroom Campus, the NWU-PUK mascot, Pukki, Mr Jean-Marc Stidworthy, Potchefstroom Campus, and Ms Delmarie van Zyl of the Potchefstroom/Tlokwe Business Chamber.

Further away from campus, staff members from the Faculty of Education Sciences created a beautiful park for the children of Ward 6 in Ikageng in Potchefstroom.

The project was led by Merna (Creative and Performing Arts subject group), and Ms Adri du Toit and her team of colleagues from the Technology for Education subject group cluster, a happy band of Faculty of Education Sciences colleagues and community members from Ward 6.

Prof Robert Balfour, dean of the faculty, says they hope to make the project an ongoing one.

"Staff from Parks and Recreation as well as Public Works helped us, along with mothers and grandmothers from Ward 6, to lend their labour to filling in the trenches, bolting the tyres, and painting them with colours and motifs."

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME WITH 67 PRODUCTS

The NWU's Vaal Triangle Campus believes charity begins at home.

Each department, academic and support department had to collect 67 items of a specific product that will be used to aid needy students as part of the campus's Meal-a-Day project. The campus's first full-time social worker, Ms Maggie Matsaneng, launched the Charity Begins at Home project on Mandela Day.

"The project will see the development of a sustainable food and clothing bank for the purposes of assisting students in need. Each department chose an item such as tinned food, sugar, tea, blankets, clothes and toiletries and collected 67 units of each," says Maggie.

In another project, Ms Tumi Mzini, lecturer in public management and administration and one of her PhD students, Ms Sonti Mokone, were part of a team who cleaned and painted the Asedi Community Centre in Bophelong-Muvhango.

Staff members from the Vaal Triangle Campus stock up the food bank. They are from left Mr Lucas Serei, Ms Keleabetswe Narenti, Ms Deliwe Msibi and Ms Maggie Motshaneng. Lucas and Maggie are from Student Counselling and Development, while Keleabetswe and Deliwe are from Marketing and Communication.



Ms Zaheera Abdullah from the Vaal Triangle Campus's Student Counselling and Development department prepares food parcels.

Focus



Offenders will be prosecuted

There has been a shocking increase in the number of cases investigated this year by the internal audit team. According to Ms Madelein van der Merwe, director of Internal Audit at the Institutional Office, their focus is on preventing fraud.

Q: *How great an increase has there been in the number of cases under investigation?*

A: There are significantly more cases – many more than we have had to simultaneously investigate in the past.

Q: *What infringements are being encountered?*

A: Among others we are encountering changes to electronic invoices, misrepresentations, creation of invoices for claims, double payments and fraud relating to cash advances and petty cash transactions.

Q: *Why has there been such an increase?*

A: Our systems have recently been upgraded and improved. It is now better than ever and makes it much easier for us to quickly and effectively identify irregularities.

Colleagues are also reporting suspicious activities because they are much more alert to incidents that seem questionable.

Q: *How do you identify irregularities?*

A: The Finance Department promptly forwards any payments they suspect might be irregular, and continuous audit monitoring tests quickly

Internal audit has been investigating an increasing number of fraudulent and irregular activities. The Audit Committee has expressed concern and urged the internal audit team to encourage personnel to prevent and report any irregularities as soon as possible. This campaign carries a firm message: Dishonest employees will be caught!

identify tendencies. Colleagues also provide us with information (they may remain anonymous).

Q: *Where does fraud most commonly take place?*

A: There are particular risk areas. Internal Audit regularly runs tests to identify duplicate transactions. Electronic invoices that are altered and submitted for payment are another big risk.

Personnel who authorise transactions should ensure that the banking details on the invoice are accurately filled out on the cheque payment requisition. Payment verifications are easily changed and private expenses presented for payment from petty cash.

Q: *What causes fraud in the workplace?*

A: People don't have the same ethical values. Many consider the space between right and wrong a grey area. People try to rationalise unethical behaviour.

They convince themselves that the controls and policies are too stringent and that it places an unnecessarily heavy administrative burden on personnel. This breeds a poor control

environment, which creates a climate that makes it easy for fraudsters to process invalid transactions or claims.

Q: *What can be done to curb fraud and misconduct?*

A: Managers and supervisors have to be rigorous in following up transactions and documentation. If you have signed for purchases or services, verify that the purchases have indeed been made and the services rendered.

It would be very easy for a duplicate claim to be made through different payment systems (petty cash, advances, ad hoc payments and ad hoc claims for Human Capital).

Q: *Must all cases of theft and fraud be handed over to the South African Police Service (SAPS), and are the guilty parties then criminally charged?*

A: All cases exceeding a certain amount must be handed over to the SAPS for criminal prosecution. We have no choice. We have to be consistent in dealing with all cases. Resigning before you are charged is no longer an option, as the case becomes a police matter nonetheless.

Q: *What are some of the heaviest penalties recently imposed on NWU employees?*

A: Imprisonment and suspended sentences, but these are all subject to the court's decision.

If disciplinary charges are brought against you it is noted in your personnel file, and it could be raised when you apply for another job elsewhere.

Remember, fraud can never be justified. Whatever the reason, it should never be an option.

Workshop focuses on fraud

The NWU's internal audit team arranged a workshop on fraud.

The workshop was presented to managers and employees on the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle campuses in October. The 2013 workshop was attended by close to 100

members of staff, which is why the workshops were presented separately this year.

The workshop focused on the profiles of fraudsters and other offenders, reporting possible irregularities and fraud, probable consequences and prevention.

Ready, steady... *Kuali!*

The Kuali Financial System has now reached the implementation phase. If you are a user of the system, you can tick the boxes in the list below. This will help you to check that you meet the deadlines for all necessary arrangements for the switch-over.

WHAT TO DO	WHEN TO DO IT (DATE TO BE COMPLETED)	REMEMBER...	
Stock from store	28 November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff must order stock on or before 28 November as physical stocktaking still has to be done. No inventory will be issued after 28 November. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Orders (external)	30 November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General orders must be issued and all invoices sent for payment as soon as possible. With special permission, some orders may be issued until 15 December 2014. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Creditors' invoices	8 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These must be submitted by 8 December for payment on 12 December 2014. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ad hoc and petty cash claims	10 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These must be submitted by 10 December for payment on 12 December. Really critical payments after 12 December will be made by cheque. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Asset purchases	12 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These should be submitted by 12 December. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ad hoc and petty cash payments	12 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the last payment for December 2014. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creditors' payments	12 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the last payment for December 2014. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods receipts	15 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These must be done as soon as possible and all invoices must be sent for payment. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interdepartmental requisitions	15 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These must be completed as far as possible. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outstanding advances	15 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All advances must be submitted as far as possible. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sundry debtors	15 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All invoices and credit notes must be processed by 16:30. The necessary reconciliations will be done on 17 and 18 December. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Journal entries	17 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These should be submitted so that they can be processed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outstanding commitments	18 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These must now be followed up and closed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oracle month-end runs	18 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Finance will do the monthly runs and updates. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oracle month-end finalising	19 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final control and processing will be completed by IO Finance. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oracle FIN closes 16:30	19 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system will be closed for backup. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oracle FIN available again	4 January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will be necessary to do the final entries for 2014. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Webpage aids Kuali training

Launched on 1 September, the Kuali webpage aids in training and provides information about the Kuali Financial System switch-over.

According to Ms Chandré Botha, manager of IT training and empowerment (Institutional

Office), the webpage, www.nwu.ac.za/kfs, provides users with a single KFS training platform. Training videos and manuals help contacts and frequently answered questions provide users with a self-help environment in order to ease the transition from Oracle to KFS.

"The webpage was designed to give users easy access," Chandré says.

"They can use it at any convenient time and can revise important information by watching the videos again and again if need be."

Success is the reward for hard work

Eish! chats to Prof Manie Spamer, executive director of the Unit for Open Distance Learning on the Potchefstroom Campus. This dynamic director talks about the privilege of establishing and developing distance learning at the NWU, and having the opportunity to see it grow and perform.

Prof Manie Spamer is passionate about open distance learning. He says that the use of technology is essential. "In future, certain programmes will be completely online. Others, especially in rural areas without internet access, would require alternative technology."

Prof Manie is a man with vision, and he is using this quality to take open distance learning farther than it has been before at the NWU.

As executive director of the Unit for Open Distance Learning (UODL) he is responsible for more than 30 000 distance students in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and one or two other countries.

SUCCESSFUL UNDERTAKINGS

"I believe that you should make a success of whatever task you undertake," says Manie, adding that nothing in life will happen if you do not make it happen. This is why he seizes every career opportunity that comes his way, as is evident from his impressive CV.

Some of the high points of his career were his appointment as vice-rector of the former Potchefstroom College of Education and as the first executive director of the UODL. And he has tasted the fruits of his labour. He has received a research award from the South African Academy for Science and Art, another award from the National Research Foundation for his research on talent identification at the University

of Exeter, and an Africa Award for Academic Leadership.

HE PROMOTES THE UODL

At present, the UODL runs 10 programmes. These include five programmes in the Faculty of Education Sciences, four in Health Sciences and one in Theology. "Next year two more faculties will be joining us – Economic and Management Sciences, and Arts," he says.

"Teaching-learning primarily entails lecturers broadcasting classes – via interactive whiteboards – to 55 study centres in South Africa and other countries. Study centres have between one and four venues – depending on which programmes are presented – that are equipped with white boards for contact classes.

"All lectures are broadcast from modern, well-equipped studios and are stored on the internet. If a student has missed a class or wants to take another look at a lecture, he or she can access it."

Each centre has a full-time centre manager, two IT specialists and a resources and computer centre co-ordinator. "At present, the UODL consists of 71 full-time and 300 part-time staff members. Supported by very competent and loyal managers, my task is to see that the process is properly run."

WORK IS SATISFYING

According to Manie, the NWU is the first traditional contact university to offer distance programmes on a large scale. The NWU is also the second largest university in South Africa if distance numbers are included.

"Open distance learning (ODL) helps to address the needs of the country. This method of delivery provides access to previously disadvantaged groups who would not have been able to further their studies otherwise. New programmes will offer even more access."

ODL changes lives by creating opportunities for study and support, and without it many people would be left out in the cold. In the past 10 years, over 50 000 degrees and diplomas have been awarded to distance learning students.

SUCCESS ON THE SPORTS FIELDS

Besides his academic credentials, Manie was a celebrated rugby coach who has trained the Springbok A team and hundreds of other rugby players. He coached big names such as Kobus Wiese, Deon Oosthuizen and Schutte Bekker.

"It is wonderful when I run into these players today and they thank me for the value I added to their careers," says Manie, who received an award for coach of the year in his training days.

TALENTS AND SUCCESS ARE BLESSINGS

"My life has been blessed with many talents and successes. Of course there have been disappointments as well, but a balance sheet of my life would definitely show more assets than liabilities," reflects Manie.

It is with this positive attitude that he hopes for enough good health to allow him to expand ODL at the NWU with more quality programmes and successes.



Prof Manie Spamer received the Africa award for Academic Leadership. His first manager, Prof Gert Strydom, motivated him to complete a PhD at age 28.

Interesting facts about Prof Manie

My favourite book: I read autobiographies and books about successful individuals.

Favourite movie: It is difficult to choose only one. Films about World War II, like *Schindler's List*, interest me.

Favourite food: Braaivleis without a doubt, served with traditional side dishes.

Favourite holiday destination: My farm and holiday home in Stilbaai. I enjoy spending time with my children, Elisma and Emile, and my three grandchildren on the farm.

Favourite music: Music played in the early seventies, when I was in matric. I am also a great supporter of Afrikaans music.

My hobbies: Gardening over weekends, managing game on my farm, and watching sport on TV.

The kind of child I was: My mother, who is now 102 years of age, would tell you that I didn't learn anything while at school; I scraped through from standard to standard. Life on the farm fascinated me, and – to my father's dismay – I liked making new things, even if the consequences were sometimes catastrophic.

Scouts invade the campus

More than 80 scout troops and crew from the United Kingdom, Swaziland and North West Province recently invaded the campus for the annual South African Scouts Expedition (SASE).

The campus hosted the event during which the NWU Rover Crew was also launched. The aim of SASE is to promote scouting and teach life skills to help the youth in the North West Province develop their moral compass as upcoming citizens in their communities and to educate them on the importance of respecting one's surroundings and the environment. During the eight-day expedition, the visiting scouts and the NWU Rover Crew focused on community

upliftment and visited communities such as the province's Magogoe Village community.

The Rover crew, led by Mr Tiro Matshane, used the opportunity to share their knowledge on indigenous games with their international friends and visited the historical monuments erected around Mafikeng.

During their visit, the scouts met the campus rector as well as the Paramount Chief of the Barolong Ratshidi nation, Kgosi Jeffrey Montshioa. The Kgosi told them about the important role played by the scouts during the Anglo-Boer War with the British victory in the famous Siege of Mafikeng.

Outreach project benefits informal day care

A community outreach project initiated by the Faculty of Education and Training is set to benefit informal day care centres in and around Mafikeng.

Dr Myrtle Erasmus, the project leader, initiated the project with the assistance of Prof Dawid Gericke, the dean of the faculty, after she realised that young children who attend the informal day care centres are not exposed to appropriate learning programmes.

Since most of the care givers are not qualified, the children do not receive proper stimulation in areas such as movement development, perceptual skills and broad language exposure. They are therefore

not school ready when they enter grade one, which eventually affects their overall development and performance later in their school career.

The objective of the project is to train the care givers, to guide them in managing the centres and to introduce them to the typical day programme which is supposed to be followed at day care centres.

Currently the project only has the capacity to work with 10 schools, but according to Myrtle, the need is much greater. Care givers from approximately 40 schools or centres attend the training sessions presented by herself and Dr Elsabe Wessels, both lecturers in foundation phase education.



Mamo T Hos Day and Baby Care Centre is one of the informal day care centres that currently benefit from Dr Myrtle Erasmus' outreach project.

Analyser to measure performance

The campus has acquired a state-of-the-art VO2 max analyser that will assist in examining athletes' aerobic exercise capacity to help them prepare for competitions.

The analyser, imported from Italy, was funded by the Institutional Research Support Office and will be used by the Sport Science department in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences under the supervision of Mr Pieter Boer, head of the department.

The research will mainly focus on the players at the Soccer Institute and outreach programmes in and around rural villages of the district.

VO2 max is the maximum rate of oxygen consumption during maximal exercise, normally performed on a treadmill, and reflects the cardiovascular endurance of a person. By measuring the soccer players' endurance capacity (amongst others), it will give an indication of how they will perform during competitions.

"This is the first time our soccer players will have unlimited access to scientific exercise testing. Now they can be trained and monitored in the same way as many other high performance institutes across South Africa. We feel privileged to receive this equipment," says Pieter.



The VO2 max analyser will give soccer players an indication of their aerobic fitness capacity. From left are Mr Tom Heer of TDH Medical, Mr Pieter Boer and Prof Petrus Botha, dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences.

Languages and Lions join hands for literacy

The School of Languages, together with the Lions Club in Potchefstroom, has collected piles of books so that less fortunate children can have the opportunity to broaden their horizons.

They understand that the love of reading must be instilled from early childhood and that books are the key to a brighter future. The books donated by staff were given to the Abraham Kriel Children and Youth Centre, where they will be used to grow a reading culture amongst the children.

This initiative was sparked by members of the school who are also part of the local Lions Club. Literacy lies close to the hearts of both Lions International and the School of Languages.



Ms Gerda Wittmann from the School of Languages hands over the donated books to Ms Florah Votyeka from the Abraham Kriel Children and Youth Centre.

"Our staff are not people who only spend time doing research and teaching, but they also open their hearts to the community. Therefore, the school did not hesitate to become part of this book donation project," says Prof Wannie Carstens, director of the school.

Words will inspire you

A project to promote the written gems of various languages will soon see the light of day on campus. Poems by local and international poets will be put up on walls, pavements and pedestals all over campus.

Prof Wannie Carstens, director of the School of Languages, says this project has been in development since 2012.

The Frans du Toit building already boasts a few poems. Staff members of the School of Languages will soon identify some places on campus where the next poems will be displayed. According to Wannie, Lovers' Lane is first priority for a series of poems from local wordsmiths such as Prof TT Cloete, Prof Heilna du Plooy, Prof Hans du Plessis, Prof Etienne Terblanche, Prof Hein Viljoen, Prof Jan Swanepoel and Prof Bernard Odendaal, to mention but a few.

Poems in Afrikaans, English and Setswana will receive preference, but staff members and students are invited to make suggestions for poems in any language. Heilna says it is her dream to publish a book of poems representative of the poems on campus. "This must serve as a road map across the campus and it will also include interesting facts on the poets and poems."

Ultimately, this project must not only be limited to the campus. According to Wannie, it would be ideal if the project expands to the rest of Potchefstroom, in cooperation with the city council, business chamber and businesses in the city.

Too little and too much salt is harmful

Results from the largest study of its kind ever conducted indicate that the current recommended maximum sodium intake for the population by 2020 is actually too low and may even be unsafe.

However, high sodium is also harmful, so an "optimal" range is the best target.

Two reports from a recently published global collaborative study are shaking up conventional wisdom around salt consumption. Various researchers, including experts from the campus, were involved.

The Prospective Urban Rural study followed more than 100 000 people in 18 countries for nearly four years. The study assessed sodium and potassium intake and related them to blood pressure, deaths, heart disease and strokes. "While there has been much focus on

reducing salt in the diet, an important and ignored approach to lowering blood pressure is increasing the amount of potassium consumed. A balanced approach is what is likely to have the greatest benefit in lowering blood pressure," says Dr Andrew Mente, the lead author of the first report.

"Low sodium intake does reduce blood pressure modestly, but low sodium intake also has other effects, including adverse elevations of certain hormones that are associated with an increase in risk of death and cardiovascular diseases," says Dr Martin O'Donnell, lead author of the second report.

For more information on this topic, contact Prof Annamarie Kruger, director of the Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUFHeR) and leader of the South African leg of the PURE study.



One of Prof TT Cloete's poems is already being displayed in the Frans du Toit building.

Academic becomes life member of top body

Prof Marius Stander, researcher and lecturer in Industrial Psychology, has been selected as an honorary member of the Society of Industrial and Organisational Psychology of South Africa (SIOPSA).

Marius was nominated by the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology of Unisa. He is a professor and management consultant, specialising in the assessment and optimisation of talented people and teams.

The signatories of Marius's nomination believe that he more than meets the criteria specified in the SIOPSA constitution for nomination as an honorary member.

According to the body's constitution, the executive committee may invite persons to become honorary life members if they have distinguished themselves in the sphere of industrial or organisational psychology as a science or profession.

SIOPSA strives to create conditions in which industrial and organisational psychologists will be able to deliver efficient and effective services to the benefit of all in South Africa.



Prof Marius Stander is now an honorary life member of SIOPSA.



Mr Wikus Botha says that the Cricket Centre of Excellence aims to create a platform from which local talent can be honed and developed into future cricketing greats.

Exciting cricket era awaits

The campus is blazing a trail of excellence in sport and the diamond in the crown of the Sport Department is the newly established Cricket Centre of Excellence.

The centre combines state-of-the-art technology such as video analysis with the latest coaching methods to ensure a scientific basis from which young players and coaches can be mentored and developed.

The centre can accommodate 32 male and 32 female players between the ages of 13 and 19.

Heading up the Centre of Excellence is former Northwest Dragons player, Mr Wikus Botha.

Wikus says the campus is working towards becoming part of the Premier League within the next three years. Several tours abroad are also on the cards and the campus will continue to take part in the prestigious annual USSA tournament.

In an exciting turn of events the Gauteng Cricket Board recently announced the launch of a Promotional League for the eight most promising teams who are not currently taking part in the Premier League.

The winner of this league will automatically be promoted to the Premier League. "This is a great opportunity and can boost the campus's developmental cycle immensely," says Wikus.

Six nations explore inclusive education

An international research study on inclusive education is positively influencing teacher training and practice in South Africa.

The study, "A comparative analysis of teachers' roles in inclusive education", is being undertaken by researchers from South Africa, Finland, China, England, Lithuania and Slovenia. The campus's Prof Mirna Nel, Dr Thabo Makhramele and Ms Isabel Payne-van Staden are part of the South African research team.

The main purpose of the study is to provide insight on how the development of inclusive education is perceived by teachers from different countries.

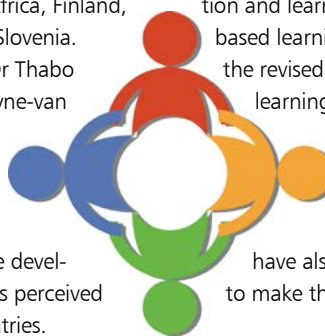
Inclusive education is the process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to and within the learning environ-

ment, especially for learners with disabilities. The results of this research study have already been used to influence the restructuring of the NWU's teaching-training curricula.

In the modules that focus on inclusive education and learning support, more evidence-based learning material was added and for the revised 2016 BEd degree, curriculum learning support will be introduced as a major elective subject.

Some schools that were part of the study's field work sample have also requested training and support to make their teaching more inclusive.

A community project in Sharpeville is also underway, where Mirna and Thabo are training teachers to identify and support learners who experience barriers to learning.



NWU *experts* know their stuff

// We were intrigued to learn that our ancestral clans also participated in the Anglo-Boer War (in reaction to Prof Bernard Mbenga's presentation on the role of the Bakgatla Ba Kgafela tribe in the Anglo-Boer War). Africa needs African scholars who can promote, embrace and write about their cultures, traditions, roots and history. A nation without history is lost. //

Prof Mashudu Davhana-Maselesele, Campus Rector, Mafikeng Campus.

"African scholars urged to write about their history", The New Age, 19 August 2014.



“ The three ‘E’s’ – enforcement, engineering and education – separately won’t be effective in ensuring safer roads. All three aspects in synergy are necessary to make people change their behaviour and get the desired outcome. People’s behaviour and socio-economic issues also have a large impact on where in the hierarchy of needs something like road safety education fits in. They are unlikely to prioritise the need to ensure their child gets to school safely, over the need for basic fundamentals like food and housing. ”

Prof Gerda van Dijk, School of Social and Government Studies, Potchefstroom Campus.

"Good roads need safety campaigns that change public's behaviour", Mail & Guardian weekly supplement, 1 August 2014.

“ Although dieticians and nutritionists agree with Prof Noakes on certain matters (for instance that refined carbohydrates must be cut out from your diet), there are some dangerous assumptions that – in the long run – could lead to deficiencies and life style diseases. A meta-analysis published in 2014 indicates that a low carbohydrate and balanced diet have similar weight-loss results. Weight loss is only possible if you consume less energy than what you need. ”



Prof Edelweiss Wentzel-Viljoen, School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus.

"Is die Tim Noakes dieet reg vir jou?/Just another fad?", Rooi Rose/You, 1 April 2014.

“ In the long term nuclear power will almost be cheaper by half than coal power. If you borrow the money (to build a nuclear reactor) at a 3% rule (9% interest minus 6% inflation), it will cost R0,40/kWh to generate (without taking into account the distribution costs). On the other hand coal power will – taking into account damages such as earth warming and pollution – cost R0,73/kWh. ”

Dr Dawid Serfontein, School of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering, Potchefstroom Campus

Kernkragprogram, Robinson Regstreeks – kykNET, 3 October 2014.



// Generation Y students have very positive attitudes towards social media and, according to our research, Facebook remains the biggest. Being relatively heavy Facebook users suggests that Facebook-based brand communities would be a viable method of targeting this segment. However, our research also emphasises the importance of informativeness, entertainment, consumer benefits and credibility to Generation Y. //

Prof Ayesha Bevan-Dye, School of Economic Sciences, Vaal Triangle Campus.

"Generation Y surprise marketers", marketingupdate.co.za, 6 August 2014.





Do, re, me, fa...

Zaan sings near and far!

People of the NWU are making their voices heard in various fields. As part of our series on interesting people at the NWU, we visit a staff member with a penchant for choral singing and whose voice has taken him to stages across the world.

Mr Zaan Strydom, manager for employment equity at the Institutional Office, fell in love with choral singing as a little boy in Grade two.

He began singing alto and soprano in primary school and, once his voice changed in high school, he became a low bass. These days he is a member of the NWU PUK choir, with which he has performed in countries like Germany, France, the Netherlands, Russia, and – in April this year – in Latvia.

He explains that the way choral music affects people is particularly profound in international cathedrals and on foreign stages. "It is a life-changing experience when audiences from Prague to St Petersburg and aloof Germany become emotionally involved with the music, and even the sternest of listeners are lifted out of their seats. That has been the climax of every performance with the NWU PUK choir."

HE HAS BEEN SINGING FOR YEARS

As Zaan grew older, his love of singing found expression in various forms: primary and high school choirs, the Alabama Student Company, the Potchefstroom Men's Choir, and Mölen Kórus (a local choir consisting mainly of former members of the NWU PUK choir).

In 2003 Prof Awie van Wyk, former choirmaster of the NWU PUK choir, convinced Zaan to audition for a place in the choir. He was successful and the rest is history.

He sang for the last time under Awie in 2011, and since then under the baton of the young and talented Kobus Venter. In between he has managed to participate in 12 single and Binglesêr events.

SINGING CLOSER TO GOD

"If choral music doesn't touch your heart, you definitely have a hard heart," is Zaan's opinion.

"The NWU PUK choir gives me the opportunity to sing 'heart' songs with others, profound songs and works like the Psalms, Griekwa-Psalms and sets from the Bible."

He explains that song suffuses every fibre of one's being. "As the saying goes, well sung is twice prayed. This is a fundamental truth. In Prague in 2011 one of the judges in a competition told Awie: 'Today I heard God.' This happened to be the same judge who, in Spittal, uttered the exact same phrase to the NWU PUK choir of 1993 – more evidence that music has no boundaries."

EXCELLING IN LATVIA

Zaan found it wonderful to have been part of the NWU PUK choir when they won two gold medals during the World Choir Games in Riga this year.

The choir won gold medals in two categories, Musica Sacra (religious music) and Musica Contemporanea (contemporary music). A total of 480 international choirs with 27 000 singers participated in the various categories.

HE WANTS TO SING FOR A LONG TIME TO COME

"I am getting old," jokes Zaan. "Every year I think it may be time to stop, but I always change my mind once the auditions start."

His enthusiasm for choral singing is inspired by the life lessons

contained in the music and the camaraderie with fellow choir members.

He says that a choir is like a family. "There are different personalities, just like the different voice ranges. Like a family where each member has a role to play, so the voices unite and contribute to the final product."

Zaan's life experience in the choir and his passion for song serves as inspiration for other choir members to touch people with their music. "The longer I sing, the longer I want to keep singing," he says.

Judging by their responses, audiences near and far share those sentiments. Keep singing, Zaan!

Zaan Strydom says that choir members form close ties and lasting friendships.



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

MY *favourite* CHILDHOOD MEMORY IS...



What is their favourite childhood memory and why is it so special? Some staff members shared their precious memories with Eish!

The lucky winner of a shopping voucher to the value of R250 will be announced in the next issue of Eish!

Ms Annelize Cronje, teaching advisor, Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus: "My favourite memory is having picnics with my whole family on the banks of the Wilge River in my hometown of Harrismith.

"I remember the homemade ginger beer my granny made for us and the delicious egg sandwiches and meatballs my mom made. My father and brother used to fish in the river, while I would listen to my granny telling us wonderful stories of when she grew up.

"The rest of the family would also share their school and work experiences with each other. I think these days we neglect to make time for precious quality family time together."

Mr Leepile Sehularo, lecturer, Nursing Sciences, Mafikeng Campus: "My favourite childhood memory has a lot to do with good food. I remember as a child that I always wanted to eat the contents of my lunch box early in the morning even before school started. I couldn't wait to see and enjoy the nice food inside the lunch box."

Ms Beula de Beer, PGCE co-ordinator, School of Natural Sciences and Technology for Education, Potchefstroom Campus: "I remember a specific day during a school holiday when my father was sleeping in the morning after working a night shift.

"My sister and I shared a room and were making a lot of noise by giggling and laugh-

ing. The next moment my father came in the room and gave both of us a hiding. It was the first and only time we ever got a hiding from him. "I learned a valuable lesson that day; one should always think about other people first and think how your actions impact on them. It is something I teach my children today (without a hiding of course)."

Ms Michelle Davel, maintenance officer, Residence and Catering Services, Potchefstroom Campus, "I fondly remember my grandmother's visits during my childhood. She used to sleep in my bed and I slept on a mattress on the floor whenever she visited.

"My father made her a nice cup of Rooibos tea every morning and she would always leave a bit for me. I used to help her bake cookies and regularly snatched some dough while baking. I really miss my granny."

Mr George Fazakas, Trevor James Artist South Africa, School of Music, Potchefstroom Campus: "I have been making music since I was five. There are so many beautiful musical memories that stand out in my mind. I remember attending PACT's production of Benjamin Britten's opera, *Peter Grimes*, in 1969. It was a wonderful experience to hear the incredible talent of the late South African tenor, Gert Potgieter, as he gave an incredible performance in the opera."

Ms Debra Legotlo, receptionist, NWU PUK Sports Village, Potchefstroom Campus: "I was

born in 1986. My mother and her two sisters were all pregnant in the same year. A few years later all us children stayed with our grandmother. While we were busy playing we noticed one of her plants. Just as children sometimes do, we all ate pieces of the plant. Until this day we have not heard the last of it. It is still a big joke in our family."

Ms Martha Mahlangu, Reading lab coordinator, Academic Development Support, Vaal Triangle Campus: "When I was about five or six years old, my uncle took me on my first train ride from Pretoria to Soweto.

"I was very hungry when we arrived at the Johannesburg station. My uncle kindly bought me a packet of chips and cream soda. Every time I drink cream soda it takes me back to that specific day. It feels almost like it happened yesterday. Cream soda is still my favourite soft drink."

Ms Thuli Msimanga, lecturer, School of Behavioural Sciences, Vaal Triangle Campus: "My favourite childhood memory is playing with my friends.

"There was nothing better than having good friends. We had so much fun together and enjoyed life to the fullest. The worst thing for me as a child would have been if someone would have taken my friends away. I would have been so miserable. My family was also great but they were not as much fun as my friends."



ANNELIZE



LEEPILE



BEULA



MICHELLE



GEORGE



DEBRA



MARTHA



THULI

And the winners are...

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



Potchefstroom Campus:

Ms Alta Victor, administrative clerk,
Postal Services (Logistics)



Potchefstroom Campus:

Mr George Ramatsebe, protection
officer, Protection Services



Potchefstroom Campus:

Ms Angelique Möller, administrative
officer, Faculty of Engineering



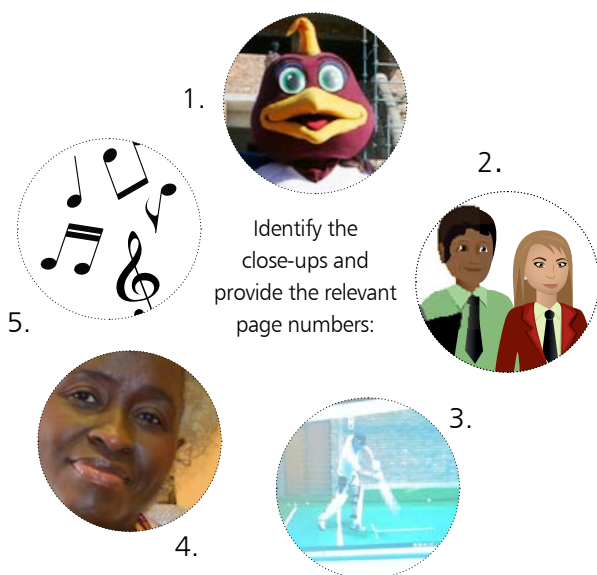
Potchefstroom Campus:

Ms Monique van Deventer, administrative
officer, Unit for Business
Mathematics and Informatics

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!



1. Identify the close-ups and provide the relevant page numbers:
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
6. Name one of the famous sport stars coached by Prof Manie Spamer.
7. Who initiated the community outreach project that will benefit informal day care centres in and around Mafikeng?
8. What is the name of the research team led by Prof Johann Tempelhoff, studying water-related matters?
9. What is the focus of the internal audit team, according to Ms Madelein van der Merve, director of Internal Audit?
10. What is the scientific name of the “Cinderella” plant that Prof Oziniel Ruzvidzo is studying?

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!

Researchers pour oil on **troubled waters**

In small towns around South Africa, discontent over water is simmering sullenly.

Pouring oil on troubled waters is none too easy yet it can be done given the right mindset and skills, says Prof Johann Tempelhoff of the research niche for the Cultural Dynamics of Water (CuDyWat) at the Vaal Triangle Campus.

Situated on the banks of the Vaal River, the CuDyWat team is ideally positioned to perform water research that probes the role of water in the lives of individuals and communities.

UNDERLYING CAUSE OF DELIVERY COMPLAINTS

The team estimates that 60% of complaints voiced by communities that embark on service delivery protests revolve around water-related issues. "Water is never given as the primary cause of conflict; it is always a secondary and

underlying cause – a static type of problem. Then, when the water situation worsens slightly, it triggers confrontation with the authorities."

STAY INDEPENDENT AND NEUTRAL

Outsiders taking sides is unhelpful, says Johann. "When we go into a town to investigate its water problems, we are strictly independent and neutral." Working with hydrologists, engineers and other natural scientists when necessary, the team's starting point is usually to contact the town's local environmental health unit and familiarise itself with the town's water supply and demographics.

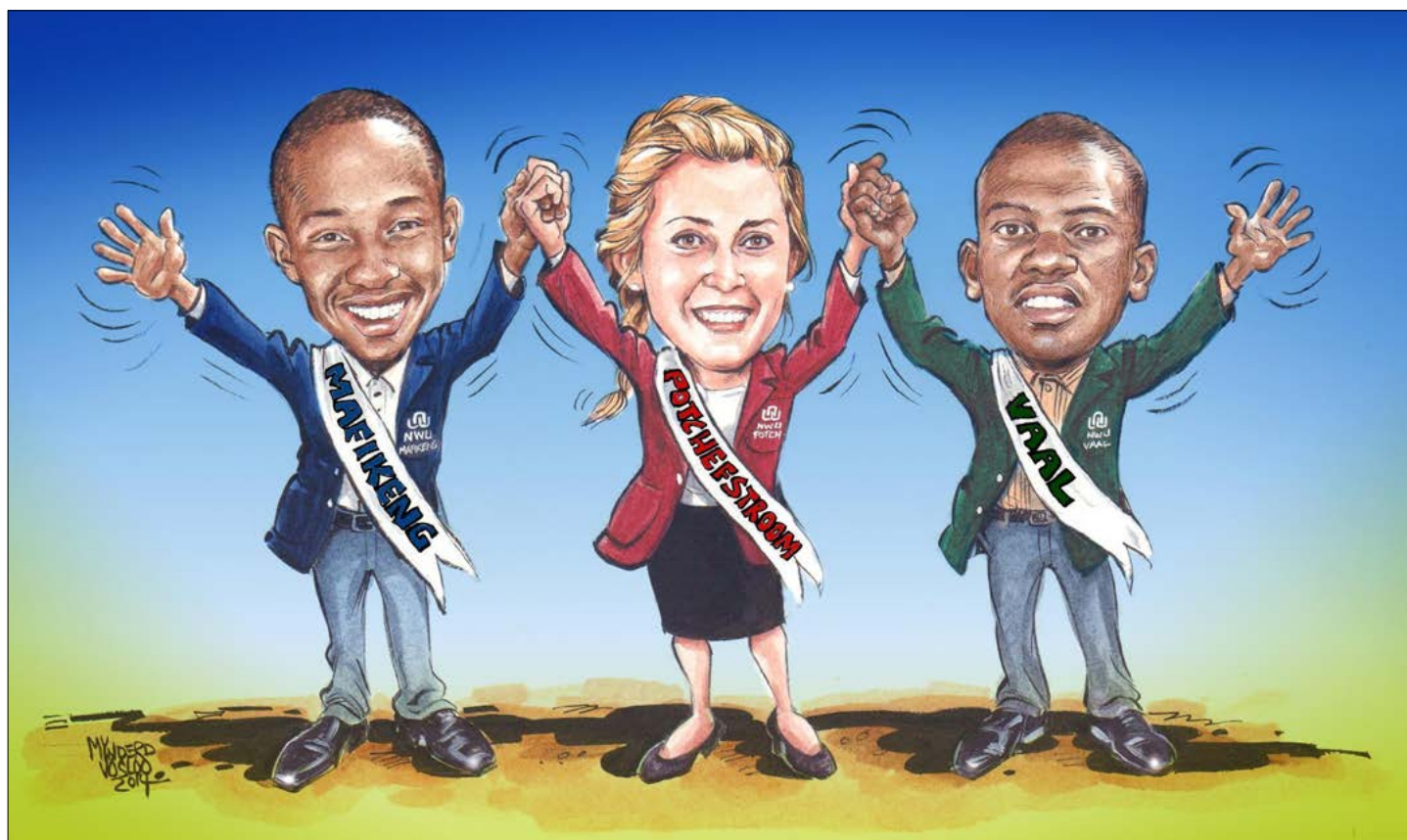
Next, team members will visit the town to speak with residents in shops and businesses and meet representatives of the ratepayers association and other community groups.



In Prof Johann Tempelhoff's experience, a lack of communication is the most common cause of water-related conflict in small towns.

This informal interaction is usually followed by group discussion sessions representing all interested parties, including municipal officials, residents associations, business groupings and the police.

The full article is available here:



Our new student leaders for 2014/2015 were recently elected. The chairpersons of the respective campus representative student councils are from left Mr Tutu Kgobane, Mafikeng Campus, Ms Monica van Schalkwyk, Potchefstroom Campus, and Mr Bethuel Mokoena, Vaal Triangle Campus. Bethuel is also the president of the Institutional Representative Student Council, while Monica is the vice-chairperson and Tutu the secretary of this institutional body.

CINDERELLA PLANT: ADAPT OR DIE



Life at the Mafikeng Campus's Plant Biotechnology laboratory is not easy for the plant, *Arabidopsis thaliana*, a member of the broccoli-like brassica family.

Deliberately subjecting it to all sorts of hardships, this "Cinderella" of the plant world is studied by Prof Oziniel Ruzvidzo, project leader of Mafikeng Campus' Plant Biotechnology Research Group.

Oziniel says the plant is supremely resilient and adaptable to various environmental stressors. "So far, we have already identified 14 candidate proteins involved in stress response adaptation mechanisms."

His work, funded by the National Research Foundation, entails studying and establishing

the exact genetic mechanisms this plant potentially uses to respond and adapt to stressful conditions. "The knowledge gained can then be ploughed into our own agronomically important crops for the ultimate improvement of food production," he says.

"Climate change goes along with a lot of drought or flooding, for instance. If we can therefore understand what makes model plants like this Cinderella of ours survive in stressful conditions, then we can sustainably transfer these mechanisms to more economically important crops."

The full article is available here:

